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THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDONESIA, 1951-1961:

A DECADE OF THE AIDIT LEADERSHIP

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PREFACE

I was in the United States in February 1958 when the PRRI-Permesta rebellion broke out in Indonesia. Both the rebels and some echoing Westerners asserted that if Indonesia was not in fact already communist, then certainly the Indonesian Communist Party was on the point of taking over the central government. The State Department's apparent support for the rebels seemed to confirm that these assertions contained a strong element of truth; and the American newspapers did little to refute them. PKI was the largest communist party in Asia outside the Soviet bloc, and the results of the 1957 local elections indicated that it had the largest popular support of any party in Indonesia. PKI was also clearly in alliance with President Sukarno. In other words, the position of PKI was apparently much stronger than that of the communist parties in the other non-communist countries of Asia. In 1958 I had just concluded a study of the failure of the communists to capture control of the leftwing, nationalist upsurge in Bolivia, and I was therefore especially interested to know why PKI had grown so large, as well as to know if PKI was, as the rebels

claimed, in real control of the central government or on the point of winning control.

These, then, are the central questions that this thesis seeks to answer: why and how has PKI won mass support and the alliance of important non-communist political forces, and does this support and alliance mean that PKI controls the central government or is in a position to win control in the near future? I found that the growth of PKI and its mass organizations has been made under the leadership of a group of young communists who won control of the Party in January 1951. That month is therefore the opening date of the thesis. The closing date, January 1961, was chosen arbitrarily because the overall policy formulated and implemented by the Aidit leadership is still in effect, and because January 1961 is the last month for which I could obtain fairly complete information. From the start of my study of PKI I was not concerned primarily with the Party's relations with Moscow and Peking, and it was found later that such a line of research would have proved fairly sterile because since 1948 the Indonesian communist leaders have been left to formulate their own policies.

The research for this thesis was undertaken with a three-year scholarship from the Australian National University. The first six months were spent in studying

all available English-language materials on Indonesia, and in learning to read Indonesian. During the next six months all available materials in Indonesian were sifted. The Indonesian visa was granted at last, and I went to Java for almost eleven months. Most of this time was spent in Djakarta, but I also went to Jogjakarta for two periods, totalling two months, in order to obtain a different view of the situation. Brief visits were also made to Surabaya and Surakarta. While in Indonesia I examined materials in libraries in Djakarta and Jogjakarta, and collected as much published communist literature as was available. Many government officials were interviewed, especially members of the Ministries of Agriculture and Labour. Much of my information was gained, however, from interviews with national and regional leaders of political parties and mass organizations. The national leaders of PKI would not meet me, but Party cadres at the regional level proved at times friendly and informative.

Several aspects of the thesis require explanation. Because little or no previous research has been undertaken on most matters dealt with in the thesis, much descriptive material has had to be included. The need to include so much descriptive material, and the limit on the length of theses of the Australian National University, made it

necessary to limit the scope of the Introduction. With regard to the general political background of the period studied, I have restricted myself to sketching a brief outline history of PKI to 1948. The wider background has been treated adequately in readily available English-language sources, and I decided against going over the same ground. But I could not omit a study, however brief, of the socio-economic situation in Java. Most of PKI's advances have been made in Java, especially among the ethnic Javanese, and expansion into other areas has been made mainly from this base. It is essential to examine Javanese society in order to understand why PKI has been able to win broad support, and to understand the character and quality of this support. Most of the introductory chapter is devoted to such an examination because an adequate one has not been undertaken before.

It must be noted that I have been unable to divulge the names of the majority of my informants. The translations from Indonesian to English are my own. I have at times quoted Indonesian English-language materials, but where the original Indonesian was also available I have at times altered the English if I felt it did not accurately represent the meaning of the original.

There are many persons, of varied nationality, occupation, social status, and political persuasion, to

whom I became indebted during my stay in Indonesia. For the information and hospitality they gave me, I express my thanks. Finally, I wish to thank in particular three members of the Australian National University: Professor Leicester Webb, my supervisor, for his constant encouragement; Dr Bruce Graham, for his advice in shaping the rough draft into presentable form; and Dr Herbert Feith, for his relentless opposition to unsound opinion and the loose generalization.

SUMMARY OF THESIS

The Introduction is divided into two parts: an analysis of Javanese society, and an outline history of PKI to December 1948. Because PKI has made its greatest gains among the Javanese and in the villages as well as in the towns, an examination is made of socio-economic conditions in the rural and urban areas of Java. It is hoped that the examination points to some of the reasons for the rapid growth of the communist organization. The outline history of PKI to the end of 1948 is intended merely to sketch in the background of the Party before the opening date of the main part of the thesis.

Part One is concerned with the communist leaders' view of Indonesian society and the Indonesian revolution. What I have termed the Aidit leadership considered Indonesia to be a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country. The basic enemies of the revolution were seen as the colonialists (imperialists) and the feudalists - in that order. The proletariat was clearly too weak to win power alone, but the Aidit leadership believed that because of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal nature of Indonesia the workers could, given the correct strategy and tactics, win many allies. Because the peasantry and

the petty bourgeoisie were oppressed and stifled by the imperialists and the feudalists, they were envisaged as being potential firm allies of the workers, while the national bourgeoisie, also the victim of imperialism and feudalism, was envisaged as an ally under certain conditions. But even such a range of allies might not be sufficient to guarantee victory for 'the people', and the communist leaders believed they might be obliged to form temporary alliances with certain sections of the compradore bourgeoisie at certain times in order to combat other sections.

From this analysis of the socio-political forces present in the revolution, the Aidit leadership decided on a broad national united front policy that entailed three main tasks: the creation of a mass communist party, the creation of much wider popular support through the work of mass organizations that were steered by the Party, and the welding of an alliance with the non-communist political forces.

Part Two describes the building of the mass party. First the leadership of PKI is discussed, then the expansion of the Party and the political education of the membership, and, leading out of these, there is a discussion of the reasons for the exceptional solidarity shown by the PKI leaders and cadres during the ten years

after January 1951. A last section analyses the available evidence as to the income and expenditure of the communist movement.

Part Three describes how the Aidit leadership built mass support. An opening section discusses the effort made to create a public image of the Party without which it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to attract mass support and to win the alliance of broad sectors of the other political forces. Most of Part Three is devoted to an analysis of how the Indonesian communists have won mass support by specific appeals to the different sections of 'the people'. An examination is made of the growth and activities of the communist-led mass organizations (which by the end of 1960 claimed about nine million members), but direct Party work is not ignored. At the same time an attempt is made to estimate the quality of the mass support won by PKI and its mass organizations. The sections of 'the people' dealt with specifically are: the workers, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, youth, women, ethnic groups and minorities, and the veterans of the revolution. Part Three is concluded with an analysis of PKI's election work in 1955 and 1957, and with a discussion of the votes obtained.

Part Four is concerned with the application of the national united front policy to PKI's relations with the

other political forces. PKI offered its friendship to all but the avowed anti-communists, and in return asked neither participation in the cabinet nor a share in the spoils of office. PNI was particularly eager to accept PKI's offer in order to strengthen its own hand against what it considered to be its most dangerous rival, Masjumi. After the 1955 general elections, the power situation changed radically. PKI and Sukarno sought each other's support against first the dissident regionalists and then the central army leadership. Too weak to take too independent a line, PKI was forced to give grumbling acquiescence to the curtailment of liberties and the restriction of parliamentary authority that were carried out by Sukarno after 1956 under the banner of guided democracy. As the first decade of the Aidit leadership came to a close, the political situation in Indonesia appeared to be moving in a direction unfavourable to PKI, but PKI could do no more than emit ineffectual protests.

The Conclusion further develops some of the main themes of the rest of the thesis. Attention is first given to the general situation in January 1961, with the special object of showing what factors induced the Aidit leadership to formulate and then to implement its national united front strategy. The actual implementation of the

strategy in the years 1951 to 1961 is then discussed, special attention being given to the question of whether or not PKI exercised a significant influence on the course of political events. Finally, PKI's position at the beginning of 1961 is examined. It is suggested here that although PKI and its mass organizations had grown large, they were not of the quality that would allow the PKI leaders to use them as a means of taking power, at least in the near future. PKI was working among the poorer sections of society that were relatively free from strong social antagonisms. At the same time, it would appear that the national united front policy, involving moderation towards the ruling groups and wealthier classes, was unable to create a militant mood among PKI's supporters. Such a mood was necessary if the massive communist organization was to become a force capable of challenging and defeating those in power.

GLOSSARY

1. Names of Political Parties.

The following are the abbreviated names of parties most frequently used in this thesis:

NU - Partai Nahdatul Ulama, Party of the Association of Islamic Scholars. NU was founded in 1926 as an association of Moslem scholars adhering to the four orthodox schools of Islamic law. It was formed partly as a reaction to the activities of the modernist Islamic association Muhammadiyah. NU became a member of the all-embracing Moslem party Masjumi founded on November 7, 1945, but withdrew in August 1952 to constitute itself as a political party.

Perti - Partai Islam Pergerakan Tarbijah Islamijah, Islamic Party of the Islamic Educational Movement. Perti was founded originally as an Islamic educational association in Central Sumatra in 1928. In November 1945 Perti reconstituted itself as a political party.

PIR - Partai Persatuan Indonesia Raya, Party of the Union of Great Indonesia, founded on December 10, 1948.

PKI - Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party, founded on May 23, 1920.

PNI - Partai Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian Nationalist Party, founded on February 1, 1946.

PSI - Partai Sosialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Party. A Socialist Party was founded shortly after the proclamation of Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945. PSI was formed in January 1948 as a breakaway from the rest of the party that had fallen under communist control.

PSII - Partai Sjarikat Islam Indonesia, Indonesian Islamic Association Party, was founded in 1947, though a party of the same name and with some of the same leaders had been active before the Second World War.

2. Names of Mass Organizations.

The following are the abbreviated names of communist mass organizations frequently used in this thesis:

BTI - Barisan Tani Indonesia, Indonesian Peasants' Organization, founded on November 25, 1945.

CGMI - Consentrasasi Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia, Concentration of Indonesian Student Movements, founded in November 1956.

- Gerwani - Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, Indonesian Women's Movement. Gerwani is the new name given to Gerwis in March 1954.
- Gerwis - Gerakan Wanita Indonesia Sedar, Movement of Enlightened Indonesian Women, founded on June 4, 1950.
- IPPI - Ikatan Pemuda Peladjar Indonesia, League of Indonesian High School Youth, was formed, with a slightly different name, in September 1945.
- LEKRA - Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakjat, Institute of People's Culture, formed on August 17, 1950.
- Perbepsi - Persatuan Bekas Pedjuang Seluruh Indonesia, All-Indonesian Union of Veterans, established on December 30, 1951.
- SAKTI - Sarekat Tani Indonesia, Indonesian Peasants' Association, established on December 17, 1949.
- Sarbupri - Sarekat Buruh Perkebunan Indonesia, Indonesian Estate Workers' Trade Union, founded in February 1947 and constituting the largest union in SOBSI.
- SOBSI - Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia, All-Indonesia Organization of Trade Unions, established on November 29, 1946.

3. Names of Newspapers and Periodicals.

BB - Bendera Buruh, Workers' Flag, the periodical of SOBSI.

BM - Bintang Merah, Red Star, PKI's monthly ideological journal.

FALP - For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!, the journal of the Cominform.

HR - Harian Rakjat, People's Daily, the PKI newspaper.

ITUN - Indonesian Trade Union News, a periodical in English issued by SOBSI.

KP - Kehidupan Partai, Party Life. This is a continuation of PKI-Buletin, but has become primarily a forum for the exchange of practical experiences in the different fields of Party work.

PKI-B - PKI-Buletin, a multipurpose Party journal issued from February 1952 to early in 1955 when its name was changed to Kehidupan Partai.

RI - Review of Indonesia, a PKI English language monthly which was originally mimeographed as Monthly Review, but from January 1957 has been printed with the present title.

ST - Suara Tani, Voice of the Peasants, the official journal of BTI.

TI - Times of Indonesia, an English-language, politically independent newspaper published in Djakarta from 1952 until October 31, 1960, when its license was revoked.

4. Government Administrative Areas.

The following two terms are used in this thesis:

Kabupaten - Indonesia is divided into provinces, the provinces into residencies, and the residencies into kabupatens. In 1958 there were 170 kabupatens in Indonesia, including 80 in Java.

Ketjamatan - Each kabupaten is divided into several kewedanaans, and these in turn into ketjamatans. In 1958 there were 2,826 ketjamatans in Indonesia, including 1,449 in Java.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN JAVA

1. A General View of Rural Java

The Indonesian population is at present estimated to be about 92 millions, compared with 60.4 millions in 1930, and it is growing at the rate of 1.5 to 2 millions per year. Between 1930 and 1952, when total population increased by about 18.5 millions, the population of the Indonesian municipalities rose from 3.2 millions to 7.1 millions.¹ As only about 2.5 to 3 millions of the urban increase was due to migration from rural areas, it is evident that urban growth was far too slow to absorb even a significant part of the increasing rural population.

In Java,² the population has increased from 41.7 millions in 1930 to about 60 millions at present. This rise occurred in an island which was already densely crowded. It is estimated that in 1952 the average popu-

1

Indonesian Participants in the December 1955 United Nations Seminar on Population in Asia and the Far East, "The Population of Indonesia", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, February 1956, pp.94-5.

2

All statistics for Java also include the island of Madura which is administratively part of East Java.

lation density for West Java (including Djakarta) was 346 persons per square kilometre, for Central Java (including Jogjakarta) 460, and for East Java 380.¹ This high density is not, in general, the result of urbanization but of a dense rural population. The greatest concentrations of rural population occur along the north coast from Tjirebon to Pekalongan; along the south coast from Banjumas to Jogjakarta, and then inland to around Surakarta; and along the lower Brantas from Kediri to Surabaya.² The highest densities are in the kabupaten of Klaten (an estimated 1,038 persons per square kilometre in 1955), and the kabupaten of Tjirebon (an estimated 773 persons per square kilometre).³

Within Java approximately 60 per cent of the total land surface is used by peasants for food production and some cash crops, 7.6 per cent is used by estates for export crops, and 8.8 per cent is occupied by towns, roads and rivers.⁴ Only 23.4 per cent is forest-covered,

¹ Indonesian Participants, "The Population of Indonesia", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, February 1956, p.108.

² Atlas Van Tropisch Nederland, Batavia, 1938, map 18a.

³ Indonesian Participants, "The Population of Indonesia", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, February 1956, p.91.

⁴ News and Views Indonesia, August 17, 1959, vol.IV, no.7, p.14. Another official estimate is that in 1958 peasant agriculture occupied 63.3 per cent of the total land area of Java; Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook of Indonesia 1960, Djakarta, 1960, p.48.

although forestry experts estimate that 30 per cent of forest is the minimum required to safeguard the water supply. The forest is in scattered pockets, and much of it is planted teak stands. There is virtually no land available in Java for a further expansion of agriculture,¹ and migration from Java to the thinly populated outer islands has been on a small scale.² In other words, the increase in rural population has to be absorbed on the present agricultural area.

The basic crop in Java is irrigated rice, with maize, cassava, peanuts and soybeans grown in the dry season and on unirrigated land. Cultivation is everywhere labour-intensive, and agricultural implements are primitive. Little fertilizer is used, and yields are low: 22.7 quintals of dry stalk paddy per hectare in Indonesia,

1

An official commission estimated in 1937 that only about 300,000 hectares of land were still available for cultivation in Java, that is, enough to absorb the population increase for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years; Karl J. Pelzer, Pioneer Settlement in the Asiatic Tropics, New York, 1945, p.162, note 9. In 1960, the Indonesian Ministry of Agrarian Affairs calculated that 181,934 hectares of 'neglected' land was available for food production in Java; Departemen Agraria (Ministry of Agrarian Affairs), "Tanah-Tanah Terlantar" (Neglected Lands), mimeographed document, Djakarta, 1960, 4p.

2

From 1951 to 1959 inclusive, only 231,474 migrants left Java to settle in the outer islands; Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook 1960, p.16.

4

compared with 37.8 in China and 74.8 in Italy.¹ Livestock (buffalos, goats and sheep) and fishing (sea and inland) form an important additional source of food. Although the geographical limits of agriculture have been reached in Java, indications are that yields could be much improved by relatively simple measures, such as increased supply of fertilizers. Similarly, it is generally agreed that fish production could be greatly expanded.

The population pressure in Java has led to the fragmentation of holdings. Statistics provided by the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs for 1957² give the area of sawah (irrigated rice land) in Java as 3,227,694 hectares, owned by 5,788,247 persons, that is, an average of 0.56 hectares per owner. The statistics for unirrigated land

1

See Sie Kwat Soen, "The Use of Fertilizers in Indonesia", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, September 1954, pp.603-14. Soen estimated, for example, that up to 1 million hectares of irrigated rice land in Indonesia were phosphate deficient and would need up to 100,000 tons annually of double superphosphate; in fact, only 5,000 tons were being used for rice cultivation, compared with 400,000 tons in India, and 2,200,000 tons in Japan.

2

Departemen Agraria, "Daftar Rata-Rata Luas Tanah Sawah Tiap-Tiap Pemilik Sawah dalam Propinsi, Tahun 1957" (List of Landholding Averages of Owners of Sawah by Province, 1957), mimeographed document, Djakarta, no date, 3 p.; "Daftar Rata-Rata Luas Tanah Darat Tiap-Tiap Pemilik Darat dalam Propinsi, Tahun 1957" (List of Landholding Averages of Owners of Unirrigated Farm Land by Province, 1957), mimeographed document, Djakarta, no date, 4 p. As an estimated 50 per cent of peasants are landless, in 1957 only 0.28 hectare of sawah was available for each peasant and his dependents.

were: 4,369,099 hectares, 9,845,936 owners, and an average of under 0.5 hectares per owner.¹ Landholdings were distributed as follows:

Sawah

Area	<u>under</u> <u>0.5 ha.</u>	<u>0.6-1</u>	<u>1.1-2.0</u>	<u>2.1-5</u>	<u>5.1-10</u>	<u>10.1-</u> <u>20</u>	<u>over</u> <u>20</u>
A	1,395,307	359,424	156,216	56,283	8,153	1,449	363
B	1,388,352	405,067	115,304	25,787	3,265	905	111
C	933,615	464,532	167,565	40,954	4,369	577	93
	<u>3,717,274</u>	<u>1,229,023</u>	<u>439,085</u>	<u>123,024</u>	<u>15,787</u>	<u>2,931</u>	<u>567</u>

Unirrigated Land

A	1,908,821	304,079	198,663	92,785	11,993	2,268	756
B	2,956,974	376,873	187,844	70,227	6,373	754	137
C	2,278,143	393,332	237,814	111,394	13,968	1,748	421
	<u>7,143,938</u>	<u>1,074,284</u>	<u>624,321</u>	<u>274,406</u>	<u>32,334</u>	<u>4,770</u>	<u>1,314</u>

A = West Java. B = Central Java. C = East Java.

While the above figures do not categorize landowners according to total landholdings, that is, sawah plus unirrigated land, and do not show how much land was owned by the few landowners with more than twenty hectares, details published by the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs do at least indicate the absence of large landowners over

¹

If the detailed figures of sawah and unirrigated landholdings and landowners, given below, are added up, they do not equal these general figures. The ministry's reports do not explain the discrepancy.

much of Java. There were no sawah owners with more than twenty hectares in 3 of the 19 kabupatens in West Java, none in 14 of the 28 kabupatens of Central Java, and none in 10 of the 29 kabupatens of East Java. Over half of the 'large' landowners in West Java were in the residency of Djakarta which covered less than one-fifth of the province, and 71 of the 111 'large' sawah owners in Central Java were concentrated in the residency of Pekalongan. In Central Java there were nine kabupatens with no owner of more than 10 hectares of sawah, and four, all around Surakarta, with no owner of more than 2 hectares. In East Java two kabupatens had no owner of more than 10 hectares of sawah.¹

The peasant organization BTI claimed in 1950, and PKI claimed in 1951, that 70 per cent of landowners in Java had less than one hectare of land (sawah plus un-irrigated land), 20 per cent had 1 to 2 hectares, 8 per cent 2 to 4 hectares, and 2 per cent more than 4 hectares.² Despite the land fragmentation indicated in these figures

1

No details were given for the residency of Kediri, which contains five kabupatens.

2

Kementerian Agraria (Ministry of Agrarian Affairs), Himpunan Keputusan Kongres/Konperensi Organisasi-Organisasi Tani Massa (Compilation of the Decisions of Congresses and Conferences of Peasant Mass Organizations), Djakarta, 1951, p.25; PKI, "Masaalah Tani di Indonesia" (The Peasant Question in Indonesia), BM, June 15-July 1, 1951, p.304.

and those of the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs, the intense population pressure on the limited agricultural land has caused the growth of a landless peasantry generally estimated at about 50 per cent of the rural population. With the collapse of Dutch authority in 1942, many land-hungry peasants moved onto estate and forestry lands. Official government sources in 1954 estimated that 28,000 peasant families were occupying 80,000 hectares of estate lands in Java, and that in Java and Sumatra combined about 400,000 hectares of forestry land were occupied.¹ Such squatters had no legal right to the land they were occupying, and after the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949 they came into conflict, often violent, with estate and government authorities endeavouring to evict them.

Alongside the fundamentally subsistence agriculture of the great majority of the Javanese peasantry has been juxtaposed modern estate agriculture. In 1958, estates occupied 629,900 hectares in Java, of which 342,600 were in West Java (mostly in the residencies of Bogor and Priangan), 209,100 in East Java, and 78,200 in Central Java.² At the end of 1955, estates in Java with over

¹ HR, August 16 and November 25, 1954.

² Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook 1960, p.62. 371,300 hectares of the estate lands in Java were under crops; ibid., p.63.

ten permanent workers were employing over 327,000 permanent workers and over 102,000 temporary workers.¹ Sugar mills rented 52,000 hectares of land for sugar cane in 1957,² at rents fixed by the government. Forestry also provides rural work outside the sphere of subsistence agriculture, and in 1958 245,349 labourers were employed in forestry work in Java.³

2. The Javanese Village⁴

(a) Occupations, landholding and social status.

The percentage of villagers engaged directly in agricultural production varies considerably with such

¹ International Labour Office, Report to the Government of Indonesia on Social Security, Geneva, 1958, p.15.

² Biro Pusat Statistik (Central Bureau of Statistics), Commercial Crops of Estates 1957, Djakarta, no date, p.18.

³ Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook 1960, p.78.

⁴ The following paragraphs are concerned with the villages of the ethnic Javanese who number about 40 millions and inhabit Central Java, areas along the north coast of West Java, and most of East Java. The only recent work on the Sundanese village of West Java is Andrea Wilcox Palmer, "The Sundanese Village", in G. William Skinner (ed.), Local, Ethnic, and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia: a Symposium, New Haven, Connecticut, 1959, pp.42-51. However, the quite atypical voting behaviour of the area she studied suggests that perhaps her village is not typical of Sunda in general. No recent research has been made on the Madurese villages of Madura and the adjacent areas of Java. For a brief description of village forms in the different regions of Java, see B. ter Haar, Adat Law in Indonesia, New York, 1948, pp.71-3.

factors as the size of the village, and its proximity to towns, communications, the sea, estates, sugar mills and forests, and workable raw materials such as clay. In some villages 100 per cent of the population engages directly in agriculture, but such villages must now be only a small minority. Non-agricultural villagers include petty traders and owners of small shops, craftsmen in a diversity of work from basketry, weaving bamboo walls and food preparation to masonry, tile-making and bicycle repair. There is often a learned group, consisting of one or more of the following: gurus, teachers of traditional Javanese lore, dalangs, conductors of puppet theatres or producers and instructors of Javanese dance drama, kiajis, Moslem scholars, imams, mosque officials, and elementary school teachers.¹ Where they are present, the learned people receive great respect from the other villagers. On occasion even the learned engage in agriculture, while most of the petty traders and craftsmen are only part-time specialists, pursuing their trades when agricultural work is slack. Each village also has its own village officials, at least a lurah (village head),

1

For a fairly full list of non-agricultural persons to be found in the Javanese village, see PKI, "Program Perubahan Tanah dan Tuntutan kaum Tani" (Programme of Land Change and Peasants' Demands), BM, December 1951, pp. 13-15.

and a secretary, and often an irrigation official, a religious official, a messenger, and kamituas, heads of hamlets. These village officials, too, usually engage in agriculture besides performing their official functions.

An American sociologist has explained concisely the relation between land and social status in the Javanese village:

There is an extremely complex organization of rights in land, labor and the use thereof, and a clearly graded hierarchy of villagers based on clustering of these rights.¹

Any description of the pattern of landholding in Java is complicated by the continued village, that is, communal, right of disposal over about one-quarter of all landholdings.² The 'kernel' villagers, those who are envisaged as being the descendants of the original settlers in the village, and who may comprise up to 50 per cent of the village households,³ receive life-long

1

Donald R. Fagg, "Authority and Social Structure; a Study in Javanese Bureaucracy" (Harvard University, Ph.D. thesis, 1958), p.136.

2

W. Hollinger, quoted in Clifford Geertz, The Social Context of Economic Change: an Indonesian Case Study, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1956, p.14. As almost all village-right land is sawah, then, if Hollinger's figure is correct, up to 50 per cent of all sawah is still ultimately owned by the village. Geertz found that 24 per cent of sawah in the subdistrict he studied was still village-right land; loc.cit.

3

Compton reported that generally about half the households in the villages of Modjokerto kabupaten of East Java

right of usufruct over equal areas, usually less than two acres, and this right is inheritable, while the land involved cannot be subdivided or sold. Should a kernel villager die without heir, commit a serious crime, or leave the village, a meeting of all kernel villagers decides to whom to transfer the land, usually to a villager who owns a house but no land and who has been waiting the longest. No person may own two shares. The village officials receive extra land in proportion to their position, and relinquish it when they vacate their position.¹ Along with the right to village land are many obligations, such as maintaining village roads and irrigation channels and taking part in the night watch. The individually-owned land may be disposed of at will, but there is strong social pressure against alienation of this land to people outside the village.²

possessed a share of village land; Boyd R. Compton, Modjokerto I, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1956, p.7.

1

Hollinger estimates that 27.5 per cent of all village-right land is used by the village officials; quoted in Geertz, The Social Context of Economic Change, p.14, note 8.

2

Ibid., p.14. Geertz found that even in the most suburban village he studied, only about 10 per cent of sawah was held by persons outside the village. It should be noted in contrast, however, that Indonesian government officials found in November 1959 that 34 per cent of 20,488 owners of sawah in Indramaju district, West Java, were absentee land owners; Dewan Pertimbangan Agung (Supreme Advisory Council), "Laporan Penyelidikan

The landless peasants and those with only diminutive holdings must seek land to sharecrop or supplementary work outside the village or of a non-agricultural nature, such as petty trading, trades, handicrafts, and transportation (much of transport is done by human back). Conditions for sharecropping are often heavy, the sharecropper usually receiving only one-third to one-half the crop from sawah, and in some areas there is added 'key money' and the obligation to work without recompense for the landlord.¹

However, exploitation of landownership has not developed to the extent that it has in some other countries. Jay, investigating villages in East Java, found that:

Landreform didaerah Kawedanaan Indramaju" (Report of Land Reform Investigation in Indramaju District), mimeographed manuscript, Djakarta, 1960, pp.3, 5. An investigation of the district of Batang (in Pekalongan kabupaten), which includes 3 ketjamatans and 67 villages, found that 'There are some villages in which almost all the land (sawah) is owned by persons outside the village' - but only three such villages were actually named; Dewan Pertimbangan Agung, "Kesimpulan Hasil Penyelidikan di Kawedanaan Batang" (Conclusions of the Results of the Investigation in Batang District), mimeographed manuscript, Djakarta, 1960, pp.1-2. It should be noted, however, that the Pekalongan area has the greatest concentration of large landholdings, and therefore absentee landownership, in Central Java.

1

PKI, "Laporan Mengenai Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan kaum Tani" (Report Concerning Party Work among the Peasants), BM, April-May 1959, p.134. On November 20, 1959, parliament passed an act providing for a minimum share of 50 per cent of the crop for the tenant. This new law is now being slowly implemented.

a poor family without land rights, in this area at any rate, may reasonably expect to be able to claim a sharecropping right from a well-to-do neighbor without much fear of rejection.¹

Willner writes that the wealthier in the village 'feel some measure of responsibility in providing work [for the landless labourer] even when rationally of dubious economic gain to himself.'² Geertz has suggested two main factors as retarding the growth of a large 'genuinely alienated and politically disinherited agricultural proletariat': the capacity of the village to absorb an increase in population through an intensification of agriculture, and the capacity of the social structure to adapt to a more complex pattern of social differentiation.³ Thus, Geertz points out, one piece of land of one acre may

1

Robert Ravenelle Jay, "Santri and Abangan: Religious Schism in Rural Central Java" (Harvard University, Ph.D. thesis, 1957), p.52. Jay also wrote (*ibid.*, p.58) that:

the coercive power of close neighbor and kin bonds, together with the shortage of land, permit only the tougher, more aggressive independent landholding households to resist demands for some kind of sharecrop concessions.

2

Ann Ruth Willner, "Social Change in Javanese Town-Village Life", Economic Development and Cultural Change, April 1958, vol.VI, no.3, p.233.

3

Clifford Geertz, The Development of the Javanese Economy: a Socio-Cultural Approach, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1956, p.47.

have an owner, a renter, a major tenant, a subtenant and a wage labourer, all drawing shares from its output, shares that are unequal but not radically so.

Many Javanese peasants are forced, by their general poverty, the seasonal nature of their income and the high expense of occasional ritual feasts, to borrow goods or money from moneylenders or to sell their crops at low prices long before they are harvested. Interest rates in the capital-scarce village are high.¹ Where the moneylenders are ethnic Indonesians, rather than Chinese, their operations have led to a certain degree of concentration of landholdings, apparently moreso in West Java.² However, 'risk capital is ... chronically short, and thus becomes the sought rather than the seeking'.³ This fact may partly explain the apparent lack or weakness of peasant resentment at the moneylenders who are helping to meet the great demand for capital that is as yet unmet by government or cooperative enterprise.⁴

1

See Asmu, "Masaalah Landreform" (The Question of Land Reform), BM, January 1960, p.24.

2

Justus Maria van der Kroef, "Indonesia: Economic Dualism", Current History, November 1953, vol.XXV, no.147, p.293. Only ethnic Indonesians are allowed to own agricultural land in Indonesia.

3

Jay, "Santri and Abangan", p.52.

4

Professor A.G. Pringgodigdo, president of Airlangga University, told me that during the Japanese occupation,

Are the poor villagers conscious and resentful of their unfavourable social and economic position? Geertz believes that village society 'has, in fact, proved remarkably capable of absorbing a very dense population without developing a sharp class segregation of haves and have-nots'.¹ Jay found a clear distinction between the 'patrons' and those who must sharecrop, but also a refusal by the villagers to conceptualize the community as divided into two socially unequal categories.² Jay further found that there was much movement across this division, and that about half the families on the wealthier side had

while he was a wedana in the Banjumas region, the Japanese issued a regulation forbidding loans of more than twelve months' duration. The peasants, however, would not report many of their longer-term debts to the wedana because they felt that they had the duty to pay them. When Pringgodigdo told the peasants that the interest rates were extortionate, they replied that when they were in need the Chinese moneylender was always ready to help with goods or money. He told me that the peasants thought of the moneylenders as a help rather than an enemy. If this attitude is as widespread as my impression would indicate, it helps explain why PKI apparently lost no popular support because of its attempt in 1959 to reverse the government's decision to evict all foreigners from the villages. It should be noted that in Java there were no reports of the villagers molesting the Chinese who were being evicted. For a more sanguine picture of the 'debt-serfdom' of the Javanese peasants, see D.H. Burger, Structural Changes in Javanese Society: the Village Sphere, Ithaca, New York, 1957, p.12.

1

Geertz, The Social Context of Economic Change, p.15.

2

Jay, "Santri and Abangan", pp.58-60.

started in their youth on the poorer side.¹ Kattenburg, studying a village near Salatiga, reached the conclusion that:

to my mind at least, class distinctions play no effective role in the village ... in final account, rights, obligations, privileges and, indeed, status, are pretty well the same for all the villagers.²

While it would be rash to generalize from the experience of a few research workers, their general conclusions as to the minimal nature of social antagonisms are supported by my own conversations with many Javanese and by the great difficulty experienced by PKI and its mass organizations in their efforts to create or increase such antagonisms. The impact of the 1945 revolution, with the concomitant penetration of political parties and mass organizations into rural areas, election campaigns,³ and increased primary education,⁴ has undoubtedly led to

¹ Ibid., pp.60, 65.

² Paul M. Kattenburg, A Central Javanese Village in 1950, Ithaca, New York, 1951, pp.13-14.

³ For a brief description of the social effects of the campaigns for the 1955 elections, see Herbert Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, Ithaca, New York, 1957, passim.

⁴ For a brief description of the discontented, more ambitious, younger generation in the village, see Boyd R. Compton, Village Notebook II. What to Believe In?, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1955, pp.8-13; also his Modjokerto I, pp.14-17.

increased material and social expectations among the poorer villagers and perhaps to the beginnings of social conflict. But the poorer villagers are still far from the point of expressing violent verbal or more active dissatisfaction with the inequalities that exist.

(b) Village government.

In each ketjamatan there are between fifteen and twenty kelurahans, which in turn consist of two to seven hamlets. The lowest administrative unit is the kelurahan, which may have a population of up to several thousand persons. Since 1945 the lurah has been elected by all village males aged 18 and over. The lurah is generally elected for life, or until he resigns or is dismissed by a member of the central government rural administrative service. He usually nominates the other village officials, but his choice must be endorsed by the administrative service. Formerly the position of lurah was generally hereditary,¹ and the lurah acted as a paternal despot. Since the revolution the lurah has become less of a 'little king', although he still retains a monarchist

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Apparently the position of lurah is still usually retained within one or two families in each village, but there is increasing competition between members of the large families, the competitors often seeking the aid of a political party.

character in the more remote villages. He still retains the respect of his villagers, but has been no effective barrier to the entry of an array of political parties and mass organizations into the village. Politically he is becoming increasingly the nominee and dependent of a political party, or he attempts to maintain political neutrality so as not to antagonize any major group in his village.

The members of the rural administrative service used to exercise considerable power and authority over the villagers, but such power and authority have been:

radically curtailed by the upsurge of nationalist and democratic feeling and by the development of political parties and mass organization at the local level.¹

The influence of the rural administrative service is still felt politically, especially in the more remote areas, and PNI is still dependent upon it for mobilizing much of its votes in elections, but like that of the lurahs it is on the wane and has been unable to prevent the growth of political parties and mass organizations in the villages.

1

Herbert Feith, "Indonesia", in George McTurnan Kahin (ed.), Governments and Politics of Southeast Asia, Ithaca, New York, 1959, p.209. See also Fagg, "Authority and Social Structure", especially pp.232, 420-1, 439, 460; and Selosoemardjan, "Social Changes in Jogjakarta" (Cornell University, Ph.D. thesis, 1959), pp.178-86.

education.¹ As the above diagram illustrates, the santri and non-santri may be thought of as two sub-communities, but they are not completely exclusive because, by and large, each sub-community recognizes the prestigious persons in the other sub-community. Further, there appears to be a tendency, especially at the elite level, for the two communities to merge as one national status system embracing persons of different ethnic and religious background.

(a) The elite.

The social elite, of a few thousand persons, is a national conglomeration that includes members of the old Javanese aristocracy but also many more who have risen to prominence by a number of channels: parties and mass organizations, the bureaucracy, business, the armed forces, education, and so on. The santris are not as well represented in the elite as in the middle and lower social categories. The santris have, by and large, either scorned employment in the bureaucracy, which is one of the main avenues to membership in the social elite,

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It must be noted that in Indonesia considerable prestige is still attached to achievements in formal education, while the same applies, especially in Java, to aristocratic titles.

because they are, in general, the indigenous commercial and industrial group with economic and religious outlets for initiative which the non-santris do not have (the remainder of private commerce and industry being effectively tied up by the Chinese); or, if santris do enter the bureaucracy, the armed forces, political parties and so on, and enter the social elite by those channels, they tend to lose their santriness and become absorbed by and indistinguishable from the non-santris. Furthermore, although santris comprise a high percentage of the small indigenous commercial and industrial group, they were largely excluded from a new element of the social elite created by the PNI-led first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet from which the largest santri party, Masjumi, was excluded: the government-sponsored and protected 'national businessmen'.

It should be noted that a position of prominence in such as the political or economic sphere does not necessarily bring entry into the social elite. For example, almost no persons prominent in PKI or the communist mass organizations are in the social elite; nor are more than a handful of the wealthy ethnic Chinese of Indonesian citizenship. It is also true that while most of the social elite are readily recognizable by obvious status

indicators - a large house in the right location, a large new car (preferably a Mercedes Benz), fine quality textiles purchased abroad, large receptions and even cocktail parties - not all members of the social elite need to possess such material attributes, nor does possession of them automatically ensure a position in the elite. The only sure way to recognize a member of the social elite is to know if he is invited to the homes of other members of the elite, and if he or his children marry other members of the elite.

(b) The middle status group.

In Indonesia the middle status group comprises that large number of white-collar citizens between the elite and those who have a blue collar or no collar at all. This middle group could almost be called the pegawai (government employee) class because the great majority of its members are associated with the bureaucracy: officials, clerks, technical staff, teachers, officers in the armed forces. The tremendous growth of the bureaucracy since the establishment of the Indonesian republic has been largely caused by three factors: the government's belief that anyone with qualifications, educational or revolutionary, is entitled to a position

in the bureaucracy; the political and family padding of ministries by individual ministers and their subordinates; and the increase in work done by the government, compared with colonial times. Employees of the central government apparatus have increased from about 150,000 in 1940 to 570,000 in 1953.¹ One effect of this expansion of the bureaucracy has been to prevent the growth of a literate unemployed, a source of radical politicians in many countries.

A significant indigenous commercial or industrial class has not yet emerged. After the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, the major commercial and industrial enterprises were in the hands of Europeans or Chinese, and the Chinese, of whom about one million live in Java, dominated most other forms of economic activity requiring more than a minimum of capital and business skill. There were exceptions, indigenous Indonesians in some medium and small-scale industry, commerce and repair shops, and they were mostly santris. In 1957,

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Geertz, The Social Context of Economic Change, p.149, note 118. The government's National Planning Bureau claimed that at the end of 1953 there were 370,389 employees of the central government and 229,332 employees (excluding village officials) of autonomous government bodies, with the status of government personnel; Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook 1960, p.236.

the Indonesian government confiscated all Dutch enterprises, which opened up a new range of positions for Indonesians, but as the larger concerns were retained under government control the new managers were, in fact, government employees, members of the bureaucracy. Indigenous Indonesians also constitute a part of the free professions, doctors and lawyers, and their more eminent members are in the social elite.

(c) The lower status group.

The gulf between the middle group and the lower group is a marked one in Java. In general the urban lower status group lives in the kampongs, though it must be noted that the housing shortage and the low government wages have forced many lower government employees also to live in kampongs; they are in the kampongs, but not of them.

Although I frequently asked Indonesian politicians and government officials how all the kampong dwellers earned a living, none was able to give a satisfactory answer. Under Dutch rule, at least until the 1930's, industrial development was discouraged, and in 1940 only an estimated 200,000 workers in Java were in industry using modern machinery; 2½ millions, of whom many would

be in the small towns and villages, were estimated to be employed in small-scale industry.¹ A survey of industry in 1955 indicated a little over 400,000 workers in Java employed in undertakings with over 50 workers.² Only 140,248 workers were employed in undertakings with over 249 workers. Furthermore, about 35 per cent of those employed were women.³ Medium and large-scale manufacturing accounts, therefore, for only a small part of the urban labour force. The rest is employed in a bewildering array of occupations, in small-scale manufacture and processing, transportation (by lorry, jeep, oplet, betjak, bicycles, carts and human back), repairs

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A.M. de Neuman, Industrial Development in Indonesia, Cambridge, England, 1955, pp.20-1; Peter H.W. Sitsen, Industrial Development of the Netherlands Indies, New York, 1942, p.5. A lower estimate is that in 1939 up to 600,000 workers were engaged in small-scale, non-mechanized industry; Jan O.M. Broek, Economic Development of the Netherlands Indies, New York, 1942, pp.81-2.

2

International Labour Office, Report to the Government of Indonesia, pp.16-18. Over three-quarters of the companies circularized answered, and the report adds that by implication it was the smaller companies that did not. It should be noted that the industrial undertakings are not concentrated in any one part of Java. Of about 400,000 workers in medium and large undertakings in Java, approximately 146,000 were in West Java, 151,000 in Central Java, and 103,000 in East Java.

3

For details of the percentage of women workers in certain industries, see below, p.442, footnote 1.

of all kinds, small-scale trade, domestic service, and labouring jobs on such as construction, road sweeping, and grass cutting.

In the smaller enterprises, which employ the great majority of the urban labour force, it would be broadly correct to say that the employer, whether Chinese, santri or abangan, still exhibits a certain fatherly concern for his workers, a certain responsibility for them in times of family illness, death, or other difficulties.

The kampongs, especially in Djakarta and Surabaya, are densely crowded collections of bamboo houses that have arisen behind the shops and better houses on the paved roads. Conditions in the kampongs vary greatly from kampong to kampong and from city to city, but in general the homes are without their own water and electricity, and sewerage arrangements are primitive. The poor living conditions of the kampong dwellers is reflected in their health and nutrition. The death rate among all Indonesians in Djakarta in the 1930's was 30 per thousand, and about 30 per cent for children under one year; and, as Wertheim comments, conditions have, if anything, deteriorated since then.¹

¹

W.F. Wertheim, Effects of Western Civilization on Indonesian Society, New York, 1950, p.46. For information

In 1957 the Ministries of Labour and Health made surveys in Djakarta of a random sample of the families of workers in manufacturing enterprises.¹ From a sub-sample of 166 families, the Ministry of Labour found that an average 95.83 per cent of expenditure was on consumption 'in order to live', and 4.17 per cent on such as taxes, interest on loans, and entertainment. Of the expenditure on consumption, 60.0 per cent was on food, of which 49.12 per cent was on rice alone. The ministry's report, written in 1959, added that 'It can be estimated that the present situation is already very different and is becoming worse.' The Ministry of Health survey covered 180 families. It found that only 30 per cent ate three times a day; that the average workers' calorie intake was only 70.4 per cent of the calculated minimum requirements, and for the members of their families, only 80.1 per cent. Vitamin deficiency was widespread.

on the development of towns in Indonesia, and living conditions of the Indonesian urban population before world war II, see W.F. Wertheim (ed.), The Indonesian Town, The Hague and Bandung, 1958, 379 p.

1

Kementerian Perburuhan, Laporan Kementerian Perburuhan, April 1957-April 1959 (Ministry of Labour Report, April 1957-April 1959), Djakarta, 1959, pp.25-8; and Laporan Kementerian Perburuhan, April-Djuni 1958, Djakarta, 1958, pp.8-9.

Wage statistics are useless unless put against cost of living indices - which are not available in Indonesia. Continual inflation, especially rapid in the period 1957 to 1960, has meant that any wage increases have quickly lost their purchasing power.¹ Careful studies suggest that real wages are lower than pre-war. To quote Higgins:

Available data indicate that national income per capita is below the 1939 level, probably below the 1929 level, and may even be below the level of 1919. There is no clear evidence that per capita real income is currently rising.²

The communist trade union federation has estimated that real wages of government workers fell from an index of 100 in 1954 to 58 in 1959.³

¹ The supply of currency is a rough indicator of inflation. It has risen from 240.0 million rupiahs in March 1938, to 3,328.1 millions at the end of 1951, 7,473.7 millions at the end of 1954, 14,091.4 millions at the end of 1957, and 19,871.7 millions at the end of 1958. By the end of July 1959 the supply reached 33,988 million rupiahs. The severe monetary measures in August cut this to 20,999 millions, but by the end of the year, the supply had increased again to 26,383.1 millions. Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook 1960, p.183.

² Benjamin Higgins, Indonesia's Economic Stabilization and Development, New York, 1957, p.xv. See also D.W. Fryer, "Indonesia's Economic Prospects", Far Eastern Survey, December 1954, vol.XXIII, no.12, pp.177-8; and S. Daniel Neumark, "The National Income of Indonesia, 1951-1952", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, June 1954, pp.348-91.

³ ITUN, March 1960, p.4.

In the absence of industrial expansion that equals the rate of urban growth,¹ there is less work per head of urban population. This situation has not led to a massive army of unemployed, rather it has led to a pattern similar to that in the villages: greatly increased under-employment, more persons doing the same amount of work, but not the creation of a socially disinherited, unemployed proletariat.²

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Indonesia does not have adequate statistics of industrial production, but such figures as imports of industrial raw materials, provided in the annual reports of the Bank Indonesia, indicate general slow growth in production since 1950 with a recession in 1958 as a result of the confiscation of Dutch enterprises in December 1957 and the outbreak of civil war in February 1958. But only the imports of malt, paper, cloves and bar iron were higher in 1958 than in 1940.

2

Estimates of the number of unemployed in Indonesia range widely from 15 millions by PKI leader Njoto towards the end of 1954 (quoted in Justus Maria van der Kroef, "Indonesia's Economic Difficulties", Far Eastern Survey, February 1955, vol. XXIV, no. 2, p. 21), to 1,736,000 by the Ministry of Labour in 1958 (Bank Indonesia, Report for the Year 1958-1959, Djakarta, 1959, p. 234). Njoto's figure must have included the partly employed or the 'not fully employed', and if so his figure seems reasonable. The Indonesian National Planning Bureau in 1954 estimated that 30 to 40 per cent of the Indonesian labour force, and more in Java, was underemployed; National Planning Bureau, "Indonesia's Economic Developments 1953", Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, July 1954, p. 436.

II. THE INDONESIAN COMMUNIST PARTY, 1920-1948

The first socialist-oriented organization in Indonesia was the ISDV (the Indies' Social Democratic Association), founded in 1914 by four Dutchmen resident in Indonesia. By 1920 the more extreme leftists in the ISDV had established close contact with Indonesian leftists in the nationalist Sarekat Islam (Moslem Association). On May 23, 1920 the Indonesian Communist Party was established, with its headquarters at the Semarang branch of Sarekat Islam.¹

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For the history of PKI up to the failure of the communist revolts of 1926 and 1927, see: D.N. Aidit, Sedjarah Gerakan Buruh Indonesia (History of the Indonesian Labour Movement), Djakarta, 1952, 64 p.; Harry J. Benda, "The Communist Rebellions of 1926-1927 in Indonesia", Pacific Historical Review, 1955, vol. XXIV, no. 2, pp. 139-52; Harry J. Benda and Ruth T. McVey (eds.), The Communist Uprisings of 1926-1927 in Indonesia: Key Documents, Ithaca, New York, 1960, 177 p.; J.Th. Petrus Blumberger, Le Communisme aux Indes Neerlandaises, Paris, 1929, 190 p.; G.S. Bousquet, A French View of the Netherlands Indies, London, 1940, pp. 24-27; George McTurnan Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1952, pp. 74-87; Netherlands East Indies Government, "Official Report, Dated January 1927, of the Government of the Dutch East Indies on the Communist Disturbances of November 1926", in Annuaire de Documentation Coloniale Comparee, 1927, vol. I, Brussels, 1928, pp. 181-200; PKI, 40 Tahun PKI (PKI 40 Years), Djakarta, 1960, pp. 7-30; B. Schrieke, "The Causes and Effects of Communism on the West Coast of Sumatra", in his Indonesian Sociological Studies: Selected Writings, part I, The Hague and Bandung, 1955, pp. 83-166; Jeanne S. Mintz, "Marxism in Indonesia", in Frank N. Trager (ed.), Marxism in Southeast Asia,

During the next 6½ years, the communists attempted first to capture control of Sarekat Islam, and when they failed, to establish a parallel organization. A change in policy turned the Party's major effort to trade union activity. The Dutch colonial government was quick to exile the more prominent communists, leaving the Party in the hands of extremists who led the Party into an ill-organized series of revolts in West Java in November 1926 and on the west coast of Sumatra in January 1927. At the time of the revolts, there were about 3,000 Party members.

The government easily quelled the revolts, arrested 13,000 suspects, imprisoned 4,500, and interned 1,308 in a concentration camp in West Irian. PKI was declared illegal. Although the Party did not re-emerge as a significant political force until 1946,¹ its anti-Dutch action in the early 1920's placed it in a position of nationalist honour as the first modern nationalist martyr at the hands of Dutch colonialism.

Stanford, California, 1959, pp.177-87; Robert Van Niel, The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite, The Hague and Bandung, 1960, p.154 et seq.; and Alexandre Von Arx, L'Evolution Politique en Indonésie de 1900 a 1942, Fribourg, Switzerland, 1949, pp.185-208.

1

For the official PKI story of communist underground activities during these twenty years, see PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, pp.31-43.

PKI was re-established on October 21, 1945, but the exiled veteran leaders did not return until 1946, when they took control and ensured that the Party pursued a policy of cooperation with other socialist and nationalist political forces.¹ It is to be noted, however, that many of the returning communists, and many of those who had been members of the communist underground, did not enter PKI. Many went into the Socialist Party, the Indonesian Labour Party, and Pesindo (Indonesian Socialist Youth). Kahin does not consider this development to have been part of a long-term plan.

For two years during the revolution, the open and covert communists followed a policy of support for the Republican government, especially in its negotiations with the Dutch. In return they received large representation in the appointed parliament and, at times, significant representation in the cabinet. At the same time the

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For the history of PKI from its re-establishment in 1945 to the outbreak of the Madiun rebellion in September 1948, see Hartono, "The Indonesian Communist Movement 1945-1948: its Development and Relations with the Soviet Union" (Columbia University, Master's thesis, 1959), 116 p.; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p.158 et seq.; Ruth T. McVey, The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution, Ithaca, New York, 1957, pp.9-70; PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, pp.44-57; and PKI, Lahirnja Partai Komunis Indonesia dan Perkembangannja (The Birth and Growth of the Indonesian Communist Party), Djakarta, 1951, pp.15-23.

open and covert communists were active in the mass organizations (or which the labour federation SOBSI, the peasant organization BTI, and Pesindo were the most important), and were later to use their positions to capture control of them.

The first Republican cabinet, installed on August 31, 1945, included Amir Sjarifuddin. He was then known as a leftwing socialist leader of the wartime underground but was to declare in 1948 that he had been a communist for thirteen years. The first working committee of the appointed parliament included Sjarifuddin as vice-chairman, and also Tan Ling Djie, then known as a leader of the Socialist Party but who was already a member of the 'illegal PKI' which was coordinating the work of the communists in the various parties. Sjarifuddin was included in the first Sjahrir cabinet as Minister of Defence, a position he retained in the second Sjahrir cabinet that also included a communist, Wikana, as Minister Without Portfolio.

Sjahrir's third cabinet, appointed on October 2, 1946, included among its 31 members one open communist and three covert communists. Sjarifuddin retained the post of Minister of Defence. In March 1947 PKI was rewarded for its support of the government by an increase in its parliamentary representation from 2 to 35 when the

size of parliament was enlarged from 212 to 514 members. After the enlargement of parliament, two young communists, who were to win control of the Party in January 1951, became prominent in parliamentary work: Njoto as chairman of the PKI group in the working committee of parliament, and D.N. Aidit as chairman of the PKI group in the full meeting. In the new working committee of parliament, the communist-socialist alliance, Sajap Kiri (Left Wing), received 17 of the 47 seats.

The cabinet which succeeded Sjahrir's third, and which was in office from July 5, 1947 to January 23, 1948, went far towards giving the communists a position from which they might have been able to win full control of the Republican government. Of the 34 ministers, Sjarifuddin was both Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, two open communists were Ministers of State, a covert communist was Deputy Prime Minister and another was a third Minister of State. It was widely believed that Sjarifuddin was using his position to advance his allies within the army and to establish secret arms and ammunition caches in the mountains. The communists were unable, however, to consolidate their position for two main reasons. First, the Dutch began their first major attack on the Republic at the end of July 1947, and the cabinet was therefore preoccupied with the struggle for

survival and then with precarious negotiations with the Dutch. Second, the government felt forced to sign the highly favourable Renville agreement with the Dutch. This caused the opposition, already concerned at the communist strength, to combine and bring down the government after less than seven months of existence. The post-1950 Party leadership was to criticize 'the transfer of state power to the bourgeois class in February 1948' as 'the peak of basic errors committed by PKI during the revolution'.¹

In this way the most important instrument in the class struggle, that is, state power, was entirely removed from the hands of the people, and from that moment became the instrument for oppressing the people.

The Sajap Kiri refused to accept a junior position in the next cabinet, that of Vice-President Hatta, but in January 1948 a large part of the intellectuals and other democratic socialists in the Socialist Party split away to form PSI which supported the new cabinet. On February 26, 1948 the Sajap Kiri was reorganized as the Front Demokrasi Rakjat (People's Democratic Front). The Front soon launched strong attacks, including strikes, against the cabinet, and rejected further offers from Hatta of cabinet posts.

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PKI, Lahirnja, p.17.

On August 11, 1948, Musso, a communist veteran of the 1920's, returned to Indonesia after over twenty years of exile in the Soviet Union and was immediately acknowledged as the leader of PKI. Musso drew up a lengthy resolution which called for the reorganization of the communist forces into one openly communist party, and presented a new formulation of the national united front policy.¹ The plenary meeting of the PKI central committee adopted the resolution on August 27, whereupon the leaders of the Socialist and Labour parties publicly declared that they had been communists for many years and announced the dissolution of their parties.

On September 1, 1948, the new 16-member politbureau of the enlarged PKI was announced, and incorporated the prominent leaders of the three former communist-led parties. Party leaders toured the country to explain the new organizational and political policies to cadres and members of PKI and the now-dissolved parties, and a start was made in sifting and registering those members of the dissolved parties who were considered suitable for membership in the enlarged PKI. But before the

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PKI, Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia (New Road for the Indonesian Republic), (seventh edition), Djakarta, 1953, 34 p.

new policies could be fully implemented, the Madiun rebellion began on September 18, 1948.¹

It appears that the Madiun rebellion began when communist and pro-communist civilians and army officers in the Madiun area panicked at the government's plan to demobilize many of the communist-led armed units. Although it is probable that PKI was preparing for an eventual armed struggle, the rebellion in Madiun was premature and posed the PKI leaders the difficult question of what to do: to do nothing, and see their positions in the armed forces eliminated; or to join the rebels, and try to turn the premature uprising into a successful revolution. Some of the politbureau members, including Alimin, merely went into hiding; others were arrested before they could take any action; but the majority of the top echelon leaders went to Madiun and took over the direction of the rebellion.

The government acted swiftly, recapturing Madiun within two weeks, and totally crushing the rebellion within two months. Musso was killed in a skirmish at

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The best account of the Madiun rebellion and the events leading up to it is Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, pp.259-303. Also good is Hartono, "The Indonesian Communist Movement 1945-1948", pp.84-96. For the more important PKI accounts of the rebellion, see below, p.242 , footnote 1 .

the end of October, but the other communist leaders were captured. In all, some 36,000 PKI members, sympathizers and suspected sympathizers were imprisoned.¹ Many second-echelon leaders were killed in the fighting or shot after capture, but the PKI suffered the most severe blow in December 1948 when the army shot the eleven most prominent communist prisoners rather than free them in face of advancing Dutch troops. Among those shot were five politbureau members, including Amir Sjarifuddin, and the two top leaders of SOBSI, the trade union federation. The chairman of the Indonesian Labour Party was also killed during the rebellion.

Most of the communists captured or arrested at the time of the rebellion were freed when the Dutch attacked and before charges could be brought against them. Many took to the hills and joined the Republican guerrilla bands. When the Dutch finally withdrew at the end of 1949, the government took no further action against them.

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PKI, Lahirnja, p.23. The personal observation of those who helped put down the rebellion confirms that many thousands were arrested.

PART ONE:

**THE AIDIT LEADERSHIP'S ANALYSIS OF THE INDONESIAN
REVOLUTION**

PART ONE

THE AIDIT LEADERSHIP'S ANALYSIS OF THE INDONESIAN REVOLUTION

I. PROLOGUE

After the Madiun rebellion and the second Dutch attack on the Republic in December 1948, PKI was broken and disorganized. Reorganization of the Party was not vigorously undertaken until the last months of 1950 when a group of young communists began to take control. The leader of the young communists was D.N. Aidit. He and his colleagues, who constituted the Aidit leadership, began to grope their way towards a new overall policy for the Party. In 1951 and the first months of 1952, they shaped a broad, national united front policy by which the communists were to organize large segments of the population and to align themselves with a wide range of non-communists against the anti-communists.¹ The new policy

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The terms anti-communist and non-communist as used in this thesis require explanation. To be anti-communist is to be openly anti-communist, verbally or otherwise. To be non-communist is to be neither openly pro-communist nor openly anti-communist. A non-communist may be, in sentiments or in theory, anti-communist, but for some reason (often political expediency) unwilling to express

was put into effect and brought PKI a remarkable series of successes. At the same time, the theory of the national united front was progressively refined and elaborated.

Aidit and his fellow leaders were Marxist-Leninists in that they analyzed the Indonesian situation in terms of the broad theories of Marxism-Leninism, but, like Mao Tse-tung, they were impressed with the need to formulate their own policies and tactics with direct reference to the objective facts (as they saw them) of the Indonesian situation. As Aidit said in March 1957:

We Indonesian communists are not dogmatic in the application of Marxist and Leninist teachings; we are creative. Marxist-Leninist theory is only a guide, the decisive thing in our policy being the concrete situation in Indonesia.¹

his anti-communism. It should be noted that many Indonesians, and especially those associated with PNI and Sukarno, consider openly expressed anti-communism to be in some way reactionary, pro-Western, and therefore pro-imperialist, a contravention of Indonesia's independent position in the cold war. This belief inhibits the open expression of hostility to communism among a large section of the Indonesian political elite. It should also be noted that, of course, anyone may shift from being non-communist to anti-communist, and vice-versa. One of the constant concerns of the Aidit leadership has been to remove or prevent any grounds for the politically-important non-communists becoming anti-communist.

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RI, March 1957, p.3.

The Aidit leadership has frequently acknowledged its indebtedness to the revolutionary and parliamentary experiences of foreign communist parties. It insists, however, that the Indonesian revolution possesses certain characteristics that are unique.¹ Foreign experience must be studied:

But the most important thing for the Indonesian communists is the problem of welding the general truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Indonesian revolution itself.²

All the evidence strongly suggests that the repeated assertions of the need to formulate a policy based on the

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While there is, for example, a close parallel between the Aidit leadership's overall analysis of Indonesian society and the Indonesian revolution and Mao Tse-tung's analysis of Chinese society and the Chinese revolution (compare, for example, D.N. Aidit, Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution, Djakarta, 1958, 69 p., with Mao Tse-tung, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party", in his Selected Works, vol.III, London, 1954, pp.72-101), the PKI leaders have been at great pains to show that there are important differences between the circumstances of the Indonesian and Chinese revolutions. As examples of the explanation of these differences, see a speech by Sakirman on October 2, 1950, given in Risalah Perundingan 1950/1951 (Indonesian Parliamentary Debates 1950/1951), vol.III, pp.1142-3; interview with Aidit, quoted in A. Doak Barnett, Echoes of Mao Tse-tung in Djakarta, American Universities' Field Staff Report, New York, 1955, pp.7-11; D.N. Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat bagi Indonesia (The Indonesian Road to People's Democracy), Djakarta, 1955, p.37; and D.N. Aidit, The Birth and Growth of the Communist Party of Indonesia, Djakarta, 1958, p.27.

2

D.N. Aidit, "Revolusi Oktober dan Rakjat-Rakjat Timur" (The October Revolution and the Peoples of the East), BM, October-November 1957, p.383.

Indonesian situation was not a verbal smoke-screen masking effective control and direction of PKI by either Moscow or Peking. In the first place, it appears highly likely that the national united front was conceived in 1951 and early 1952 by the Aidit leadership alone, without outside guidance or prompting. Herbert Feith, observing the new national front policy as it was first applied in 1952, concluded that it was most unlikely that the change was made at Soviet direction.¹ He listed four reasons for his conclusion. First, the change had no basis in contemporary communist theory elsewhere. Second, the change pre-dated the later Soviet attempt to curry favour with Asian neutralism. Third, there was no comparable change in the policy of other South or Southeast Asian communist parties at that time. And, fourth, contemporary Soviet comment on Indonesia suggested that PKI was leading Moscow rather than following it.

It is probable that after the fiasco of Madiun, Moscow wrote off the Indonesian communists as a lost cause. That is, Moscow considered PKI no longer worthy of attention. Only after 1954, when the success of the Aidit leadership's national united front policy had

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Herbert Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-1953; a Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1958, pp.92-3.

become apparent, did the interest of international communism focus anew on PKI. At that stage, the cold war was entering a more complex stage, with the Russians attempting to extend their sphere of influence by winning favour among the neutralists in the underdeveloped and newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The lack of interest shown by Moscow in PKI until after the period in which the national united front was formulated is indicated by the Cominform journal, the number of foreign communist delegates to PKI congresses, and the number of PKI delegations invited abroad.

From the end of 1948 until August 1954, the Cominform journal, "For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!", made little mention of Indonesia, and none whatsoever during 1952, the year in which PKI began to implement its form of the national united front. From August 1954 until 1956, when the journal was discontinued, articles on PKI appeared regularly - written by Aidit, not by Russian 'experts'. In March 1954, only one foreign communist attended the PKI fifth congress, compared with seven who went to the sixth congress in September 1959. And from July 1950, when Aidit and Lukman returned from abroad, until the beginning of 1956, only two PKI delegations visited the Soviet bloc, and none before

December 1952. In contrast, between January 1956 and January 1960, thirteen PKI delegations visited the Soviet bloc.

The tentative conclusion to be drawn from the above evidence is that after Madiun, the Soviet leaders considered PKI to be of little interest. It was only after the Aidit leadership's policy had brought such obvious successes, and after the Soviet leaders became aware of the possibility of winning allies among the neutralists in many underdeveloped and newly independent countries, that the Soviet and other foreign communist parties began to show an increasingly keen interest in PKI. This new interest did not take the form of interference. Rather, the foreign parties studied the PKI policy in order to see if it could have wider application. Hence, many PKI delegations were invited abroad, and PKI received considerable attention in the Cominform journal. Perhaps in order to provide the foreign parties with material on PKI's policy and tactics, in mid-1954 the Indonesian communists began to publish a monthly periodical in English devoted to the work of the Party and its mass organizations in the Indonesian situation.

There are certain parallels between the circumstances in which Aidit and Mao Tse-tung formulated their overall policies. Both Aidit and Mao won control of parties that

were freed from Soviet guidance in policy. Earlier Soviet intervention in both Indonesia and China had helped cause the near-extinction of the local communist parties, with the result that Moscow considered the small, decimated parties to have little or no chance of winning power, and therefore to be no longer worthy of intervention. In formulating their own overall policy, both Aidit and Mao used Marxist-Leninist analytical tools and studied the experience of foreign parties. But each of the leaders was deeply imbued with the atmosphere of his own country, and used his own assessment of the local situation as the principle basis of an overall policy designed to bring his party to power. In each case, a broad, national united front policy was chosen. Mao has led the Chinese Communist Party to power in the highly favourable circumstances of the Japanese War, but the success of Aidit's policy in post-revolutionary Indonesia is still in the balance.

II. INDONESIA IS A SEMI-COLONIAL, SEMI-FEUDAL COUNTRY

The Aidit leadership's theory of the Indonesian revolution is based on the assumption that Indonesia is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country. At first the Party

leaders merely asserted this to be self-evident.¹ The semi-colonial position of Indonesia was widely recognized by Indonesians outside PKI, and was emphasized by the heavy terms of the Round Table Conference agreement which had ended the war with the Netherlands,² by the control of Indonesia's export and import trade by large foreign companies, by the extent of the foreign estate agriculture, and by the exploitation of Indonesia's oil wealth by foreign companies. On the other hand, PKI at first did not elaborate on what was termed the semi-feudal nature of Indonesia, perhaps because it was not until 1953 that the Party was concerned with expanding into the rural areas.

An early account of Indonesia's semi-colonial position was given by Aidit in May 1953.³ He repeated the PKI assertion that by the Round Table Conference agreement the Dutch imperialists had retained their control over Indonesia. Among the terms of the agreement

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See, for example, PKI, Konstitusi PKI (PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1951, p.11.

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The results of the Round Table Conference, as accepted by the Indonesian and Dutch delegations on November 2, 1949, are to be found in Round Table Conference Results, The Hague, no date, pp.7-78.

3

D.N. Aidit, Menuju Indonesia Baru (Towards a New Indonesia), (second edition), Djakarta, 1955, pp.27-31.

that he particularly attacked were the position of the Netherlands monarch as head of the Indonesian-Dutch Union, the control of the Dutch government over Indonesia's financial and foreign policies, the enormous debt to the Netherlands, the restoration to the colonialists of their former rights in industry, commerce, finance and agriculture, and the control by Dutch civil and military officials of the Indonesian state apparatus and armed forces.

That means Indonesia has what is called 'the right of self-government', but in fact real power, in the political, economic and military spheres, is retained in the hands of the Dutch imperialists, and the Indonesian door is opened wide by the RTC agreement to political, economic and military penetration by the American imperialists and other imperialist countries.¹

Although the first agrarian programme drawn up under the Aidit leadership and issued on November 10, 1951 had referred to the 'landownership of a feudal and imperialist nature',² a clear definition of what was meant by semi-feudalism was not given until July 1953. In that month Aidit wrote a major article, "The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement", which marked the beginning of intensive

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Ibid., p.29.

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PKI, "Program Perubahan Tanah dan Tuntutan kaum Tani" (Programme of Land Change and Peasants' Demands), BM, December 1951, p.8.

Party work in the rural areas.¹ He stated that after capitalism had operated in Indonesia complete feudalism no longer existed, but that 'important and heavy remnants' remained. The most significant remnants he listed were:

1. the continued monopoly rights of the large landowners, with the result that the majority of peasants could not own land and were forced to rent land on the landlords' terms;

2. the payment of most of the crops as land rent in kind, so that the majority of peasants were kept in poverty;

3. the payment of land rent in the form of work on the landlords' land, 'which places the majority of peasants in the position of serfs'; and

4. the heavy debts of the majority of peasants, which placed them 'in the position of slaves vis-a-vis the landowners'.

In short, Aidit argued, 'there is still feudal exploitation of the peasants'.

Such semi-feudal conditions, Aidit claimed, made impossible the economic development of Indonesia.

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D.N. Aidit, "Haridepan Gerakan Tani Indonesia" (The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement), BM, July 1953, pp.332-40.

Agricultural techniques were primitive, the internal market was shrinking as agricultural production declined and the relative prices of manufactured goods increased, and industrialization was impossible so long as 70 per cent of the population remained too poor to afford industrial goods.

The PKI programme endorsed by the fifth national congress in March 1954 devoted its first section to a description of Indonesia as being semi-colonial and semi-feudal.¹ Once more the Round Table Conference agreement was attacked because it 'enslaves Indonesia and maintains her position as a semi-colony'. As a result of the colonialists' control of the Indonesian economy, 'our country is in the grip of a continuous economic crisis and is already close to collapse', so that talk about development plans, industrialization and the like came to nothing.

Although our land is fertile there is not enough food in our country to meet the people's minimum needs ... As a result of the unlimited power of monopoly and of the embargo against trade with China enforced by the American capitalists, the price of export goods ... declines gravely, and it is increasingly difficult to find markets for these goods. Indonesian money declines and the price of goods rises. As a result of competition

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PKI, Program PKI (PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1954, pp.5-10.

from the Netherlands, America and Japan, the very small number of national industries and trading enterprises is crushed and bankrupt. Except for a small number of feudal landlords, compradores and high officials, the greater part of the Indonesian people lives miserably.¹

The programme also pointed out that 20 per cent of all cultivated land, that is the best and most fertile land, was still in the hands of colonialist estates. On the matter of feudal remnants in Indonesia, the programme added nothing to Aidit's article of July 1953.

When Indonesia unilaterally abrogated the Round Table Conference agreement in April 1956 and then cancelled her debts to the Netherlands, the PKI was forced to show new grounds for continuing to describe Indonesia as semi-colonial. This Aidit did in a booklet "Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution" written in July 1957.² He examined the degree of political and economic sovereignty enjoyed by Indonesia. Dealing with the political question, he pointed out that West Irian, comprising 20 per cent of Indonesian

¹ Ibid., pp.7-8.

² D.N. Aidit, Masyarakat Indonesia dan Revolusi Indonesia, Djakarta, 1957, pp.39-44. This booklet was published in English as: Aidit, Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution, 69 p. I have used the English version, but I have altered the English of some of the direct quotations.

territory, was still occupied by the Dutch, and that as for the rest of the country:

The political independence which the Indonesian people now possess is not full and stable political independence but only half and is under the constant threat of the reactionaries. The internal reactionaries working in collaboration with the Dutch, American and other imperialists are doing all they can to restrict and destroy the political independence of the people. And besides this, the national bourgeoisie is trying to limit the political independence of the working class and other progressive people.¹

According to Aidit, an analysis of the economic sphere also gave 'extremely clear evidence that Indonesian society is still semi-colonial'. The big foreign capitalists:

by utilizing their dominant position in the sphere of the economy and by means of their mercenaries ... also participate in determining political developments in Indonesia.

They controlled the oil reserves, estates, sea transport, some land transport, the import, export and internal trade, and the banks. As if to emphasize that the abrogation of the agreements with the Netherlands had not altered the situation, Aidit claimed that:

The policy of the imperialists in the field of economic affairs is not in principle different from what it was at the time when Indonesia was fully colonized. They have continued to run their old enterprises and have opened up

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Aidit, Indonesian Society, pp.39-40.

some new ones. This means that they can directly make use of Indonesia's raw materials, extract Indonesia's mineral wealth, and utilize cheap Indonesian labour power. They are economically squeezing national industry, that owned by the state and that owned by the national bourgeoisie. The result is that the big foreign capitalists stand in the way of developing the productive forces in our country. The banks and finances as well as the goods for sale in the hands of the imperialists play the decisive role in the economic life of our country at the present time.¹

In order to safeguard their capital and facilitate their exploitation of the people, Aidit continued, the imperialists used compradores and usurers:

to throw out wide nets of exploitation extending from the busy commercial harbours on the coast and from the towns right out to the most remote villages.

Furthermore, they had placed their compradores in the bourgeois parties and so converted those parties into faithful servants of their interests.

In December 1957 the Indonesian government took over all Dutch businesses.² Once again the PKI had to justify its continued description of Indonesia as semi-colonial,

¹ Ibid., pp.40-1.

² In 1952 the White Engineering Corporation of New York undertook an investigation of foreign capital in Indonesia. Its report to the Indonesian government showed that 70 per cent of the 2,100 million dollars of foreign investments were Dutch. The general findings of the report are quoted in RI, March 1957, p.29.

and in December 1958 the central committee submitted a new compilation of evidence to support its case.¹ A blow had been struck against the Dutch, the central committee admitted, but the Dutch still occupied West Irian; the position of the confiscated Dutch enterprises was still uncertain; Indonesia still made much use of Dutch capitalist channels in its foreign trade; Dutch capital in the oil industry, that is, in the Anglo-Dutch Shell Company, was still untouched; Dutch puppets still occupied important positions in the government, the state apparatus and the economic field; armed gangs were still actively operating in the interests of the Dutch colonialists; the sky, sea and coastline of Indonesia was still constantly threatened by Dutch aircraft and submarines; and the Dutch colonialists still had influence in the fields of education and culture. The central committee declared that as a result of this situation, 'Dutch imperialism is still the first enemy of the Indonesian people'.

The central committee must have been aware that the diminished economic position of the Dutch had made it difficult for PKI to persist in attributing a semi-

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PKI, Bahan-Bahan untuk Kongres Nasional ke-VI Partai Komunis Indonesia (Materials for PKI's Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1958, pp.8-9.

colonial status to Indonesia, and Party leaders began talking of American imperialism as 'increasingly occupying important positions in Indonesia in the economic, political and cultural spheres'. According to the central committee, the American imperialists maintained military bases in West Irian, controlled right-wing parties and individuals to promote their interests, carried out cultural infiltration via films and education, and were engaged in a programme of assistance to the rebels in Sumatra and Indonesia. All this was cited as 'proof that U.S. imperialism already constitutes a constant danger threatening Indonesia's sovereignty and independence'.

In the central committee report presented to the sixth national congress in September 1959, Aidit once more stated that:

For the imperialists, Indonesia continues to be a place for the investment of their capital and a storehouse for cheap labour. They strive not only to defend what capital they already have invested in Indonesia, but also to increase it.¹

He also added an extra paragraph in denunciation of American imperialism.

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D.N. Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi dan Kabinet Gotong Rojong (For Democracy and a Mutual Cooperation Cabinet), Djakarta, 1959, pp.36-7.

Lukman, in his speech to the sixth congress, justified at some length the Party's continued description of Indonesia as semi-colonial, semi-feudal.¹ He said that except for Dutch-occupied West Irian, Indonesia had political independence. On the other hand, the Indonesian economy was in large part still controlled by the imperialists and dependent upon the economy of the imperialist states.² In order to emphasize the political importance of economic considerations, he declared:

Supposing the whole of Indonesian territory was already under the control of the Indonesian Republic, but the Indonesian economy was still controlled by or very dependent on the imperialist countries, in such a situation Indonesia could not yet be said to be completely independent because political power cannot possibly be separated from economic power, and economic power is even precisely the basis of political power. Therefore it is impossible for a country to have complete power in the political sphere if its economy is still controlled or greatly dependent on other, imperialist, countries. Thus it is clear that if a country is not yet independent in the economic sphere, neither is it yet completely free in the political sphere.³

¹ Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI (Concerning PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1959, pp.17-18.

² Aidit claimed in 1958 that 41 per cent of Indonesia's exports went to the United States, 35 per cent to Western Europe, 16 per cent to African and Asian countries excluding China, 4 per cent to Australia, and only 4 per cent to the Soviet bloc; D.N. Aidit, "Economic Difficulties and the Communist Party's Proposals", World Marxist Review, September 1958, p.71.

³ Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi, loc.cit.

Lukman added nothing to Aidit's July 1953 description of the semi-feudal condition of Indonesia, a description which remains the basic Party exposition of the matter largely because there have been no major subsequent changes in agrarian relations.

In short, PKI chooses to envisage Indonesia as being still semi-colonial, semi-feudal. The continued presence of colonial and feudal elements ensures that the great majority of the Indonesian people remain in a state of poverty, and obstructs general economic and industrial development. It is only 'a small number of feudal landlords, compradores and high officials', to re-quote the March 1954 PKI programme, who do not suffer from the country's semi-colonial, semi-feudal condition.

III. THE BASIC TARGETS OF THE INDONESIAN REVOLUTION

The PKI general programme issued by the central committee in April 1951 declared that the Indonesian revolution 'is aimed against imperialism, feudalism and the compradore bourgeoisie'.¹ This bald statement was expanded in the programme of March 1954:

¹ PKI, Konstitusi, 1951, p.12.

As long as the [semi-colonial, semi-feudal] situation in Indonesia is unchanged, that is, as long as the power of imperialism has not been overthrown nor the remnants of feudalism eradicated, the Indonesian people cannot possibly free themselves from poverty, backwardness, lameness and powerlessness in facing up to imperialism. The power of imperialism and the remnants of feudalism in Indonesia will never be abolished in Indonesia while state power in our country is still held by the landlords and compradores who are firmly connected with foreign capital because they want to preserve imperialist exploitation and feudal remnants in our country, because they are most afraid of the Indonesian people.¹

Thus the main targets of the revolution are imperialism, with its Indonesian compradore agents, and feudalism.

The Aidit leadership has, however, made a clear tactical distinction between the two main enemies. This distinction was most lucidly explained by Aidit in his speech to PKI's national peasant conference in mid-April 1959.² He declared that the two tasks of overthrowing the power of the foreign enemy, imperialism, and the internal enemy, feudal landlord domination, were 'from the strategic angle ... very closely interconnected and inseparable'. Strategically inseparable because the imperialists were using the feudalists in order to govern and exploit the people, and because for the revolution to

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PKI, Program PKI, p.10.

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D.N. Aidit, "Fly High the Banners of 'Land to the Peasants' and Fight for One Victory After Another", RI supplement, June-July 1959, p.12.

succeed it had to mobilize the peasants, which could only be done by providing them with land, which in turn meant taking the land from the feudal landlords. Aidit then went on to say:

If viewed from the tactical angle these two tasks, that is the tasks of overthrowing the power of imperialism and the power of feudalism, cannot be executed at one and the same time. If viewed from the tactical angle of the particular conditions of the present moment, the head of the revolutionary spear should in the first place be pointed at the foreign enemy (imperialism) and those feudalists and bourgeois who have become the agents of this foreign enemy. The oppression of foreign imperialism is widely felt by our people. Imperialism is the most criminal enemy with the most intensive exploitation.

Thus, at a certain moment and under certain conditions as at present, we must concentrate all our efforts for a blow against imperialism in order thus to be able to settle the first contradiction, the contradiction between the Indonesian nation and imperialism.

In other words, the enemies of the revolution are considered too strong to be tackled both at the same time. They must be smashed in turn, first imperialism and then feudalism.

IV. THE DRIVING FORCES OF THE REVOLUTION

As communists, the PKI leaders believed that the proletariat constituted the basic driving force of the Indonesian revolution, the basic support of the Party.

An analysis of the strength of the proletariat showed, however, that the proletariat was far too weak to destroy the power of imperialism and feudalism. Because the proletariat was so weak, the Aidit leadership undertook a socio-political analysis of the other major social forces in Indonesia in order to determine which might be won as disciplined allies, which might be won as allies under certain circumstances, and which were implacable enemies.

1. The Proletariat

According to Aidit, the Indonesian proletariat consists of about 500,000 workers in modern industry (transport workers, factory workers, miners, workers in repair shops, etc.), more than 2 million workers in small industry and handicrafts in the towns, and a large number of workers on estates, in forestry work and in miscellaneous occupations.¹ Their total number is about six millions or, with their families, about 20 millions. They therefore comprise about 25 per cent of the total population.²

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Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.61.

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Aidit's figures appear to be exaggerated. In a booklet issued in 1959, the leaders of the communist trade union federation, SOBSI, stated that:

The exploitation and poor living conditions suffered by the Indonesian proletariat are obvious to all Indonesians. Aidit could state, without fear of contradiction, that 'the Indonesian proletariat is exploited by three forms of brutal exploitation, that is, imperialism, capitalism and feudalism'.¹ In December 1958 the central committee reported that 'the living conditions of the Indonesian workers are getting worse and worse'² - which was a deterioration in an already deplorable situation. The decline was stated to be the result of the rapid and continuous rise in the price of basic daily essentials, and the increasing contraction of work opportunities because of the failure to develop state and private industry.

the Indonesian workers constitute only 10 per cent of the total Indonesian population, while the peasants constitute not less than 70 per cent. The remaining 20 per cent of the population is comprised of other groups, such as students, small urban industrialists, national industrialists and intellectuals.

The SOBSI leaders also stated that:

most of the workers consist of casual labourers, both in government work, such as forestry, autonomous areas, estates, and general works, and in private enterprise, such as in sugar enterprises, oil companies, fishing, agriculture, and so on.

SOBSI, Masaalah Front Persatuan Buruh (The Question of the Workers' United Front), Djakarta, 1959, p.14.

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Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.62.

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PKI, Bahan-Bahan, p.13.

According to PKI's analysis, the Indonesian proletariat, 'as is also the case of the proletariat in other countries', has 'very fine qualities'.¹ First, because it works in the most advanced economic units, the proletariat has a strong understanding of organization and discipline. Second, because it owns no means of production, the proletariat is not individualistic in nature and cannot fear the loss of its property in the revolutionary struggle. Third, because it suffers the three forms of brutal exploitation, the proletariat is more resolute and thoroughgoing in the revolutionary struggle than the other classes. Fourth, because Indonesia unlike Europe is not fertile soil for social reformism, 'the proletariat in its entirety is very revolutionary indeed, of course with the exception of the small number who have become the scum'. And, fifth, because the Indonesian proletariat has been led by the PKI since it first appeared in the revolutionary struggle, it is politically the most conscious class in Indonesian society. Therefore the proletariat is:

the basic force pushing the Indonesian revolution forward. The Indonesian revolution will not succeed unless it is under the

¹ Aidit, Indonesian Society, loc.cit.; see also PKI, Mengapa Front Nasional (Why the National Front), Djakarta, 1957, pp.8-10.

leadership of the Indonesian proletariat ... Without the proletariat taking an active part, nothing will ever run properly in Indonesian society.¹

On the other hand, the PKI leaders recognize that the Indonesian proletariat has 'certain unavoidable weaknesses'.² It is numerically weak compared with the peasants, it is young compared with the proletariat in capitalist countries, and it has a low cultural level compared with the bourgeoisie. By itself it is not strong enough to win victory. It must build 'revolutionary unity in all situations with all other revolutionary classes and groups'.

2. The Peasantry

What the PKI means when it refers to the peasants 'is mainly the poor and middle peasants that make up the majority of the inhabitants of the villages'.³ As a group, the peasantry is viewed as suffering not only the remnants of feudalism, but also the deprivations of Darul Islam and PRRI-Permesta bandit gangs that allegedly receive assistance from the landlords and foreign estate

¹ Aidit, Indonesian Society, pp.62-3.

² Ibid., p.62.

³ Ibid., p.61.

owners as well as arms from the imperialists.¹ Because of their suffering, the peasants as a whole 'can be, for the working class, not only the most numerous ally but also the most loyal and most trusted ally'.² In recognition of the size and revolutionary nature of the peasantry, the PKI agrarian programme issued in November 1951 stated that the worker-peasant alliance was all-important for the success of the revolution.³ The Aidit leadership's increased awareness of the role of the peasantry in the revolution was shown in Aidit's declaration in July 1953 that 'The agrarian revolution is the essence of the people's democratic revolution in Indonesia'.⁴

Once the Aidit leadership accepted the peasantry as a revolutionary force, it proceeded to grade separate groups within the peasantry according to their revolutionary potential. The November 1951 agrarian programme included a guide for classifying the peasantry into rich peasants, medium peasants, poor peasants and

¹ See, for example, PKI, Program PKI, p.8; and PKI, Bahan-Bahan, p.15.

² PKI, Mengapa Front Nasional, p.7.

³ PKI, "Program Perubahan Tanah", BM, December 1951, p.24.

⁴ Aidit, "Haridepan Gerakan Tani", BM, July 1953, p.340.

agricultural labourers.¹ But it was not until mid-1957 that Aidit gave a public explanation of the revolutionary value of the respective peasant groups.²

Aidit wrote that although some rich peasants lend money, exploit peasant labourers, and are by nature semi-feudal, they generally participate in labour themselves and so form part of the peasantry. If a correct approach is made to them, they can take a neutral stand in the struggle against the landlords and can join the struggle against imperialism. The medium peasants are economically independent, generally neither exploit others nor earn interest on loans, and suffer from the exploitation of the imperialists, the landlords and the bourgeoisie. Some do not own enough land for their own use and must rent land from the landlords. Therefore, they:

can not only become part of the anti-imperialist revolution and the agrarian revolution, but they can also accept socialism. This is why they are one of the important forces pushing the revolution forward and are a reliable ally of the proletariat.

Aidit even stated that:

their attitude to the revolution is a decisive factor for victory or defeat because the medium peasants will comprise the majority in the countryside after the agrarian revolution.

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PKI, "Program Perubahan Tanah", BM, December 1951, pp.15-22.

2

Aidit, Indonesian Society, pp.60-1.

Prior to the agrarian revolution, Aidit continued, the poor peasants and the agricultural labourers would continue to form the majority in the villages. They do not own land or do not have sufficient land for their own use, and must rent land or work as labourers for the landowners. In short:

they are the village semi-proletariat, they are the largest force pushing the revolution forward and it is natural for them to be the most reliable of the allies of the proletariat and a basic part of the forces of the Indonesian revolution.

However, they can attain their emancipation, Aidit claimed, only under the leadership of the proletariat.

3. The Petty Bourgeoisie

Aidit, writing in 1957, defined the petty bourgeoisie, 'other than the peasantry', as 'the urban poor, the intellectuals, the small traders, the handicraft workers, the fishermen, the independent workers and so on'. He declared that these groups:

have a status which is almost the same as that of the middle peasants. They also suffer the oppression of imperialism, feudalism and the big bourgeoisie and are every day pushed further and further towards bankruptcy and ruin. This is why they are one of the forces pushing the revolution forward and are a reliable ally of the proletariat. They can attain their freedom only under the leadership of the proletariat.¹

¹

Ibid., p.59.

Aidit also pointed out that as some sections of the petty bourgeoisie fell easily under the influence of the bourgeoisie, the Party had to devote special attention to revolutionary propaganda and organizational work among them.

Aidit's description of the composition and political character of the Indonesian petty bourgeoisie is an almost direct translation of sections of the analysis of the Chinese petty bourgeoisie contained in Mao Tse-tung's "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party"¹ - though Aidit added fishermen and the urban poor to the definition. Apparently Aidit took over Mao's analysis regardless of its relevance to the Indonesian situation. Earlier in the period of the Aidit leadership, for example in the April 1951 PKI General Programme, the petty bourgeoisie was not specifically included among the driving forces of the revolution.² In fact, the only group to be listed in 1951 as a revolutionary force and later included in the definition of the petty bourgeoisie was the intelligentsia. Only when the national united front policy was being implemented

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See Mao Tse-tung, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party", in his Selected Works, vol. III, pp. 90-2.

2

PKI, Konstitusi, 1951, p. 11.

successfully and when the Party leaders were tidying up their theoretical analysis of the Indonesian revolution, did the Aidit leadership define their concept of the petty bourgeoisie and list the petty bourgeoisie as the third of the three basic driving forces of the revolution.

The groups that comprise the petty bourgeoisie as defined by Aidit vary greatly in social status and in political behaviour. To put the Indonesian urban poor and fishermen in the same category as the high-status and wealthy doctors and lawyers is almost ludicrous. Politically, the urban poor, the fishermen, small traders and handicraft workers, unless they were santri, have provided a ready source of support for PKI and its mass organizations. On the other hand, the intellectuals and independent workers have been, in general, leaders, members or supporters of what the communist leaders call the national bourgeois and reactionary parties.

Why, then, has the Aidit leadership defined the petty bourgeoisie as it has, and why has the petty bourgeoisie been described as a revolutionary force? Perhaps the PKI leaders do believe that given the correct policy and tactics the Party could rally as revolutionary forces all the groups within the petty bourgeoisie as defined. Such a belief could arise from a study of the success of the Chinese Communist Party. It is also

possible that the Aidit leadership used the category of petty bourgeoisie as a potpourri of groups that did not fit into the other more readily identifiable socio-political categories - and if this is the case, it would account for the heterogeneous nature of the petty bourgeoisie as defined.¹ The Party leaders have been aware, too, that they needed members of the petty bourgeoisie, who are generally more self-assured, better educated and financially better-off than the workers and peasants, as cadre and financial sources for the Party and its mass organizations.²

4. The Bourgeoisie

According to the usage of the Aidit leadership, the bourgeoisie is not so much a social as a political category. The bourgeoisie comprises those persons of

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Alfred Meyer, in his study of Leninism, notes that: An ideological study surveying the uses of the term petty bourgeoisie would ... constitute a virtual history of Marxist social theory. Such a study would reveal the flexibility of this concept, which has been used as a label for any group not fitting into the simple bipolar schemes Marxism seeks to apply.

Alfred G. Meyer, Leninism, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1957, p.115, footnote.

2

From my own limited sampling of communist cadres, however, it would seem that they were drawn mainly from a group that has been ignored by the Aidit leadership in its socio-political analysis: the white-collar workers in government and private employment, including teaching.

social status higher than the petty bourgeoisie (not including the doctors and lawyers), and who lead, join or support political parties other than those of the extreme left. The bourgeoisie is sub-divided into the compradore bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.

The Aidit leadership labelled as compradore bourgeois those sections of the bourgeoisie which were pro-Western, or not so outspokenly anti-Western, and which were avowedly anti-communist. Although the label compradore bourgeois has been applied irrespective of whether the victims had business relations with foreign capitalist companies, Aidit has attempted to remain within the bounds of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy by explaining that some of the compradores had capital alliances with the large foreign capitalists, while others were paid 'out of special funds or other forms of bribes provided by the imperialists'.¹ But despite their obvious hatred for the compradore bourgeoisie, the PKI leaders have been aware of the possibilities of exploiting the 'contradictions' between the compradores serving different imperialist masters:

When ... the Party's policy at a given time is directed against only one particular imperialism, then a part of the compradore bourgeoisie can be

¹ Aidit, Indonesian Society, pp.50-1.

an additional force in the fight against that particular imperialism. But, even so, the compradore bourgeoisie remains very reactionary and still aims at crushing the Communist Party, the proletarian movement and other democratic movements.¹

The national bourgeoisie, according to the usage of the Aidit leadership, is that section of the bourgeoisie which is outspokenly opposed to Western imperialism, and which is not implacably anti-communist. The Aidit leadership envisages the national bourgeoisie as having a dual character: on the one hand its development is stifled by imperialism and feudalism; but on the other, because it is economically and politically weak and has class ties with imperialism and feudalism, the national bourgeoisie does not have the courage to attack in a fundamental manner the two basic targets of the revolution.² The vacillating character of the national bourgeoisie was explained by Aidit in his speech to the fifth national congress of the Party in March 1954:

The Indonesian national bourgeoisie, because it is also oppressed by foreign imperialism, can, in certain situations and within certain limits, participate in the fight against imperialism. In such certain situations, the Indonesian proletariat must build unity with the national bourgeoisie and defend that unity to the utmost ...

1

Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat, p.53.

2

Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.57.

Because the Indonesian national bourgeoisie is weak in the economic and political fields, under certain historical conditions the national bourgeoisie, which is in nature vacillating, can become unreliable and betray. Therefore the proletariat and PKI must always be prepared for the possibility that in a certain situation the national bourgeoisie will not participate in the united front but, in yet another situation, it may possibly rejoin the front.¹

The PKI leaders have shown widely varying degrees of confidence in their own ability to win the national bourgeoisie to the side of the revolution. In mid-1957 Aidit wrote that because of the weak character of the national bourgeoisie, 'it is not very difficult to pull this class to the left and make it stand firmly on the side of the revolution' provided that the progressive forces were strong and the PKI tactics were correct.² National and international events in 1959 and 1960 removed much of this confident tone. When the Nehru government evicted the communist-led cabinet in Kerala, Aidit warned the Party that 'even though the proletariat wants to take the peaceful path to win victory for its policy, the bourgeoisie will not voluntarily accept this path' but cast aside constitutions and democracy when they were

¹Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat, loc.cit.²Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.58.

harmful to its interests.¹ This was a roundabout reference to the anti-democratic practices of the Indonesian ruling group. In February 1960, Aidit wrote directly of the Indonesian situation that 'some groups of the national bourgeoisie, jointly with the compradore bourgeoisie, want to take the road of military or personal dictatorship'.²

5. The Landlord Class

The Aidit leadership sees the landlords as oppressing the peasant masses, as opposing their emancipation, and as possessing the land that is required for distribution to the peasant masses in order to mobilize those masses on the side of the revolution. Therefore the landlords are 'a target of the revolution'.³ They are not necessarily, however, an immediate target. The PKI leaders have concluded that when, for tactical reasons, the primary target of the revolution is foreign imperialism, then it is desirable and possible to obtain the neutrality

¹ RI, September-October 1959, pp.8-9.

² D.N. Aidit, "For National Unity", World Marxist Review, February 1960, p.21.

³ Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.57.

and even alliance of sections of the landlord class in the struggle against imperialism.

Aidit declared in 1957 that:

Based on the above analysis of the classes in Indonesian society, it is clear which classes and groups are the pillars of imperialism and feudalism, that is, the landlords and the compradores. They are obstacles standing in the way of the revolution and that is why they are the enemies of the people. The above analysis also makes clear which classes and groups are the basic driving force of the revolution, that is, the working class, the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie. It also makes clear which class can take part in the revolution, that is, the national bourgeoisie. This is why the workers, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie are the people and make up the forces of the revolution, the forces of the national united front.¹

In other words, from its analysis of the socio-political forces in Indonesia, an analysis based on the past and continuing experience of PKI itself and of foreign communist parties, the Aidit leadership concluded that the proletariat alone was not able to complete the revolution (that is, to bring the Party to power). Because conditions were unfavourable for a coup-type seizure of power, PKI had to try to organize the support of other

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Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.64.

broad sections of society, namely the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. But even this combination was insufficient to guarantee victory. It was also necessary to seek allies among the other major political forces (namely among what was termed the national bourgeoisie), and, in the struggle against imperialism, to win the alliance of sections of the landlord class and to exploit the contradictions that were believed to exist between the different sections of the compradore bourgeoisie.

V. THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT

The PKI leaders believe that although the enemies of the revolution, namely the imperialists, compradores and feudal landlords, 'are in a stage of disintegration and decay ... it would be a mistake for us to underestimate the strength of these enemies ...'¹ Because the enemies are still strong, the struggle to defeat them 'is a bitter, difficult and protracted struggle'. 'It is a mistake to believe that this struggle can be completed within a short space of time and hastily.' Having also examined the strength of the different social classes and

¹

Ibid., p.51.

their position vis-a-vis the revolution, the PKI leaders concluded that in order for the revolution to succeed:

the working class, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie must unite in one national front.

The alliance of the working class and the peasants must be the foundation of this national united front.

The working class must lead the national united front.

Only a national united front that is formed on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, led by the working class and formed as the result of the broadest people's movement and the revolutionary struggle of the masses, will make possible the establishment by the Indonesian people of a people's democratic government that implements the programme of people's democracy and leads the people to victory.¹

In order to win the support of and leadership over the other revolutionary classes and groups, the proletariat:

must aid the peasants' struggle for land, the intellectuals' struggle for their basic rights, the national bourgeoisie's struggle against foreign competition, and the entire Indonesian people's struggle for national independence and democratic liberties.²

1

PKI, Program PKI, pp.21-2. This statement was repeated in the PKI programme endorsed in the September 1959 congress; Njoto, Tentang Program PKI (Concerning PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1959, p.52.

2

PKI, Program PKI, pp.19-20; Njoto, Tentang Program PKI, p.51.

Further, the proletariat must not only assist the other sections of the people, but must also practice self-abnegation:

The basic principle we must adhere to in the conduct of the national struggle is to subordinate the class struggle to the national struggle ... Only by subordinating the class and Party interest to the national interest, which is the interest of the whole revolutionary people, and by defending the class and Party interest in a limit-conscious manner, can our cooperation with the other classes and groups be profitable and can cooperation be achieved.¹

In other words:

class political and economic demands must be based on the condition that they will not harm the cooperation between the classes which, according to their common interest, must cooperate; and ... all demands in the class struggle must be based on the needs of the national struggle.²

As the leaders of 'the organized vanguard and highest form of class organization of the Indonesian proletariat',³ the PKI leaders have been faced with the problem of what

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This quotation is from Aidit's report to the PKI central committee plenum held at the end of December 1960; D.N. Aidit, "Madju Terus Mengempur Imperialisme dan Feodalisme!" (Continue to Advance to Destroy Imperialism and Feudalism!), HR, January 2, 1961.

2

This quotation is from Anwar Sanusi's speech to the PKI central committee plenum held at the end of December 1960; HR, January 18, 1961.

3

This phrase is contained in all three Party constitutions written by the Aidit leadership.

form the national united front should take in Indonesia. The Aidit leadership inherited a concept of the national united front from the August 1948 politbureau's "New Road" resolution drawn up by the veteran communist Musso after his return from two decades of exile in the Soviet Union.¹ Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Sudisman, the most important members of the post-1950 leadership, had all been present at the politbureau meeting, and have collectively given subsequent endorsement to the historical importance of the resolution.

The "New Road" resolution had called for the creation of a national front in which PKI would play the leading role. A widely acceptable national programme was first to be drawn up in order to attract 'all progressive and anti-imperialist people' into the front. The front was to be formed from below, with members of all parties as well as non-party persons eligible for membership as long as they agreed to the programme. Front committees were to be established at the centre and in the regions, their members to be elected democratically. Here, then, was a plan for the creation of a national front organization, linked with but separate from the political parties, and

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PKI, Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia (New Road for the Indonesian Republic), (seventh edition), Djakarta, 1953, pp.31-3.

with which the PKI leaders hoped to win disguised control over the members of other parties and over non-party persons. The communist rebellion at Madiun in September 1948 removed any possibility of implementing the plan.

As Lukman was to write later:

For some time after the "New Road" resolution, there ... existed rather widely among we communists stiff and formal thinking about the organization of the national united front.¹

During 1950, PKI made frequent calls for the formation of 'one complete national united formation' or 'a national united front', but gave no further details of what the front would involve.² On February 1, 1951, Lukman himself wrote an article entitled "Towards the United Front".³ It was, however, merely a vague restatement of some of the proposals contained in the "New Road" resolution, and called for unity of action based on a joint programme to further the common anti-imperialist

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M.H. Lukman, Tentang Front Persatuan Nasional (Concerning the National United Front), Djakarta, 1960, p.54; see also p.55.

2

See, for example, the appeals made in parliament by communist representative Hutomo Supardan on October 2, 1950, and by his colleague Peris Pardede on October 9, 1950; Risalah Perundingan 1950/1951, vol.III, p.1187, and vol.IV, p.1678.

3

M.H. Lukman, "Menudju Front Persatuan" (Towards the United Front), BM, February 1, 1951, pp.57-9.

objective. Unlike the August 1948 resolution, Lukman's article avoided any mention of the organizational structure the proposed unity should have. And then the organizational basis of the front seemed to arrive ready-made.

On March 24, 1951, the leaders of the minor Moslem party PSII called a meeting of leaders of several political parties to seek a basis for overcoming the problems facing the nation. Six days later eleven political parties signed a charter of cooperation, a joint programme, and a constitution for the new body, the Political Parties' Consultative Council (BPP).¹ The members of the BPP included, besides PKI, the minor Moslem parties PSII and Perti, the nationalist communist Murba party, the Labour Party, and the small nationalist parties Parindra, PRN, and PRI.

Despite certain qualifications, the PKI leaders were jubilant at the formation of the BPP. They warned Party members that the BPP 'is not yet in accordance with the concept of the national united front as we desire it', and that the other parties in the BPP were not yet prepared to accept the PKI proposal that individuals as well as organizations be admitted as members of the new

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These documents are given in BM, March 15-April 1, 1951, pp.169-71.

body.¹ But they also said that 'we can do much, very much!' with the BPP. Lukman wrote that 'the Consultative Council with its joint programme is one form of the national united front at a certain stage'.² He was certain, he wrote, that the joint actions based on the joint programme would force the BPP to adapt its organization along lines designed by PKI - that is, along lines similar to the "New Road" resolution. On May 11, 1951, Aidit declared that the creation of the intended national united front had already begun with the creation of the BPP.³

The optimism of the PKI leaders was soon proved to be groundless. Most of the members of the BPP viewed it as a short-term means of applying pressure in the current cabinet crisis. When the BPP was ignored by the cabinet formateurs,⁴ the majority of its members lost interest in it. Although PKI and its mass organizations worked hard

¹ Editorial in BM, March 15-April 1, 1951, pp.161-4.

² M.H. Lukman, "Mewudjudkan Front Nasional" (To Realize the National Front), BM, March 15-April 1, 1951, p.172.

³ Sin Po, May 12, 1951.

⁴ Under the 1950 Indonesian constitution, when a cabinet resigned the president appointed one or more cabinet formateurs to form the next cabinet. The formateurs were not necessarily party leaders or even members of political parties, and they did not necessarily sit in the subsequent cabinet.

to build the BPP into a nation-wide system of committees, the other members showed no further interest and within a year it had disappeared completely.

The failure of the BPP drove home forcibly to the PKI leaders the certainty of what they must already have felt probable: that no political party was likely to transfer part of its control over its members to another political organization which, covertly but still obviously, was controlled by the PKI. It had also become evident that PKI's appeals for a national coalition government were of no avail while the PKI was so small that its support was hardly worth seeking. A new concept of the national united front was required. As a result, in the latter part of 1951 and the first months of 1952 the PKI leaders undertook a thorough re-examination of the Indonesian political situation and of the national united front policy. Drastic changes were made in the methods of winning the broad masses of the people, in the Party's attitude to the parties of the national bourgeoisie, and in the nature of the Party.

Before the failure of the BPP, the Aidit leadership appears to have hoped to win the support of the broad sections of the masses by subverting the followers of the other parties and organizations. With the exception of the trade union federation, SOBSI, the communist-led mass

organizations remained diminutive. In August 1951, however, Aidit declared that the national front consisted of:

the workers' front, the peasants' front, the cultural front, the youth front, the students' front, the women's front, the poor urban people's front, the ex-armed fighters' front, the peace front, the Irian struggle front, the parties' united front, and the national industrialists' front.¹

The agitation and propaganda secretariat of the PKI central committee on April 26, 1952 wrote in a similar vein, but indicated that it would be the communist-led mass organizations that would organize the fronts uniting the various sections of society.² In short, the PKI leaders now set the Party the task of uniting the masses through the Party's own mass organizations. This was a long-term task, but the leaders had acknowledged the protracted nature of the revolution. The period of futile appeals for national coalition governments was ended. The Party would work to build its own mass support with which to force or bargain an entry into the national government.

At the same time, the Party drastically revised its attitude towards the non-communist political forces.

1

HR, August 16, 1951.

2

PKI-B, April 26, 1952.

Sakirman wrote in 1960 that at the time of the mass arrest of communists and communist sympathizers in August 1951, PKI was faced with a choice between two political lines.¹ The Party could either consider the ruling classes to be one 'compact and intact' anti-communist force, or it could consider the ruling groups to be heterogeneous. If they were compact and intact, then the Party would have to oppose them all, but if they were heterogeneous the Party could work to isolate their reactionary wing, and neutralize, or if possible attract, their non-reactionary elements. According to Sakirman the choice was not an easy one, and 'a part of the higher cadres'² believed that the entire national bourgeoisie had betrayed the revolution by uniting with the reactionaries to crush the communists at the time of the Madiun 'affair', by acquiescing to the Round Table Conference agreement, and by helping to formulate the 1950 constitution. That is, some of the PKI cadres believed that

1

Sakirman, "Apa Arti Sokongan PKI kepada UUD 1945 dan Demokrasi Terpimpin" (The Meaning of PKI's Support for the 1945 Constitution and Guided Democracy), part I, BM, May-June 1960, pp.213-14.

2

In PKI usage, the term cadre is applied to an active Party worker with fairly important responsibilities within the Party. The implication is that a cadre has received relatively thorough political education.

because the national bourgeoisie had betrayed the revolution in the past, it would always do so in the future.

The PKI leaders spent their time in hiding after the August 1951 arrests in an intensive study of Lenin's "Leftwing Communism, an Infantile Disorder" and several brochures by Mao Tse-tung. Finally they decided that:

1. the ruling groups within the current cabinet were not compact;

2. the national bourgeoisie was not irrevocably wedded to the reactionary, anti-communist forces, but part or even all of it could be won to a mutually advantageous alliance with the 'progressives'; and

3. even the reactionary groups were rent by conflicts which PKI could exploit to advantage. For example, there were conflicts between those in the government and those outside, and between the pro-British and pro-American groups.

The basis of this change was the realization that PKI could neither build a large Party and large mass organizations, nor win power without the tolerance and alliance of large segments of the non-communist political forces. The Aidit leadership has therefore constantly emphasized the need to unite with the greatest possible section of the non-communist forces. An exposition of what the national united front policy meant in terms of

the PKI's relations with the non-communist political forces was contained in Aidit's speech to the central committee on July 31, 1956.¹ He divided the Indonesian social-political forces into three broad categories: the diehard force, consisting of 'feudalists and compradores who plot with foreign imperialism'; the progressive force, consisting of workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and revolutionary intellectuals, and by which he clearly meant those people within or influenced by the PKI or its mass organizations; and the middle force, consisting of 'the national bourgeoisie and all other patriotic and anti-colonial forces including the left (rather progressive) landlord group'. Aidit said that the PKI's political line must be 'with all its might and tirelessly to build up the progressive force, to unite with the middle force and to isolate the diehard force'.

Aidit went on to say that:

It is a fact that in the parties that represent the diehard force and the middle force there exist several groups which can basically be divided into left, centre and right groups. In order to be able to unite the greatest strength, the communists must analyze these groups so that we can always establish a correct attitude in order to be able to unite all that can be united, and in order to isolate the truly diehard.

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D.N. Aidit, "Bersatu untuk Menjelesaikan Tuntutan Revolusi Agustus 1945", (Unite to Complete the Demands of the August 1945 Revolution), HR, August 1, 1956.

Even within the diehard parties, he continued, some leaders and members were anti-communist but not pro-imperialist, not yet aware that to be anti-communist assisted the imperialists, while others were anti-imperialist and not averse to cooperation with the communists. 'The communists must unite with such people.' This readiness to seek cooperation with as many as possible of the political forces, even the most reactionary, in the pursuit of certain common goals, is a major characteristic of the Aidit leadership's concept of the national united front as applied to the non-communist political forces. It stems from the leadership's analysis of the relative weakness of the progressive force in face of the other internal and external forces, and the resultant need to build the broadest possible unity in order to advance step by step against the enemies of the revolution.

Thus the Aidit leadership came to create its own concept of the national united front. In his speech of July 31, 1956, Aidit made this concept clear. He said that the revolution would be successful 'only if there is a united front, if the proletariat has many friends', and added that 'there are two kinds of fronts and two kinds of friends'. There was the united front between the proletariat, the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie; and

the unity or friendship between the proletariat and the people who exploit it, that is, between the proletariat and the employers and government people who represent the interests of the national bourgeoisie. In other words, the Aidit leadership came to conceive of the national united front as entailing unity in two separate spheres and of two distinct qualities: the unity of the masses directly led and controlled by the Party and its mass organizations, a disciplined unity embracing the truly revolutionary classes; and the unity, in the form of friendship and cooperation, between PKI and the non-communist political forces, a unity that PKI must work painstakingly to create and maintain, a unity that is limited to certain common objectives.

The primary task of the national united front policy has been, however, the creation of a large and disciplined communist party. Only with such a party could the PKI leaders weld the unity of the revolutionary classes under communist leadership, either directly or through the intermediary of mass organizations. Only with such a party could they play a significant part in directing the course of national politics, and would they be sufficiently strong to warrant other forces seeking alliance with them. And only with such a party, also in control of mass organizations, could they hope to prevent the

establishment of a bourgeois dictatorship once imperialism and feudalism had been shattered. The first step on the road of building a mass party was taken in March 1952 when a campaign was begun to increase Party membership within six months from 7,910 to 100,000.¹

Thus the Aidit leadership in the later months of 1951 and the early part of 1952 formulated its own concept of the national united front in conformity with its analysis of the Indonesian revolution and the forces present in the revolution. The concept envisaged and even now envisages no rapid victory, but many years of hard and patient work to alter the balance of forces in Indonesia. In the implementation of this concept, the PKI has faced three main tasks:

1. To build PKI into a disciplined, mass party.
2. To attract, mobilize, organize and lead the three most revolutionary classes, and to do the same for any other elements in society which might prove susceptible.
3. To gain the tolerance and cooperation of as many as possible of those political forces that are not anti-communist, and to use their tolerance and cooperation to

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PKI-B, March 7, 1952, pp.3-6; PKI, 40 Tahun PKI (PKI 40 Years), Djakarta, 1960, p.72.

several ends: toleration of the growth of the Party and its mass organizations, the destruction of the strength of imperialism and feudalism in Indonesia, the isolation and destruction of the anti-communist Indonesian political forces, and communist participation in a 'national unity government' as a step towards communist control of a People's Democratic Republic of Indonesia.

The main body of this thesis is concerned with the implementation of the national united front policy of the Aidit leadership, and with an estimate of the progress it has brought towards communist control of Indonesia.

PART TWO: BUILDING THE PARTY

PART TWO

BUILDING THE PARTY

I. THE PARTY LEADERSHIP

1. The Party Leadership, December 1948 to January 1951

In the period between December 1948 and the final Dutch withdrawal in December 1949, a provisional PKI central committee worked spasmodically in an effort to maintain a rudimentary Party organization. The great majority of the surviving leaders and members were afraid, however, to associate openly with the Party until they were certain it was not going to be persecuted further for its rebellion at Madiun. When the Dutch withdrew, Ngadiman Hardjosubroto, who was acting secretary-general, was chosen by the Party to sit in the working committee of the Republican parliament, and took his place there in December 1949. Ngadiman was then appointed a member of the Indonesian parliament and moved from Jogjakarta, in which city the PKI headquarters were still located, to Djakarta in January 1950. Djaetun, a veteran communist who had been active in the PKI in the 1920's, and

had suffered exile in West Irian and Australia from 1926 to 1946, took over the post of acting secretary-general.¹ But Djaetun was only a front figure.

Throughout most of 1950, PKI operated on three levels. First, there was the legal PKI, with an office in Jogjakarta, and with Djaetun as secretary-general. Second, the Socialist and Indonesian Labour parties were revived. The leader of the Socialist Party was Tan Ling Djie, an Indonesian citizen of Chinese descent. The Indonesian Labour Party was led by Asmu and Sakirman. Third, there was an 'illegal PKI' which directed the work of the open parties, and also maintained a clandestine Party organization. In other words, Musso's plan for the organization of the communist parties into a single, public Marxist-Leninist party was quietly ignored.

During 1949 and 1950 no one person exercised leadership of the 'illegal PKI', and therefore of the legal PKI and the Socialist and Labour parties. The foremost leader was Tan Ling Djie,² with Ngadiman Hardjosubroto

¹ Much of the information on the period December 1948 to January 1951 was provided in statements made to the author by Djaetun.

² This was confirmed by Djaetun and Darsono (a veteran communist who returned to Indonesia in 1950 after many years of exile, during which he had broken with the communists) in conversations with the author. The Aidit leadership later made Tan Ling Djie the scapegoat for the 'errors' committed in this period.

perhaps the second figure. These two were the survivors of the four-man general secretariat of the politbureau that had been announced on September 1, 1948, and their rise to the top two places in the Party was a natural process after the death of the other two general secretariat members. Alimin, a veteran Party member, retained considerable prestige, and in March 1950 he was reported to be the head of PKI's agitation and propaganda secretariat, of which he had been a member in 1948. But Alimin could not be a serious contender for control of the Party because of his age (he was born in 1889), and of marked ill-health which began in late 1949.¹ Also within the leadership, but of a lesser stature, was Wikana, who had been a Minister of State in the Amir Sjarifuddin cabinet from July 1947 to January 1948, and who had been elected head of the youth section of the politbureau announced on September 1, 1948.

In July 1950, two young communists returned to Indonesia after eighteen months abroad: Dipa Nusantara Aidit, and M.H. Lukman. They had left Indonesia at the time of the Madiun rebellion and had gone to Viet Nam where they reportedly fought with the Viet Minh guerrillas,²

¹ Alimin, Riwayat Hidupku (The Story of My Life), Djakarta, 1954, p.44.

² Sin Po, July 25, 1950.

and to China, where they attended the Asian-Australasian trade union conference in Peking in December 1949, ostensibly as representatives of the trade union federation SOBSI.¹ Aidit² was 26 years old on his return, but already had been active for several years in the left-wing movement in Indonesia. He claims to have joined the PKI as early as 1943, and to have taken part in the semi-legal youth organizations which prepared the August 17, 1945 proclamation of Indonesian independence. In the middle of 1946 he went to work for the PKI central committee and at the fourth PKI congress in January 1947 was elected to membership of that committee. In 1947 he became a member of the Republican parliament and chairman of the PKI parliamentary group. In the same year he was also a member of the executive of the Indonesian Socialist Youth, and of the executive council of the People's Democratic Front which united most of the socialist and communist organizations. At the beginning of 1948 Aidit became a candidate member of the PKI politbureau and in August became a full member and a member of its labour

¹ Sin Po, November 18, 1949.

² For brief biographies of Aidit, see D.N. Aidit, Menempuh Djalan Rakjat (Along the People's Road), (fourth edition), Djakarta, 1954, pp.3-4; and BM, September-October 1953, pp.479-80.

secretariat. His companion, Lukman,¹ was 30 years old and had been raised in the Dutch concentration camp in West Irian to which his father had been sent for his part in the 1926 communist rebellion. Lukman, too, had taken part in the youth movement during the Japanese occupation and the early days of the revolution, and had also worked for the PKI headquarters from mid-1946. He was elected to the central committee in 1948, and in August 1948 to the politbureau, in which he was a member of the agitation and propaganda section.

Upon their return Aidit and Lukman worked for the politbureau's agitation and propaganda secretariat which on August 15, 1950, and despite obstruction from Tan Ling Djie, began to republish, twice a month, the Party's periodical "Bintang Merah" (Red Star). Also on the editorial staff were Peris Pardede, then only 32, and Njoto.² Njoto, Aidit and Lukman, were to constitute a triumvirate which still controls the PKI. In August 1950 Njoto was aged 25, and like his companions already had an active record in the communist movement. He had taken

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For brief biographies of Lukman, see BM, September-October 1953, pp.481-2; and HR, September 7, 1955.

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PKI, 40 Tahun PKI (PKI 40 Years), Djakarta, 1960, p.66. For brief biographies of Njoto, see BM, September-October 1953, pp.483-4; and HR, September 7, 1955.

part in the underground movement during the Japanese occupation, and in November 1945 had helped establish the PKI organization in Bekasi, of which he soon became secretary-general. Later he represented PKI in the working committee of the Republican parliament, and became chairman of the PKI group in the committee. In mid-1948 he became a member of both the central committee and politbureau of the Party.

The "Bintang Merah" editors claimed in the issue of January 1-15, 1951 that the periodical had reappeared:

at a time when Party members were seeking a way out of the darkness caused by the confusion of the Party leadership, at a time when Party members ... did not receive clear leadership in the organizational and political spheres.¹

The editors further claimed that the reorganization of the Party in the regions, which gathered force after August 1950, was in large part due to the stimulus and leadership given by "Bintang Merah". They also claimed that the periodical gave the basis and leadership for developing the criticism and self-criticism among Party leaders and ordinary members which led to the ouster of those leaders who clearly 'did not fulfil conditions'. And if the claim is correct that "Bintang Merah" circu-

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Editorial, "Memasuki Tahun 1951" (Entering 1951), BM, January 1-15, 1951, p.4.

lation was increased from 3,000 in August 1950 to 10,000 at the end of the year,¹ then presumably the periodical would have had an influence also extending far outside the Party, which at that time had perhaps 3 or 5,000 members.

The influence of the newly-returned leaders was soon felt. On October 19, 1950, the Indonesian Labour Party officially dissolved itself in accordance, as it declared, with Musso's plan, and its leaders expressed the pious hope that Tan Ling Djie's Socialist Party would soon follow suit.² However, not all the 'old' communist leaders were willing to accept meekly and without question the new leaders and their policies. As prominent communists from the previous period, at least Wikana, Ngadiman Hardjosubroto, Tan Ling Djie and Alimin openly disagreed with the Aidit leadership on matters of policy. But because the older leaders were not themselves united, they did not present a compact resistance and were quickly eliminated one by one.

The first of the older leaders to be publicly disciplined was Wikana. In the third conference of the Indonesian Socialist Youth, which was held from November 4-12, 1950, he was not re-elected to that organization's

¹ Loc.cit.

² Sin Po, October 19, 1950.

executive committee. Further, an article of his in "Bintang Merah" entitled "Mass Youth Organization", was severely criticized by the editorial board for 'erroneous and confused thought'.¹ The board called him in for long discussions and obliged him to recant. On December 29 he was made to resign from a study-group organized by the nationalist-communist Murba party, and which the new leaders denounced as a 'Trotskyite effort' harmful to PKI.²

Ngadiman Hardjosubroto was also disciplined in December 1950. On December 2, a statement was issued in the name of the PKI secretariat which called for a confederation between a:

Democratic Republic of Irian, free from the Round Table Conference agreement, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia not yet freed from the agreement.³

The PKI central committee immediately denounced the statement as the work of 'the Trotskyite and adventurist group', and disclaimed authorship.⁴ When it was found that Ngadiman, apparently with Tan Ling Djie's knowledge, had issued the statement, the central committee removed

¹ BM, January 1-15, 1951, p.26.

² Loc.cit.

³ The full text of the December 2, 1950 statement is given in Sin Po, December 6, 1950.

⁴ Sin Po, December 11, 1950.

him as a PKI member of parliament,¹ and he was excluded from the leadership of the Party.

The other prominent 'old' communist to resist openly the policies of the young leaders at this time was Tan Ling Djie himself. By the end of December the new leaders were sufficiently entrenched within the central committee to take Tan to task in a plenary session of the committee held in the first week of January 1951.

There he:

deviously defended his reformist and legalistic policy concerning West Irian, and also deviously defended the importance of continuing the Socialist Party in order, he said, to gather people who were pro-communist but 'dare not enter PKI'.²

The central committee went against him, cancelled his statement on West Irian, and decided to dissolve the Socialist Party. His defeat 'resulted in his being deserted by the centrist group in the central committee.'³

The new, five-member politbureau elected by the central committee was announced on January 7, 1951.⁴

It consisted of Aidit, Lukman, Njoto, Sudisman, and the

¹ BM, January 1-15, 1951, p.22.

² D.N. Aidit, "Madju Terus untuk Sukses-Sukses jang Lebih Besar" (Continue to Advance for Greater Successes) in his Pilihan Tulisan (Selected Works), vol. I, Djakarta, 1959, p.202.

³ Ibid., p.203.

⁴ BM, January 1-15, 1951, p.50.

aged and ailing Alimin. Aidit, now occupying the post of first secretary, and Sudisman, were elected as the leadership of the central committee secretariat.

Sudisman,¹ aged 30, had a similar political background to that of the new triumvirate leadership: he had joined PKI during the Japanese occupation, was secretary-general of the Indonesian Socialist Youth from its formation in November 1945, worked in the leadership of the People's Democratic Front, and in August 1948 became a full member of the PKI politbureau, in which he headed the organization section. From June 1950 to January 1951 he was joint secretary-general of the legal PKI, and lent his support to the Aidit-Lukman-Njoto triumvirate. Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Pardede were chosen as the editorial board of "Bintang Merah". Sakirman was chosen to head the PKI parliamentary group, a position held previously by Ngadiman Hardjosubroto. The central committee itself consisted of fourteen persons,² still including Tan Ling Djie and Wikana, but not Ngadiman.

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For brief biographies of Sudisman, see Parlaungan, Hasil Rakjat Memilih Tokoh-Tokoh Parlemen (The Results of the People's Election of Members of Parliament), Djakarta, 1956, pp.295-6; and HR, September 7, 1955.

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PKI, Putusan-Putusan Sidang Pleno Central Comite Partai Komunis Indonesia (Decisions of the PKI Central Committee Plenum Meeting), Djakarta, 1953, p.6.

The new leadership had met little opposition from the older leaders, for several reasons. First, the more prominent and capable of the 'old' leaders had been killed, and the surviving leaders did not have a sufficiently large or loyal following within the Party to stand against the new leadership. Tan Ling Djie had the added disadvantage of being of Chinese descent, and was thereby unable to occupy publicly the top position of the PKI in a country where anti-Chinese feeling was strong. Second, the 'old' leaders were divided among themselves on matters of personality and policy, and did not present a united front against the new leadership. Third, and partly because of the divisions in the 'old' leadership, the Party during 1950 was in a chaotic condition. Little progress was being made in the task of reshaping the Party organization that had been shattered by the Madiun rebellion and the second Dutch attack, and there was a lack of leadership on both organizational and political policy. Into this situation came the new, young, dynamic leaders. They claimed to have clear ideas on organizational and political policy, and they claimed, in defence of their legitimacy, to be the true implementers of Musso's August 1948 resolution. Perhaps they also claimed to have the approval of the Chinese communist leaders, from whose country they had just returned. Of great, and perhaps

crucial importance was their dynamism. They launched into the publication of "Bintang Merah", feverishly began to re-build the Party organization, and worked hard to subdue their opponents. The result was that by January 7, 1951, PKI had a new leadership, and the 'old' leaders were relegated to minor positions.

2. The Party Leadership Since January 1951

Among the fourteen members of the central committee in January 1951, the new leadership was faced with three who were discontented with the new leaders, the new policies and the relatively lowly status to which they had been relegated: Tan Ling Djie, Alimin and Wikana. As soon as the Aidit leadership had established firm control over the lower organizations of the Party and was assured of the loyalty of most members of the central committee, it moved to expel the three recalcitrants from the central committee.

The first move was made against Tan Ling Djie. In August 1952 the central committee established a control commission to investigate those of his activities which were held to conflict with Party policy.¹ Although he dutifully performed self-criticism and admitted many

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Ibid., p.4.

errors, the central committee termed his self-criticism as not completely sincere. The central committee plenum which met from October 6-8, 1953, drew up a resolution which accused him of maintaining his 'errors of subjectivism, legalism and liquidationism' and of insincerity in performing the tasks set by the control commission.¹ A campaign against 'Tan Ling Djie-ism' was launched as a means of purifying the Party ideologically,² and Tan himself was removed from the central committee. He was not expelled from the Party, but was given the opportunity:

to purge himself of non-communist ideology, to correct his errors, to proletarianize his ideology, and to develop himself as broadly as possible in order to become a good Party member

by performing tasks to be set by the politbureau and by greater study of the theories of Marxism-Leninism in relation to the practice of the Indonesian revolution.

In June 1953, at a time when discussions were being held concerning the formation of a new cabinet, there were reports of disagreement between Alimin on the one hand and the Aidit leadership over what course of action PKI should take. On June 25 Alimin was made to issue a statement that no such disagreement existed, and that he agreed fully

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"Resolusi Terhadap Kawan Tan Ling Djie" (Resolution Concerning Comrade Tan Ling Djie), ibid., pp.4-5.

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See below, pp.141-4.

with Aidit's views.¹ Despite this, the October 1953 central committee plenum removed him from the politbureau 'in view of his activities and health',² though for the time being he retained his position on the committee. He was replaced by Sakirman, who was already chairman of the PKI parliamentary group and a loyal supporter of the Aidit leadership. Sakirman³ was a useful addition to the PKI leadership as one who was able to cement personal contacts vital to the creation of a national united front between the Party and the non-communist political leaders. He had a higher level of education than the other PKI leaders, having graduated before the war from the Bandung technical high school. And he had a long record of cooperation with the non-communist nationalists. In 1941 he had joined Gerindo (Movement of the Indonesian People), which included a few communists and many nationalists, and within which he became a member of the West Java commissariat, thereby gaining the acquaintance of many nationalist leaders. During the revolution he had become first chairman of the People's Army stationed in Magelang,

¹ PKI-B, July 25, 1953, p.109.

² PKI, Putusan-Putusan, p.4.

³ For brief biographies of Sakirman, see Parlaungan, Hasil Rakjat Memilih, pp.286-7; and HR, September 7, 1955.

and later a major-general in the Indonesian national army, serving in the headquarters. In January 1950 he became a member of parliament. Furthermore, he is the brother-in-law of Sartono, a prominent PNI leader and speaker of parliament from 1950 to 1959.

At the central committee plenum of October 1953 Aidit was elected secretary-general of the central committee secretariat, with Lukman and Njoto as his deputies. Sudisman, who had shared the leadership of the secretariat since June 1950, lost this position but remained on the five-member politbureau.

By the time of the PKI fifth national congress, which ended on March 21, 1954, the number of full members of the Party, that is members with voting rights, had reached 49,042¹ - a tenfold increase since January 1951. This large increase in itself consolidated the Aidit leadership's control over the Party because the new members had been attracted into the PKI by Aidit's policies and programmes, they were receiving political education from cadres loyal to the Aidit leadership, and they had no loyalties to the 'old' leaders. The Aidit leadership was already assured of the support of the central and local Party cadres, and

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D.N. Aidit, "Some Results of the Fifth National Congress of the Indonesian Communist Party", FALP, October 15, 1954, p.3.

from this position of strength made the fifth congress the occasion for removing the last of the disgruntled 'old' leaders from the central leadership. Although Alimin sat on the five-man congress presidium,¹ he failed to receive enough votes to be re-elected onto the central committee.² It was not announced whether Wikana stood for re-election, but he too lost his place on the central committee. Alimin and Wikana were replaced by Nursuhud and Karel Supit,³ who had proved themselves able and disciplined Party workers under the Aidit leadership. The membership of the central committee remained at 13.

As the claimed membership of the Party increased from about 4, or 5,000 in January 1951 to 165,206 in March 1954, and one million by the end of 1955, the work to be done by the Party's central leadership increased considerably, and it became necessary to widen its membership. It appears that the Aidit leadership was at first reluctant to incorporate new members in the central leadership, perhaps through fear of unwittingly importing potential opposition into what had proved to be a reliable central committee. But as time passed, the Aidit leadership was able to judge which of the lower Party workers were most able and most

¹ TI, March 18, 1954.

² HR, July 4, 1956.

³ HR, March 22, 1953.

loyal. In the March 1954 congress, three young communists were elected as candidate members of the central committee: A. Anwar, Anwar Kadir and Siswojo, born in 1926, 1916 and 1925 respectively. The central committee plenum which met on August 7, 1955 endorsed the election of three more candidate members: Tjugito, S. Utarjo and Ruslan Kamaludin,¹ born in 1921, 1923 and 1919 respectively. The central committee plenum which met from July 31 to August 3, 1956 elected Siswojo to full membership of the committee,² to replace Bachtarudin who had died in June. At the same time the central committee secretariat was enlarged to include Sudisman, Jusuf Adjitorop and Siswojo.

These slight increases in the membership of the central leadership were soon found inadequate to meet the increased work entailed by a further increase in Party membership to one and a half millions at the beginning of 1959, and by the greatly increased Party work in parliament, the Constituent Assembly, and the local councils.³ The

¹ HR, August 9, 1955.

² HR, August 6, 1956.

³ The number of PKI representatives in parliament increased from 19 before to 32 after the September 1955 elections; PKI had 60 members elected to the Constituent Assembly in the December 1955 elections; and PKI representation in the regional and local councils of Java increased from a negligible number to 624 in 1956, when the councils were

expansion and reorganization of the central leadership organs were undertaken by the central committee plenum which ended on April 3, 1958.¹

The politbureau was enlarged by the promotion of Adjitorop to candidate membership, and a politbureau daily council, consisting of Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Sudisman, was established to provide leadership to the Party between politbureau meetings. All five candidate members of the central committee were elevated to full membership, thus increasing the size of the committee from 13 to 18 members. Ten of the members had continued to sit in the committee since January 1951. The central committee secretariat was reorganized, and given the task of performing the committee's routine daily work. Its seven members consisted of Sudisman and Adjitorop from the politbureau, plus five other central committee members of whom only one had sat in the committee since January 1951. The

formed on the basis of the 1955 parliamentary elections, and to 973 in the latter half of 1957 after local elections had been held.

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D.N. Aidit, "Fase Baru dan Penjesuaian Organisasi Dengan Situasi" (A New Phase and Bringing the Organization into Line with the Situation), BM, March-April 1958, pp.144-9; "Putusan-Putusan Sidang Pleno ke-VI Central Comite PKI" (Decisions of the Sixth Plenary Session of the PKI Central Committee), BM, March-April 1958, p.153.

inclusion of so many post-1951 central committee members in the secretariat demonstrated the Aidit leadership's confidence in the loyalty of the new members.

The PKI sixth national congress, held from September 7-14, 1959 resulted not only in the confirmation of the control of the Aidit leadership, but also in the further enlargement of the Party central organs, and the readmission of the previously ousted 'old' leaders, presumably purified, to positions within the central leadership.¹ Aidit was chairman of the commission which drew up the lists of candidates for all central leadership organs, and the lists were adopted unanimously and unchanged by the congress. It is certain, therefore, that the enlargement of the central organs and the return of 'old' leaders were in no way a threat to Aidit's leadership.

Aidit was elected to the new post of central committee chairman, with Lukman and Njoto as his deputies. The politbureau was unchanged except for the addition of Njono, the chairman of SOBSI, as a candidate member. The central committee was enlarged to 35 full members and 11 candidate members. The central committee secretariat, with Sudisman as its head, was further enlarged by the addition of Karel Supit.

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PKI, Dokumen-Dokumen Kongres Nasional ke-VI PKI (Documents of PKI's Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1960, pp.218-20.

The rehabilitation of the 'old' Party leaders had begun some time before the sixth congress. Alimin, Wikana and Tan Ling Djie had been elected as PKI representatives to the Constituent Assembly in the December 1955 general elections, and in December 1956 Tan Ling Djie and Wikana were elected as second deputy chairman and secretary respectively of the Party group in the assembly.¹ Ngadiman Hardjosubroto was reported, in 1959, to be chairman of the PKI central election committee entrusted with the task of preparing the Party's campaign in the forthcoming general elections. In the sixth congress, Wikana returned to the central committee as a full member, Tan Ling Djie and Ngadiman were elected to membership of the central verification commission, and Alimin was honoured by a place on the congress presidium. Aidit was sufficiently sure of his own control of the Party to re-employ the undoubted talents of Wikana, Tan Ling Djie and Ngadiman in useful, but, in terms of power, unimportant, positions.

A notable feature of the central leadership of the PKI since January 1951 has been the continuity of the

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PKI dan Perwakilan, December 1956, p.201. In 1958, they were reported to be only ordinary members of the group's nine-man leadership committee; PKI dan Perwakilan, fourth quarter of 1958, p.29.

membership of the inner core. Of the 14 central committee members in January 1951, 11 are still members. Only Bachtarudin, who has died, Alimin, who is too senile for such a position, and Tan Ling Djie are no longer in the committee. And of the five full members of the politbureau elected in September 1959, four were members in January 1951. The control over the Party of these four - Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Sudisman - is complete. Not only do they control the politbureau and its daily council, and the central committee and its secretariat, but they also have exercised personal supervision over Party work in parliament and the Constituent Assembly.¹ Furthermore, they have even maintained a close personal supervision over Party publications. When PKI began to publish its own newspaper, "Harian Rakjat" (People's Daily), in July 1951, Njoto was given the task of supervising its contents, a task he still performs. With the publication of the newspaper, the importance of the periodical "Bintang Merah" was reduced, and its editor-

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In 1954, Aidit, Lukman and Njoto entered parliament, replacing communist members who had resigned, and they continue to sit there. In December 1956, when Sakirman was elected fourth deputy chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Lukman took over his post of chairman of the PKI parliamentary group. Aidit, Lukman and Njoto also entered the Constituent Assembly which existed from November 1956 to June 1959.

ship was transferred in August 1951 to the veteran, Djaetun, and later to Supeno, a member of the "Harian Rakjat" editorial staff. In January 1957, however, the editorship was returned to a board consisting of Njoto, Sudisman and Pardede.

II. THE EXPANSION AND EDUCATION OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP

1. 1951

The Aidit leadership took over a party that was small and ill-organized, and most of whose members were lacking even the rudiments of Marxist-Leninist knowledge. The two primary tasks of the new leaders were to put the Party organization into order, and to begin the work of political education.

In January 1951 the Party organization was still chaotic as a result of the Madiun rebellion, the second Dutch attack on the Republic, and the failure of the post-Madiun leaders to give clear and energetic direction. Total Party membership was about 4, or 5,000.¹ The task

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This figure is deduced from Aidit's statement (D.N. Aidit, "Ideological Work in the Communist Party of Indonesia", World Marxist Review, July 1959, p.24) that there were 7,910 full and candidate members at the beginning of 1952, and from the undoubted growth of the Party during 1951. There is doubt, however, as to the accuracy of Aidit's figure. At another time he stated

of re-establishing the Party organization was begun in earnest after the return of Aidit and Lukman to the Party leadership in July 1950. In September 1950, the newspaper "Sin Po" reported that PKI branches were already active throughout Sumatra (where the Party had stayed aloof from the Madiun rebellion and so continued its public activities unimpaired) and in Java in Djakarta, Banten, Sukabumi, Jogjakarta, Surakarta, north Kedu, Blitar, and Banjumas.¹ It was expected that branches would soon be revived in Semarang, Bandung, Besuki, Pekalongan and Tjirebon in Java as well as in Menado, Makasar, Banjarmasin and Timor in the outer islands. During October 1950, the Party was revived in Surabaja, Bodjonegoro, Madiun and Malang.²

The revival of former PKI branches and the establishment of new ones continued after the Aidit leadership won full control of the Party in the first week of January

that PKI membership had reached 'the teens of thousands' (belasan ribu) by August 1951; D.N. Aidit, "Menudju Persatuan Nasional dengan Semangat Revolusi Agustus" (Towards National Unity with the Spirit of the August Revolution), PKI-B, August 1954, p.102. On the other hand, this apparent discrepancy could be explained if the government's mass arrest of communists in August 1951 had caused many members to break their contact with the Party through fear of further government action.

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Sin Po, September 26, 1950.

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BM, November 1, 1950, pp.186-7.

1951. In each locality where reorganization was effected elections were held and leaders chosen who were in agreement with the new central leadership. The Party in Sumatra, however, required special treatment, probably because the pre-Madiun leaders there had remained unchanged. On February 1, 1951 the central committee sent Pardede and Hutapea to reorganize the Party in Sumatra. By March it was already reported that undesirable elements had been excluded from the leadership there, and central committee commissariats, led by trusted pro-Aidit members of the central committee, were established in North, Central and South Sumatra.¹

By May 1951, Aidit declared that the Party organization was being built not only in Java and Sumatra as in the past, but also in Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Nusatenggara.² He also claimed that the number of Party members and candidate members was already far more than in 1948, and that the basic Party organizations in places of

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See BM, March 1, 1951, pp.156-8 for the details of the reorganization of the Party in Sumatra.

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D.N. Aidit, "Garis-Garis Pokok Perdjuangan Ideologi Didalam PKI" (The Fundamental Lines of the Ideological Struggle in PKI), BM, May 15-June 1, 1951, p.265. Kalimantan is the Indonesian name for the Indonesian part of Borneo, Sulawesi is the name for Celebes, and Nusatenggara is the name given to the Lesser Sundas stretching from Bali in the west to the Indonesian part of Timor in the east.

work and residence, as well as Party fractions within mass organizations, had already begun to function. The work of expanding the Party organization suffered a blow when, in August 1951, the government arrested some 2,000 communists and 'other progressives' on an unsubstantiated charge of plotting a coup d'etat.¹ Many of the leaders who evaded arrest, including Aidit, went into hiding from which they did not emerge until the formation of a new government in April 1952.

Thus, a year after the Aidit leadership had won control of the Party, the Party organization was functioning not only throughout the major centres of Java and Sumatra but also in the other islands. Furthermore, the leadership of the Party had become more homogeneous than ever before. The Aidit leadership had exercised its power under the January 1947 and April 1951 Party constitutions to nominate the commissars who headed the organization at the regional level, and had ensured that the leaders in the newly organized or revived branches were persons

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Aidit, The Birth and Growth of the Communist Party of Indonesia, Djakarta, 1958, p.38. George McTurnan Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism" in William L. Holland (ed.), Asian Nationalism and the West, New York, 1953, p.189, states that in August 1951 15,000 persons were arrested, of whom many were communists. I can see no reason, however, why Aidit should have understated the magnitude of the arrests.

amenable to the central leadership. At the beginning of 1952 there were 7,910 full and candidate members of PKI.

At the same time as reviving and expanding the Party organization, the Aidit leadership began the ideological and organizational education of the cadres and members. Aidit, in an article written at the beginning of March 1951, warned that the Party suffered from ideological deficiencies and that during the struggle for victory, PKI could be affected by the dangers of 'left' and right opportunism, that is adventurism and capitulationism.¹ At the same time he warned against sectarianism, which entailed ignoring the importance of attracting the broad mass of the workers and the importance of the national united front. The Party's general programme, included in the April 1951 constitution, introduced the Party members to other dangerous deviations that could isolate PKI from the people and which had to be fought and avoided:

tailism, commandism, closed door policy, isolation policy, paternalism, individualism, liberalism, bureaucracy, intrigue, nepotism and militarism.²

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D.N. Aidit, "Membolsewikkan PKI" (Bolshevizing PKI), BM, March 1, 1951, pp.129-34.

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PKI, Konstitusi PKI (PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1951, p.18.

An article by Aidit in May 1951 pinpointed two other diseases present in the Party which led sometimes to 'left' and sometimes to right deviation.¹ They were dogmatism, which did not accept that 'Marxism is not a dogma but a guide for action'; and empiricism, whose adherents held firmly to their own restricted experiences, and who did not understand or wish to understand the importance of theory for revolutionary practice. In order to remedy or avoid such ideological deviations, the new central leadership emphasized the need to study not only the concrete situation in Indonesia, but also the more important and relevant Marxist-Leninist literature.

In order to provide study materials, the central committee announced on March 1, 1951 that it had formed a commission to translate communist works into Indonesian.² The first books listed for translation were: Stalin's "The Foundations of Leninism", Leontiev's "Political Economy", "The History of the CPSU(B)", and Liu Shao-chi's "On the Party". They were to be followed by Lenin's "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism", "State and Revolution", and "Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder", Mao Tse-tung's "On New Democracy", Stalin's "Marxism and the

¹ Aidit, "Garis-Garis", BM, May 15-June 1, 1951, p.266.

² BM, March 1, 1951, pp.132, 156.

National and Colonial Questions", Engels' "Utopian and Scientific Socialism", and Rutgers' "Indonesia". And so began the systematic translation into Indonesian of the communist classics, basic tools with which the PKI leaders hoped to create a Party united on ideology and thereby on policy matters too.

Brochures and pamphlets were not the only means used to make known international communist writings. For example, the periodical "Bintang Merah" contained Mao Tse-tung's "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War" in serialized form during the later part of 1950 and the first part of 1951, and during 1951 the translated works included Stalin's "Theory" and "The Foundation of Leninism", Mao Tse-tung's "On Eradicating Liberalism in the Party", and Hong Ha's "The Victory of the Vietnamese People and its Army". From July 1, 1951 the PKI published its own daily newspaper, "Harian Rakjat", which began with only 2,000 copies, but which played and plays an important role in disseminating Party instructions and in providing materials for the organizational and political education of its readers. As soon as "Harian Rakjat" was published, "Bintang Merah" became a monthly instead of a twice-monthly, and was then temporarily forced by financial problems to cease publication from the end of

1951 to August 1952.¹ When "Bintang Merah" temporarily closed down, the agitation and propaganda secretariat of the central committee began to publish a mimeographed periodical "PKI-Buletin" which appeared on average about once every three weeks. The new periodical contained Party statements and news, articles by Party leaders on a wide range of ideological, political and organizational matters, and an increasing number of translations from the Cominform journal "For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy!". In Surabaya, from about the end of 1950, a large 'weekly of people's democracy', "Zaman Baru" (New Age) was published under PKI control. By the end of 1952, when its editor, Naibaho, was appointed chief editor of "Harian Rakjat", "Zaman Baru" appeared irregularly. Miscellaneous Party publications during 1951 included the April 1951 Party constitution, and a short history of the PKI.² One of the PKI-led peasant organizations published a translation of Stalin's "The Peasant Question".³

According to Aidit, the government's mass arrest of communists in August 1951 resulted in a fresh burst of

¹ PKI-B, March 7, 1952, pp.6-7.

² PKI, Konstitusi, 1951, 64 p.; PKI, Lahirnja Partai Komunis Indonesia dan Perkembangannja (The Birth and Growth of the Communist Party of Indonesia), Djakarta, 1951, 29 p.

³ Stalin, Masalah Tani (The Peasant Question), Djakarta, 1951, 74 p.

study of those of Lenin's works which in a popular way expounded Marxist strategy and tactics.¹ The Party leaders in hiding turned to Lenin's works in order to seek a way out of the difficult situation PKI was in. As a result, extra work was undertaken to translate Lenin's works, adding to those begun in March 1951 such as "What is to be Done", "From Where to Begin", "To the Village Poor", "Thesis", and "Marxism and Revisionism".

Little information has been published as to the work of formal cadre training in 1951. On April 16, 1951, the Djakarta Raja section of the Party opened a course for Party functionaries at which Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Sudisman gave instruction on the fundamentals of Leninism, the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, utopian and scientific socialism, and Party organization.² A leading Party cadre told me in 1960 that he had attended a central committee cadre school in Djakarta in 1951, but this might have been the one officially organized by the Djakarta section. A report in "Harian Rakjat" mentioned in April 1952 that courses had been organized in Subang and Krawang, on the initiative of the communist-led mass

¹ D.N. Aidit, Lenin dan Indonesia (Lenin and Indonesia), Djakarta, 1960, pp.31-2.

² BM, April 15-May 1, 1951, p.253.

organizations, in order to give cadres the minimum knowledge required in building the national united front.¹ But although this report added that it was hoped to extend these courses into other areas, it did not say how long the original courses had been in operation. Within the Party itself, from the time of the August 1951 arrests, periodic discussions concerning theory and concerning practical work were begun in the Party committees, fractions in mass organizations and representative councils, and in lower levels of the organization.²

2. The First Membership Drive

At the beginning of 1952 the politbureau decided to try to increase Party membership to 100,000 within six months.³ During 1951 the Aidit leadership had re-organized the Party, purged the national and regional leadership of elements considered hostile to itself, and had begun the work of ideological and cadre training. The Party was strong enough to bring in new members on a large scale, and to begin the primary task of the national

¹ HR, April 8, 1952.

² D.N. Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat bagi Indonesia (The Indonesian Road to People's Democracy), Djakarta, 1955, p.45.

³ PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, p.72.

united front policy, that is, to build the Party into a mass, nation-wide machine. Only a great increase in PKI membership would enable PKI to find large numbers of capable cadres, to successfully build and control mass organizations among the different sections of society, to mobilize millions of voters in the coming elections, to seek entry into the civil service and armed forces which contained only insignificant numbers of Party members, and so to mobilize and control a broad national united front which, it was hoped, would eventually control political life in Indonesia. It is possible, too, that the August 1951 arrests spurred the Aidit leadership to expand the Party, for the arrests showed that the removal of only a relative handful of leaders could virtually paralyze the small Party, and they also showed that PKI control over its mass organizations was still extremely tenuous.¹

A PKI national conference, which met early in March 1952, took two important decisions.² First, it decided

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Because Party work among the peasants was still little developed, the small communist-led and communist-influenced peasant organizations could not have been expected to give the Party significant support at the time of the August arrests. But most of the cadres and almost all the members of SOBSI also responded with indifference to the arrest of the PKI and SOBSI leaders.

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Aidit, "Madju Terus" in his Pilihan Tulisan, vol. I, p.203; also his Djalan ke Demokrasi, p.46.

to promote the study of theory within the Party, as a means of combatting sectarianism, capitulationism and adventurism which had appeared among the Party ranks at the time of the August arrests. Second, it endorsed the plan to expand membership to 100,000 within six months. On March 7 the central committee published a resolution calling for a membership drive which would result in the Party becoming a mass party,¹ an objective that had not been envisaged since 1926 at least.

It would have been surprising had there not been some opposition within the Party to the new policy, and the resolution in fact incorporated a series of arguments designed to counter objections to the creation of a mass party. To those members who said that the Party needed quality, not quantity, the central committee explained that:

quantity is necessary in order to achieve quality. From a large quantity it is far more possible to achieve higher quality. Therefore we need quantity as well as quality.

To emphasize this point the central committee stressed that 'Party cadres cannot appear all of a sudden. People cannot enter the Party as good cadres' but must enter as ordinary members, the best among them being selected and

¹ PKI-B, March 7, 1952, pp.3-6.

trained as new cadres. The resolution also explained that only by increasing the number of members could the Party broaden and strengthen its relations with the masses, and that only with the organized strength of the broad masses could the Party achieve its goals. In order to remove the fear that the membership drive might lead to the recruitment of undesirable elements or to the lowering of the quality of members, the resolution explained that organizational methods would prevent this. That is, the implementation of the stringent provisions embodied in the April 1951 constitution governing the entry of new members and the elevation of candidate members to full membership, and the practice of criticism and self-criticism would prevent such an occurrence. Finally, the resolution stated that in order to maintain the political and theoretical level of the Party, the membership drive had to be accompanied by the implementation of the other central committee resolution concerning the education of Party members and cadres.

The success of the membership drive was immediate. Towards the end of May 1952 PKI was already claiming 100,000 members.¹ This was followed by a period of

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Sudisman, "Peladjaran Fundamentil Selama 32 Tahun Berdirinja PKI" (The Fundamental Lesson of 32 Years of PKI), PKI-B, May 20, 1952, p.12.

consolidation in which the membership rose more slowly to 126,671 at the end of 1952 and 165,206 in March 1954.¹ In May 1953, the central committee gave its comments on the drive.² By the end of 1952 the Party had 8,467 committees, fractions³ and groups. The best efforts had been made by the Party organizations in Priangan (Bandung), Surakarta and Madiun. But not all was satisfactory. Only 1½ per cent of members and candidate members were women, and the Party leaders in Banten, Tapanuli (North Sumatra) and Kalimantan still did not consider that women were 'mature' enough to enter the Party. Some Party committees even had shown indifference to the whole membership campaign. For example, after the delegates from Kedu returned home from the March 1952 national conference, 'the instructions and plan were discussed a little in the daily committee, and then ... deposited in the refrigerator' and forgotten for a year.

In terms of social targets, the campaign appears to have been aimed primarily at the towns in general and

¹ PKI, Bahan-Bahan untuk Kongres Nasional ke-VI Partai Komunis Indonesia (Materials for PKI's Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1958, p.54.

² PKI-B, May 1953, pp.78-81.

³ A fraction is a group of communists operating in a non-Party organization such as parliament, a trade union, and a peasant association.

SOBSI activists in particular. PKI, since 1926, had had very little experience of work in the rural areas, and it was natural that the drive was aimed at the towns, with which the cadres were familiar and where the possibilities of rapid success were greatest.¹ Reportedly one of the main objectives of the drive was to consolidate control over SOBSI by bringing a greater number of lower-level activists under Party direction.² That is, to ensure that if the government tried to curb SOBSI's activities, as it had in August 1951, it would have to arrest not merely a few national leaders, but would have to ferret out and arrest thousands of communists. As for the geographical spread of the Party, Aidit claimed that the first membership drive had extended PKI to Madura, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Maluku (Moluccas) and Nusatenggara,³ although the great majority of members remained in Java and, secondarily, Sumatra. The geographical spread of

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Feith states that before 1953 PKI had established itself in villages in many plantation and mining areas and in some other areas, but that PKI political activity was largely confined to the towns; Herbert Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, Ithaca, New York, 1957, p.29.

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Boyd R. Compton, Indonesian Communism: The Ranks Swell, American Universities' Field Staff Report, New York, 1954, p.8.

3

Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi, p.47.

the Party was illustrated by the establishment in October 1953 of a Party subsection in Lombok, Nusatenggara.¹

As the March 7 central committee resolution on the expansion of membership had emphasized, the campaign was to be accompanied by the implementation of a central committee resolution on the education of Party cadres and members. The latter resolution was not published, but Lukman, in September 1952, did write his comments on the work done to implement it.² He stated that the Party had only recently begun to effect the education of Party cadres and members in a wide and more organized manner; but, as according to the resolution, all Party organizations in the regions were obliged to organize courses for all Party members, arrange periodic discussions of theory, organize self-study, arrange lectures, organize public meetings and other efforts to propagandize Party policy, and arrange for regional publications by either the Party or other progressive groups. By such efforts it was hoped gradually to raise the theoretical and political level of all members, as well as gradually to increase the public's understanding of Party policy.

¹ HR, October 23, 1953.

² M.H. Lukman, "Tentang Agitasi dan Propaganda Partai" (Concerning Party Agitation and Propaganda), BM, September 1952, pp.62-3.

Such efforts, which Lukman recognized would be at first accompanied by all kinds of deficiencies, were expected in the long run to give birth to:

a number of course leaders, discussion leaders, lecturers, speakers in public meetings, writers for regional publications, etc., from the most progressive Party members. This means the creation of a Party propagandist and agitator group.

In order to improve the work of cadres, Lukman also recommended regular meetings of the propagandists and agitators to discuss experiences gained in carrying on their work, and pointed to the need for especially the cadres to master both Indonesian and the local language of the area in which they worked. Indonesian was necessary for writing letters and reports, giving news to the press, and writing articles and translations; mastery of the local language would enable the cadres to work far more efficiently among the masses, whose knowledge of Indonesian was often slight.

Little evidence remains as to the materials studied within the Party during 1952, although Aidit did mention that they included Mao Tse-tung's "On the Practice and Extermination of Liberalism in the Party" and Liu Shao-chi's "On the Mass Line".¹ In March 1953, Sudisman

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Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi, p.60.

reported that education courses had begun in an organized manner at all levels of the Party organization and that the section and subsection committees were giving lectures at least once a month on the history and policy of PKI, the task of building the workers' united front, the PKI agrarian programme, the policy of peace, people's democracy, the cultural struggle, the national united front, and the question of the national industrialists.¹ He also stated that within a period of six months all Party members had to study and understand seventeen specified communist works, including six written by Indonesians, five by Chinese, three by Russians, two by unidentified authors, and the Communist Manifesto.²

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Sudisman, "J.V. Stalin, Pentjipta dan Organisator Partai Komunis" (J.V. Stalin, Communist Party Creator and Organizer), BM, March 1953, p.111.

2

Ibid., p.110. The Indonesian works were the PKI constitution and agrarian programme, Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia (New Road for the Indonesian Republic), Kewadajiban Front Persatuan Buruh (The Duty of the Workers' United Front), Lahirnja PKI, and Aidit's Menempuh Djalan Rakjat. The Chinese works were Mao Tse-tung's New Democracy and People's Democratic Dictatorship, Liu Shao-chi's The Mass Line and Nationalism and Internationalism, and Kian Ling's The Method of Thought, Work, Criticism and Self-criticism. Stalin's The National Question and Dialectical and Historical Materialism and Leontiev's Introduction to Marxist Political Economy were the Russian works.

That not all went well with the plan for education within the Party was shown by a central committee statement in May 1953.¹ The central committee pointed out, for example, that the plan for Djakarta Raja was only 15 per cent achieved because of absenteeism among both members and cadres, and that higher cadres had made only 'fragmentary' study of theory, while the staff of the central committee commissariats and the members of the section committee daily councils 'often "forget" to study theory and to hold discussions concerning theory'. Lukman, in his article of September 1952, had predicted that many shortcomings would appear when the Party launched its first large-scale education campaign, but he had also stated that despite inevitable shortcomings a body of teachers and cadres would be formed which could, with the practice of criticism and self-criticism, teach others, expand their own knowledge, and thus gradually raise the quality of Party education.

In the sphere of publications, great though uneven strides were made between the opening of the membership drive and the fifth national congress in March 1954.

"Harian Rakjat" slowly increased its circulation from 2,000 in July 1951 to 12,500 in October 1953 and to

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PKI-B, May 1953, pp.78-81.

15,000 in February 1954.¹ "Bintang Merah" did not fare so well. It was republished in August 1952 and has continued as a monthly down to the present. From a peak of over 10,000 copies in the first half of 1951, when it was the only official Party periodical, it had declined to only 7,500 or 8,000 copies in May 1953.² During 1952 and 1953 "Bintang Merah" contained central committee comments on national and international affairs, articles on theory and practical work, and translations of works by foreign communists. In order to increase its circulation, and thereby its educational importance, the central committee agitation and propaganda secretariat early in 1953 ordered all Party functionaries to read "Bintang Merah" from cover to cover and to send in their criticisms every month.³

"PKI-Buletin" was published regularly, but in October 1952 its form was changed. For the first time it was printed, instead of mimeographed, and so became available in sufficient numbers for all lower Party committees to receive it. The translated editorial of "For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy!" became a regular feature added to its usual contents of official Party

¹ HR, October 31, 1953, and February 25, 1954.

² PKI-B, May 1953, p.79. ³ Ibid., p.80.

statements, occasional articles by Party leaders, and comments on methods of work within the Party. When the form was changed, the editors stated that the lower Party committees would still have to translate "PKI-Buletin" into the regional languages.¹

During 1952 few translations were yet available of works by foreign communists, but in 1953 translation and publication was greatly increased. By the end of 1953 at least forty, mostly booklet-size, works were available. Lenin, Stalin, Dimitrov, Kalinin, Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi were among those whose works were translated, and from the available evidence² it would appear that Mao Tse-tung and Lenin, in that order, were most frequently translated at that time. A report by an American observer suggests, however, that the large number of translated Chinese works was due not to the efforts of PKI but to the Chinese government which was shipping in large quantities of pamphlets and booklets translated into Indonesian.³

¹ PKI-B, October 10, 1952, page reference lost.

² The evidence consists of the notices appearing in Harian Rakjat of the literature available in the Party's bookshops.

³ Compton, Indonesian Communism, p.6.

A central committee note of January 18, 1953 expressed continued dissatisfaction with the circulation of Party publications and with the collection of funds for them.¹ The note complained that many Party committees were not doing a good job of circulating Party and other progressive publications, and as a remedy ordered all committees to appoint a Party member to be an agent for the publications. These agents were to supplement, not replace, the work of existing non-Party agents. The note also listed 30 Party committees which owed money to "Bintang Merah" and 36 with debts to "PKI-Buletin", and called upon them to pay their debts.

The preparations for the fifth national congress were converted into a massive campaign not only for the propaganda of Party policies and programmes among the general public, but also for educating Party members and candidate members. The congress materials, including the new draft constitution and programme, were drafted in the central committee plenum of early October 1953, and were then widely circulated and publicized. 150,000 copies of the draft programme were published, in Sundanese, Batak

¹ PKI-B, February 10, 1953, pp.18-19.

and Madurese as well as in Indonesian.¹ About 1,500 public meetings, attended by over 2 millions, were held to explain the draft programme to people outside the Party. Within the Party, in the four months prior to the congress, meetings were organized at all levels and conferences held between equal levels of the Party organization to discuss the draft constitution, programme, and the central committee general report.²

3. The Second Membership Drive

The PKI fifth national congress which met in March 1954, made two decisions of importance to the education and expansion of Party membership: it endorsed the campaign against 'Tan Ling Djie-ism', and it endorsed the plan for a second membership drive.

Although Tan Ling Djie was removed from his position on the central committee in October 1953, the campaign against the error of Tan Ling Djie-ism was developed on a large scale only in the period around the fifth national congress. The congress endorsed both the central committee resolution of October 1953 which condemned Tan Ling

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D.N. Aidit, "Kongres Nasional ke-V Partai Komunis Indonesia" (PKI's Fifth National Congress), in his Pilihan Tulisan, vol. I, p.280; FALP, January 22, 1954, p.6.

²

Aidit, Pilihan Tulisan, vol. I, p.281.

Djie's activities,¹ and the more important "Report on Tan Ling Djie-ism".² The campaign against Tan Ling Djie-ism was not used to expel Tan Ling Djie, for he was allowed to remain within the Party because he accepted the central committee's decisions and promised to correct all his errors.³ Nor was it used to purge his followers because, in the words of the "Report", he had received only the passive help of several centrists who later abandoned him when he was defeated in January 1951. No announcements were ever made of anyone else being accused of Tan Ling Djie-ism. It is probable that the campaign, which was carried out intensively throughout the Party, had an educational purpose, that is, to increase the cadres' and members' knowledge and understanding of the basic organizational, ideological and political content of the Aidit leadership's national united front policy. In other words the campaign was a useful framework within which to undertake the political education of old and new members.

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"Resolusi Terhadap Kawan Tan Ling Djie" in PKI, Putusan-Putusan, pp.4-5.

2

"Referat Tentang Tan Ling Djie-isme" (Report on Tan Ling Djie-ism), HR, March 19, 1954.

3

Loc.cit.

The "Report on Tan Ling Djie-ism" analyzed the error in detail. In the field of organization, Tan Ling Djie-ism was condemned as basically liquidationist. It advocated the creation of a working class party other than PKI, which was 'tailism' because the working class already had sufficient political consciousness to support an openly communist party. In the sphere of policy, Tan Ling Djie-ism was described as 'legalistic', as 'nothing other than bourgeois liberalism', because it wished to tone down the Party programme, to divert the members too much from the class struggle, to place excessive emphasis on the parliamentary struggle. This error in policy, declared the "Report", had its roots in a grave under-estimation of the strength of the masses and a gross exaggeration of the strength of the reactionaries. But it was in the realm of ideology that Tan Ling Djie-ism received most bitter condemnation.

'Tan Ling Djie-ism in the ideological field has its source in subjectivism', which resulted in dogmatism and empiricism. It was dogmatist because it attempted to imitate uncritically overseas experience without taking into consideration the conditions in Indonesia. It was empiricist because it considered unimportant the work of raising the theoretical knowledge of Party members.

As the result of the two subjectivist ideologies, dogmatism and empiricism, our Party was tossed about between two diseases. Subjectivism caused our Party to be unable to take a correct attitude, that is, an objective, truly scientific attitude. In one situation our Party committed errors by pursuing a rightist policy, reformist policy, following behind the masses who were already more progressive. But in another situation our Party committed 'left' errors, pursuing adventurism, going far ahead of the masses who were still trailing behind. Therefore the history of our Party after Tan Ling Djie-ism gained control was the history of right and 'left' errors at the same time, the history of capitulationism and adventurism together.

Besides endorsing the campaign against Tan Ling Djie-ism, the fifth national congress also endorsed a one-year plan for the second membership drive.¹ At the time of congress, membership was 165,206, of whom 49,042 were full members and 116,164 candidate members.² The goal of the second membership drive was not published. Aidit, however,

¹ PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, p.77.

² Aidit, "Some Results", FALP, October 15, 1954, p.3. A candidate member is one who has not yet completed the period of candidacy (of from six months to two years, depending on the candidate member's social and political background) which is demanded of all prospective Party members. A candidate member has the duties and rights of a full member, except that he may not vote in Party meetings, nor may he be elected to Party offices. The period of candidacy is used 'to give basic Party education to the candidate member and also to ensure supervision by Party organizations of his political quality.' PKI, Konstitusi Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI's Constitution), (third edition), Djakarta, 1956, pp.29-30.

wrote on May 23, 1954 that in view of the Party programme, the current tactical and organizational lines and cadre activity, 'it will not be simply luck if PKI at the end of this year is a Party with a million members and candidate members', not just registered but organized and receiving political education.¹

The second membership campaign did not achieve as rapid a growth as Aidit had hoped. Probably the figure of one million by the end of 1954 was unrealistic given the number of cadres and members and the still limited geographical spread of the Party organization in March 1954. It seems that the Party leaders had allowed themselves to become over-optimistic as a result of the ease with which the first membership campaign had been completed. At the end of October 1954 Aidit claimed a total of half a million members and candidate members, and in February 1956 one million.² Membership figures were not published between these two dates, but available evidence suggests that the greatest growth occurred before August 1955. Feith, in his monograph on the 1955

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Aidit, "Perkuat Persatuan Nasional dan Perkuat Partai!" (Strengthen National Unity and Strengthen the Party), in his Pilihan Tulisan, vol. I, p.297.

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FALP, November 19, 1954, p.2; BM, February-March 1956, p.112.

elections, mentioned the rapid extension of Party membership prior to the September elections,¹ while Aidit, in his report to the central committee plenum on August 7, 1955, referred to the success already achieved in the campaign to extend the Party's organization and membership.²

During the second membership drive, the PKI organization was spread, although thinly, over most of Indonesia. This was shown by the results of the parliamentary elections of September 1955. PKI received votes in all of the fifteen electoral districts, and more than 5 per cent of the total votes cast in nine of them: the four districts in Java, the three districts in Sumatra, and East Kalimantan and West Nusatenggara.³ But, presumably reflecting the strength of its organization in the different regions, PKI received 37.2 per cent of its votes in East Java, 37.7 per cent in Central Java, 13.8 per cent in West Java, including Djakarta Raja, and only 11.3 per cent outside Java where the only two sizeable communist

¹ Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, p.24.

² D.N. Aidit, Untuk Kemenangan Front Nasional dalam Pemilihan Umum (For the Victory of the National Front in the General Elections), Djakarta, 1955, p.25.

³ A. van Marle, "The First Indonesian Parliamentary Elections", Indonesie, 1956, vol. IX, p.262.

votes were in North Sumatra (12.2 per cent of the total votes cast) and South Sumatra (12.1 per cent).

Most of the PKI votes in the September 1955 elections came from the rural areas, and it is important to note that the second membership drive had been aimed especially at the peasants. Until July 1953 Party work among the peasants had been negligible except in the estate areas, where SOBSI unions were strong. In that month Aidit wrote a major article which was used as the basis of the Party's agrarian programme (endorsed by the fifth congress), and which marked the beginning of increasingly intensive work in the villages by the Party and the communist-led peasant organizations.¹ In November 1954 Aidit claimed that 'an extremely important factor' in the expansion of the Party's organization and membership was the improvement in the work among the peasants.² A year later he re-emphasized the urgency of extending Party membership in the villages.³

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D.N. Aidit, "Haridepan Gerakan Tani Indonesia" (The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement), BM, July 1953, pp.332-40.

2

D.N. Aidit, "For Broad Unity of All National Forces in Indonesia", FALP, December 31, 1954, p.4.

3

D.N. Aidit, Pertahankan Republik Proklamasi 1945! (Defend the 1945 Proclamation Republic!), Djakarta, 1955, p.29.

Thus, by the second membership drive PKI not only grew numerically and extended geographically, but it also widened the social basis of its membership. Whereas before the second drive the Party's membership had consisted largely of urban petty bourgeois and workers, the peasants became the largest group, a position they still maintain. The rapid expansion of membership prior to the 1955 elections had been necessary in order to mobilize the votes needed to ensure PKI a more important role in national politics, which were then revolving largely round parliament.

The rapid rise in Party membership again posed the problem of how to maintain the ideological purity of the Party. As Aidit told the central committee in November 1954:

It is wrong if we think that bourgeois ideology and bourgeois influence is only outside the Party, especially as many new people have entered our Party bringing with them bourgeois and feudal ideological vestiges and habits ... Besides, the enemies of the Party certainly try to enter our Party in order to break the Party's organization from within and to weaken the ideology of the Party members.¹

Because of this situation, Aidit declared, it was necessary to intensify the vigilance of members and cadres,

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D.N. Aidit, Untuk Persatuan jang Lebih Luas dari Semua Kekuatan Nasional di Indonesia (For the Broader Unity of all National Forces in Indonesia), Djakarta, 1955, pp.31-2.

and ideological work within the Party. Every new member had to be given an understanding of the structure of the Party organization, of the limitless strength of the people, of the Party's leadership role, and of the importance of the national united front. Every political view expressed by the central committee or the province committees or the Party congress had to become material with which to educate the members politically.

In the same speech, Aidit also devoted special attention to the need for the proper education of cadres some of whom, he declared, still did not understand either the essential character of the worker-peasant alliance or the agrarian relations in the villages. As a remedy for the cadre shortcomings, cadre courses had to be extended to Party committees at all levels, and at the same time made more systematic and practical. Furthermore, the cadres from the level of section committee upwards were expected to accustom themselves to reading and discussing the classical writings of Marxism-Leninism. Aidit said that in July and August 1954 a beneficial campaign had been organized for the study by cadres of Lenin's "Leftwing Communism, an Infantile Disorder", although several provinces still had not seriously implemented the campaign.

Despite the insistence by the central Party leadership in the second half of 1955 that the cadres and members should be given a systematic political education,¹ several factors prevented the implementation of this task. In the first place, the Party was obliged to concentrate all its resources on the campaign for the September 1955 parliamentary and the December 1955 Constituent Assembly general elections.² In the second place, the cadres' low level of general education proved a serious obstacle to their understanding of Marxist-Leninist texts, and the Party was obliged to institute general knowledge courses, ranging from the eradication of illiteracy to geography, history and languages, before it could proceed with courses in Marxism-Leninism.³

Njoto, speaking to the central committee plenum on August 1, 1956, summarized the educational work actually performed by the PKI since it had become a mass party

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See, for example, Aidit, Untuk Kemenangan, pp.27-8; Pertahankan, pp.28-9; and M.H. Lukman, "Tugas Partai Sesudah Pemilihan Umum" (The Party's Task After the General Elections), BM, November-December 1955, pp.379-81.

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Njoto, "Masaalah Pendidikan didalam Partai" (The Question of Education in the Party), in D.N. Aidit, Bersatu untuk Menjelesaikan Tuntutan-Tuntutan Revolusi Agustus 1945 (Unite to Complete the Demands of the August 1945 Revolution), Djakarta, 1956, p.64.

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Lukman, "Tugas Partai", BM, November-December 1955, p.380.

with over half a million members.¹ He said that the Party had as yet been unable to establish a centralized system of political education, but that on several occasions the central leadership had issued instructions to the lower Party organizations that:

a. all members and candidate members should be given a thorough understanding of the Party constitution and programme, and that they also should follow and understand all central committee and politbureau statements;

b. Party cadres should study classical works of Marxism-Leninism such as Lenin's "Leftwing Communism, an Infantile Disorder" and the "History of the CPSU(B)". Furthermore, Party committees from the provincial level downwards had already begun to organize various kinds of courses which used central committee instructions and guides, and had made their own experiments in methods of teaching. But in the period of the second membership drive, education was concerned primarily with cadres. Njoto explained that this was necessary 'because they are the backbone in carrying out the Party's tasks', and because without prior cadre education it would not be possible to educate the rest of the Party or have unity

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Njoto, "Masaalah Pendidikan", in Aidit, Bersatu untuk, pp.64-75.

of ideology, policy and organization in the Party. In short, the rapid expansion of Party membership had created a grave shortage of cadres. As the Party was not yet in a position to provide thorough political education for all members, its educational work was concentrated primarily on the creation of an informed and ideologically attuned cadre force.

Party publishing also made considerable strides between March 1954 and August 1956. "Harian Rakjat" increased in circulation from 15,000 in February 1954 to 23,000 in January 1955 and to 55,000 in January 1956.¹ At the last date its circulation compared with 48,000 for the socialist newspaper "Pedoman", 40,000 for PNI's "Suluh Indonesia", 38,000 for the independent but pro-PNI "Merdeka", and 34,000 for Masjumi's "Abadi".² A three month campaign to extend sales was launched in January 1956, but succeeded in increasing circulation by only 3,000.³ "Bintang Merah", from a low of 7,500-8,000 copies at the end of 1952, increased its circulation to 20,000 in the second half of 1954 and to 25,000 at the

¹ HR, February 25, 1954; January 26, 1955; and January 21, 1956.

² HR, January 21, 1956.

³ HR, March 23, 1956.

end of 1955.¹ At the end of 1953 "PKI-Buletin" became a monthly, whereas previously it had appeared every two or three weeks. On January 1, 1955 its name was changed to "Kehidupan Partai" (Party Life), with the intention that henceforth it would provide a place for short articles by regional and local cadres on their experiences, as well as for important Party statements and some articles translated from foreign communist sources.

A surprising new Party monthly appeared in the middle of 1954 - an English language "Monthly Review" providing news of PKI and also of the major political developments in Indonesia. At first "Monthly Review" was mimeographed, but from January 1957 was printed, illustrated, and well-produced under the title "Review of Indonesia". The purpose of the review is uncertain. Its editor told me simply that it is intended for comrades and friends abroad. One can only surmise that its appearance reflected the growing prestige of the PKI in the international communist world, and that it was intended firstly to keep the foreign communist parties informed, in a language they understand, of national and Party events in

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BM, January 1955, inside front cover; Njoto, "10 Tahun Bintang Merah" (10 Years of Bintang Merah), BM, November-December 1955, p.371.

Indonesia, and secondly, perhaps, to serve as comparative material especially for such as the Indian Communist Party.

By the beginning of November 1954 PKI had issued, besides translations from foreign communist literature, 150,000 copies of the Party programme, 100,000 copies of its constitution, and 250,000 copies of its election manifesto.¹ 150,000 copies of the election programme were printed in Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, and Indonesian in Arabic script. At the end of 1955, the PKI publishing company, Jajasan Pembaruan, reported that during the year it had published 30 different books and pamphlets in a total of 1,136,000 copies.² Of this number, the translations from foreign sources appear to have been predominantly from Chinese authors, with some also from Lenin and Stalin.

The educational importance is clear of the increasing circulation of "Harian Rakjat" and the Party periodicals, and of Marxist-Leninist classics translated into Indonesian.

¹ HR, November 4, 1954. In 1955 the PKI Central Java province committee published the Party constitution, including the Party's general programme, in Javanese. Perhaps other province committees published it in other regional languages.

² HR, December 31, 1955.

At the same time, the 1955 election campaigns also provided valuable education: for ordinary members and candidate members through the availability and study of the Party constitution, programme and election manifesto; for all, but especially cadres, through the practical work of winning and mobilizing millions of electors.

As the Party membership swelled rapidly during the second membership drive, a new organizational form had to be found that could permit the control, education and activation of the ordinary members and candidate members. The old branches were swamped by large numbers of new members and could no longer perform this function. It was therefore decided to organize all members into groups of at the most seven persons.

The group was incorporated into the March 1954 constitution,¹ but intensive work to bring all members into groups was started only at the beginning of 1955 when Aidit wrote an important article on the subject.² The purpose of the groups was fourfold:

1. to eradicate illiteracy among members by organizing anti-illiteracy courses or obliging members to attend government courses;

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PKI, Konstitusi, 1954, (third edition), pp.56-7.

2

D.N. Aidit, "Mengaktifkan Grup Partai" (To Activate the Party Group), in his Pilihan Tulisan, vol.I, pp.361-6.

2. to organize their members to report on the conditions, thoughts and activities of the people with whom they lived and worked, and send these reports to the branch committees, which in turn sent them to the higher committees;

3. once a group had been established some months and was already holding periodic meetings, it was to begin the basic political education of its members by discussions on Party organization, the responsibilities of members, the Party programme, the unlimited strength of the people, and the importance of the national united front;

4. to collect membership fees.

At the beginning of 1955 the PKI began to establish special groups for women.¹ This was deemed necessary in face of the traditional bashfulness and self-effacement of Indonesian women.

4. The First 3-Year Plan of Organization and Education

The central committee plenum which met from July 31 to August 3, 1956 drew up a three-year plan for organization and education which went into operation on August

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M.H. Lukman, "Bagaimana Mentjiptakan Kader Wanita" (How to Form Women Cadres), KP, January 1, 1955, pp.5-6.

17, 1956. The actual plan was not made public, but its outline as well as its results may be gathered from a number of PKI sources.¹

From the available sources, the organizational objectives of the plan were:

1. to extend membership by 50 per cent from one million to one and a half millions;
2. to spread membership and organization more evenly throughout Indonesia;
3. to open new Party offices and improve the organization of all offices, to activate the various committees' bureaux, and increase the number and improve the distribution of full-time cadres;
4. to organize every member into a group, with women in special groups, and to make the groups active;

¹ Aidit, "Fase Baru", BM, March-April 1958, pp.149-52; "Ideological Work", World Marxist Review, July 1959, pp.24-5; Untuk Demokrasi dan Kabinet Gotong Rojong (For Democracy and a Mutual Cooperation Cabinet), Djakarta, 1959, pp.131-3; "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan untuk Melaksanakan Konsepsi Presiden Soekarno 100%!" (Change the Balance of Power in Order to Implement President Sukarno's Concept 100%), HR, July 5, 1957; also Amir Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, mimeographed translation, Djakarta, 1959, pp.2-5; and PKI, Bahan-Bahan, pp.55-6; Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum CC PKI kepada Kongres Nasional ke-VI (Resolution Concerning the PKI Central Committee's General Report to the Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1959, pp.69-70, 77-80; PKI 40 Tahun, pp.88-90.

5. to promote all candidate members to full membership after they had completed their supervised period of candidacy; and

6. to increase the payment of membership fees and donations, and to ensure that they be forwarded in stipulated percentages to the higher committees.

The education objectives were:

1. to eradicate illiteracy within the Party;
2. to organize Party schools and courses;
3. to organize seminars at the central committee and provincial committee levels on such matters as economic problems, and also to organize conferences in theory;
4. to extend Party publishing and to increase distribution of the publications, with an emphasis on increasing the circulation of "Harian Rakjat";
5. to establish libraries in committee offices; and
6. to establish educational institutions for non-Party progressives, especially to create a people's university.

Quotas were set for each committee, and special plan bureaux were created in the central committee and the provincial committees.

Although not all the plan's objectives were realized, important gains were made: Party membership was increased, organizational work advanced, and educational activity systematized.

Membership had reached the goal of one and a half millions by the beginning of 1959,¹ at which figure it remained until the sixth national congress held from September 7-14, 1959. Peasants had still constituted less than half the total membership in March 1954, but by December 1958 they had become the majority group.² The proportion of peasants in the membership was still growing at the time of the sixth congress, while that of workers remained the same, despite the fact that their number was increasing.³ The promotion of candidate members to full membership was accelerated until by September 1959 about 50 per cent, or 750,000, of the total members were full members, compared with only 30 per cent, or 49,042, at the time of the fifth congress in March 1954.⁴ Thus between the two congresses the number of full members had increased fifteen-fold. Aidit, however, still complained that the percentage of candidate members was still too high due to the tardiness of some

¹ Aidit, "Ideological Work", World Marxist Review, July 1959, p.24.

² PKI, Bahan-Bahan, p.53.

³ PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum, p.66.

⁴ D.N. Aidit, "The Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of Indonesia", RI, November-December 1959, p.45.

committees to promote them, and to the insecurity in the rebel areas which prevented the smooth operation of the Party there.¹

A significant result of the plan was the large increase in the number and percentage of women members. The Party instruction of January 1955 to increase the number of women members and to organize them into special groups was at first implemented slowly owing to the shyness of Indonesian women, but also because many male committee members refused to see any value in women as Party members.² In February 1957 guidance was published on how to attract women from the different social strata; during 1957 several provincial committees held conferences on how to attract and activate women members; and not only special groups but also special political schools and courses were organized so as to permit the more rapid political development of women members.³ In September

¹ Loc.cit.

² Suharti Suwanto, "Mendjelang Konferensi Nasional Wanita Komunis" (Awaiting the National Conference of Communist Women), BM, September 1957, p.343.

³ Setiati Surasto, "Memperluas Keanggotaan Partai dikalangan Wanita" (To Extend Party Membership among Women), KP, February 1957, pp.19-21; Suharti Suwanto, "Mendjelang", BM, September 1957, p.342; Ibrahim, "Sedikit Pengalaman tentang Menjelenggarakan KPS Wanita" (A Little Experience in Organizing a Section-level Women's Political Course), KP, December 1958, pp.242-4.

1957 the number of women members had been 100,000, with the percentage of women members ranging from 6 to 17 per cent in Java and lower in the outer islands.¹ As late as May 1958 the number of women members was still given as 100,000, but a PKI national conference to discuss Party work among women and held at the end of that month² heralded a rapid increase. By December 1958 there were 150,000 women members, and 258,000 at the time of the sixth congress.³ At the time of the national conference of May 1958 there were already five women sitting in parliament, six in the Constituent Assembly, and 180 in regional and local councils, who had been elected on the PKI ticket.

As for the geographical spread of the Party during the period of the plan, the chairman of the central planning bureau, Amir Anwar Sanusi, told the sixth congress that 'the activities of the Party are now evenly spread over all parts of the country'.⁴ He backed the

¹ Suharti Suwanto, "Mendjelang", BM, September 1957, pp.343-4.

² For the main documents of the conference, see BM, June 1958, pp.241-85.

³ PKI, Bahan-Bahan, p.54; Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, p.3.

⁴ Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, loc.cit. This report contains most of the published statistics on the results of the plan.

statement by claims of membership increases of 38 per cent in West Sumatra and 40 per cent in North Sulawesi, despite atrocities committed on Party members by rebels in these areas, and of 63.5 per cent in Kalimantan.

In Java, the increase had been 36 per cent, with the lowest, 31 per cent, in East Java. As for the growth of the Party organization, Anwar Sanusi reported that in Kalimantan the number of subsections had increased by 45 per cent, while in Java the number of branches had risen 250 per cent, and of subsections 42 per cent.

At the end of the plan, within Java only 1.3 per cent of the 1,449 ketjamatans (the level at which the subsection is established) and 15.8 per cent of the 21,047 villages (the level at which the branch is established) were without a Party organization.

In order to cope with the increase in membership and organization, the number of full-time functionaries in the provincial and island committees was almost doubled. The number of full-timers in the sections (established for each kabupaten, for medium-sized towns and for areas of large cities) increased 400 per cent and in the subsections 300 per cent. The number of committee members at all levels was increased seven-fold. From these statistics it appears that during the plan PKI increased its cadre force even more rapidly than membership. At

the same time, the equipment of the Party offices was increased. For example, the number of typewriters in the provincial committee and section committee offices was increased by 600 per cent.

Although a rapid increase in membership was effected, great care was still taken to prevent the entry of undesirable elements into the Party. This is illustrated by an article published in "Kehidupan Partai" in May 1958, which detailed the method used in bringing a new person into the Party.¹ Four stages were listed: preparation, watching over the recruit, caution, and investigation. The basic targets were those who had voted communist in the last elections. First, for 'rather a long time', the cadres would note the potential recruit's name, age, residence, social origins, education, work, etc., questioning his friends and acquaintances to obtain the information. Then began the second stage, that of educating him to live selflessly and to be progressive in his political outlook and method of thinking. To encourage him in such ways, Party workers would pay periodic visits to his house in order to explain Party

¹ Parjono, "Tjara Mempersiapkan Peluasan Anggota untuk Memperkuat Partai" (The Method of Preparing the Extension of Membership in Order to Strengthen the Party), KP, May 1958, pp.56-9.

policy and convince him of the correctness of the Party's political position; they would provide him with progressive reading materials (at least "Harian Rakjat" every day); invite him to art evenings, receptions or lectures organized by the Party and other progressive organizations; invite him to public meetings and demonstrations; encourage him to take part in delegations to press both social-economic and political demands; and, if necessary, give him the responsibility of leading small actions. The aim of the second phase was to develop the recruit's political and organizational awareness so that he voluntarily requested to join the Party.

But, at that stage, caution was required. A close check would be made of his friends and associates to see whether they were reactionary or progressive. If they were reactionary, the cadres had to convince him of the criminal nature of the reactionaries' actions. Finally, if the recruit passed through the first three stages successfully, there was the period of investigation. A thorough check would be made of the records of the preceding stages, especially of his assistance in implementing Party policy, his diligence in reading Party literature and his loyalty to the people's everyday demands. If he passed this check he was accepted into

the Party. At the end of the article the author warned committee members not to use the guide in order to keep the entry of new members to a minimum, not to practice 'closed-doorism'; that is, the cadres had to use great care with potential members, but not to the extent of impeding the growth of the Party. Although it was not mentioned in the article, the careful supervision of those who entered PKI was continued during the period of candidate membership when any undesirable elements that had evaded earlier detection could be weeded out.¹

Little information has been published on the success achieved in pursuing the last objective of the organizational section of the first three-year plan, to increase the entry of membership fees and donations and to ensure that they were forwarded in stipulated percentages to the higher committees. From the little evidence available, it appears that by the end of the plan PKI was still unable to solve either the problem of collecting a large percentage of membership fees or of ensuring that the

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Under the provisions of the April 1951, March 1954 and September 1959 Party constitutions, anyone wishing to enter PKI had to spend from six months to two years as a candidate, depending on their social origin and previous political activity. Even after the period of candidacy their promotion to full membership required sponsorship by long-standing Party members and the endorsement of higher committees.

lower committees forwarded the stipulated percentages of income to the higher committees.¹

PKI educational work also expanded considerably during the plan. In fact, the sixth national congress claimed that 'in general, the quotas achieved in the field of education are much better than that in the field of organization'.²

The work to eradicate illiteracy within the Party has not been discussed publicly. In mid-1957, at a time when the number of illiterates in the Party was 'not small',³ the agitation and propaganda section of the central committee issued two booklets for use in the eradication of illiteracy both within and outside the Party.⁴ The organization of members into groups must have facilitated anti-illiteracy work, but in 1960 committee members complained to me of the continued existence of illiteracy among not only ordinary members but functionaries as high as the section and subsection levels.

¹ This evidence is discussed below in the section dealing with communist funds in Indonesia, pp.216-9.

² PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum, p.79.

³ Aidit, "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan", HR, July 5, 1957.

⁴ Loc.cit.

Under the three-year plan a system of political schools and courses was established through all levels of the Party organization from the central committee to the branches. The central committee ordered that all schools and courses teach four subjects whenever the educational level of the participant would permit.¹ The four subjects were: the history of society, which was designed to acquaint students with the Marxist-Leninist view of society and the laws of social development; the basic problems of the Indonesian revolution, which was directed towards creating unanimity of thought on the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian revolution; the problems of the national united front, aimed to secure unanimity in the PKI's implementation of this policy in the Indonesian situation; and the building of the Party, which showed the importance of the Leninist-type party and of the active participation of all communists in its development. Texts have been published for each subject adapted to the different levels of education and political awareness of the students.

Each 'shift' of the central school, organized by the central committee, lasted full-time for one month. It

¹

Audit, "Ideological Work", World Marxist Review, July 1959, pp.24-5.

included two extra subjects: dialectical and historical materialism, which was also taught by some provincial-level schools, and the international working class movement. The duration of each 'shift' in the provincial, section and subsection schools has not been published, but information is available about a provincial-level school for women cadres held in Makasar.¹ In order to avoid the women students' staying in a hostel, which was the normal practice for male students, the school was held for three hours, three days a week for five weeks - or for 45 hours in all. The time was spent in lectures, discussion groups and discussion classes; self-study at home was required; and the course ended with an examination. From Surabaya there is information about the duration of branch schools.² As the Party leaders had determined that a branch political school should be completed within seven days, the students met for two hours on each of the seven days, making a total of fourteen hours of classwork.

At the lowest level the Party faced great difficulties in giving political education because the students in the

¹ Ibrahim, "Sedikit Pengalaman", KP, December 1958, pp.242-4.

² Wahjoedi, "Pengalaman Mengadjar dalam Sekolah Politik" (Experience in Teaching in Political Schools), KP, December 1958, p.241.

branch schools were people:

whose general knowledge is still low, a large part of them are illiterate, while those who are not illiterate still have a very limited desire to read.¹

Not all branch schools covered the four subjects stipulated by the central committee. One in Surabaya, for example, met for 2½ hours on six successive nights but taught only the history of the development of society; the people who attended were heads of groups.²

Absenteeism was also a problem in the schools and courses. Where the students stayed in a hostel for the period of the school, which occurred on at least the central and provincial levels, absenteeism was not significant. But in the lower levels absenteeism occurred for a number of causes: students had to work overtime, or were too tired or too lazy or lost interest. An added cause was the wet season. Leaders of all communist-led mass organizations complained to me of the fall in attendance when the roads were quagmires and the students had no rainclothes and could not afford to come by transport. The Madiun section committee reported

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Ibid., pp.240-1.

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Achmad Sjafii, "Pengalaman Sekolah Politik" (Experiences with a Political School), KP, August 1958, pp.148-9.

that during rain attendance at the political school fell by 30 per cent.¹

Less than a year after the plan went into effect, Aidit told the central committee plenum of July 4, 1957 that 'In general there is already rather enough attention to education for high and middle Party cadres'.² After this speech, the emphasis of Party education was shifted to the lower cadres and activists, the committee members in the subsections and branches and the leaders of groups. By the time of the sixth congress over 270,000 cadres and activists had graduated from the Party schools or completed a Party course.³ They 'form the Party's backbone, which can never be broken'. According to Aidit, the 270,000 comprised 'the majority of cadres from the centre to the basic committees'.⁴

Concerning the implementation of the plan for seminars and conferences, Aidit told the central committee plenum which met from March 31 to April 3 1958 that conferences in theory were not yet being held as desired,

¹ Simat, "Sekolah Politik dan Pengaruhnja" (Political Schools and Their Influence), KP, June 1958, p.81.

² Aidit, "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan", HR, July 5, 1957.

³ Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, p.4.

⁴ Aidit, "The Sixth National Congress", RI, November-December 1959, p.45.

but that the central committee and some provincial committees were already arranging seminars on specific topics. The seminars and special conferences arranged by the central committee during the period of the plan included a seminar on Party work among students, held at about the beginning of 1958, a national conference on Party work among women, held in May 1958,¹ a national seminar on economics, held in February 1959,² and a national conference on Party work among peasants and fishermen, held in April 1959.³ The provincial committees also arranged conferences and seminars which were probably devoted to the same topics as, and held in preparation for, the national meetings.

One of the principal goals of the seminars and conferences was to exchange experiences in the work of building the Party among the different sections of society. But for the high and middle cadres who took part, there was the danger that their work within the Party organization might result in their losing contact

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For the main documents of the Party conference on work among women, see BM, June 1958, pp.241-85.

2

For the main documents of the seminar on economics, see Ekonomi dan Masyarakat, no.2-3, 1959.

3

For the main documents of the Party conference on work among peasants and fishermen, see BM, April-May 1959, pp.121-222.

with the actual condition of the masses. To avoid this danger, the central committee organized a six-month 'go down' and 'three-togethers' campaign in preparation for the national conference on Party work among peasants and fishermen.¹ All Party committees from the central committee down instructed certain cadres to 'go down' to the villages to study at first hand agrarian relations and the living conditions of the peasants. While in the village, in order to better understand the peasants and win their support, the cadres had to practice the 'three-togethers': 'living together, eating together and working together with the peasants, especially with ... the poor peasants and agricultural labourers'.² The communist-led mass organizations followed the Party and organized 'go down' movements among their own cadres and activists. 'Going-down' has continued since the national conference on work among the peasants, and cadres have been sent into urban kampongs and fishing villages as well as into rural areas. The movement has a greater value than just educating cadres in the realities of the life of the

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B.O. Hutapea, "Some Lessons from the First National Peasants Conference of the CPI", RI, August 1959, p.33.

2

"Laporan Mengenai Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan kaum Tani" (Report on Party Work among the Peasants), BM, April-May 1959, p.138.

masses, for it has also provided the Party leadership with a store of social and economic data which permits the Party to formulate popular demands and slogans.

During the period of the first three-year plan, the Party cadres and activists were expected to do more for their political education than attend schools and courses, participate in seminars and conferences, and join in the 'go down' movement. They were also expected to study on their own, and guides to self-study were published in "Kehidupan Partai".¹ Anwar Sanusi reported in September 1959 that cadres at the provincial and section committee levels were studying on their own such classical Marxist-Leninist works as the "Communist Manifesto", Lenin's "Leftwing Communism, an Infantile Disorder", and his "Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution".² The cadres were also encouraged to read communist novels which had been translated into Indonesian, such as Gorki's "Mother", Julius Fucik's "Report from the Gallows", and Mihail Sholokov's "Impressions of a Soviet Soldier". Cadres were also expected to read "Harian Rakjat", the various Party

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Siswojo, "Beladjar-Sendiri" (Self-Study), KP, November 1956, pp.21-3; Jono, "Beladjar Sendiri", KP, May 1958, pp.65-7.

2

Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, p.4.

periodicals, pamphlets and booklets, and all Party documents that were circulated to their respective committees.

The schools, courses, seminars, conferences, 'go down' movement and self-study movement of the first three-year plan were concerned with the Party cadres and activists. The Party did not yet have the resources for a mass education campaign among the ordinary members. For the 1,200,000 or so members and candidate members who had not achieved the position of cadre or activist, basic political education continued to be received through the group. Instruction on the Party constitution and programme was continued, but apparently a special effort was made to organize study movements that would familiarize the ordinary members with the line of the moment taken by the central Party leadership.¹ Cadres from the subsection or even section, that is, those who had benefited most from the education campaign, went into the groups to explain decisions taken by the central committee plenums, and any important Party document which

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Rewang, "Memperbaiki Gerakan Mempeladjar Putusan-Putusan CC dikalangan Anggauta dan Tjalon-Anggauta" (To Improve the Movement among Members and Candidate Members to Study Central Committee Decisions), KP, May 1958, pp.60-2.

laid down the Party line at a given time, such as the politbureau's New Year messages. The meetings of ordinary members would then discuss how to implement the Party line in their own locality.

The fourth objective of the educational section of the plan was the extension of Party publishing and the distribution of Party literature, especially raising the circulation of "Harian Rakjat". Work towards this objective had mixed success.

The greatest failure, perhaps, in the whole plan was met in the attempt to increase the circulation of "Harian Rakjat". In March 1956, five months before the plan went into effect, the circulation of "Harian Rakjat" was 58,000. By February 1957 it had reached 60,000, compared with a total circulation of the 75 daily newspapers in Indonesian of 747,250.¹ Despite campaigns to increase circulation, in which even Aidit and other central committee members took part, and despite the great increase in the number of Party members, committee members and organizations, the circulation was still 60,000 four years later.² In December 1960, although "Harian Rakjat" maintained the largest circulation of any newspaper in

¹ HR, February 4, 1957.

² HR, December 31, 1960.

Indonesia, but there was only one copy for every 250 Party members.

All the periodicals from the period before the plan continued publication. "Bintang Merah" appeared regularly. "Kehidupan Partai" reappeared in October 1956. From May to December 1957 it appeared only twice because of technical printing difficulties and the lack of articles being sent in from the regions. During 1958 and 1959 it was published regularly. The English-language monthly "Review of Indonesia", initially mimeographed, was printed from January 1957 and appeared regularly.

Apart from the periodicals continued from the previous period, several new ones appeared during the three-year plan. The first was "PKI dan DPR" (PKI and Parliament) which began publication in June 1956. Its title was changed to "PKI dan Perwakilan" (PKI and the Representative Councils) after the 1957 local elections. This quarterly is intended to give news of PKI activities in parliament, the Constituent Assembly, and the local representative councils. In January 1957 appeared the first number of "Mimbar Komunis" (Communist Forum) which has the sub-title "Problems of Peace and Socialism". "Mimbar Komunis" contains translated articles and speeches by foreign communists, and seeks to familiarize the PKI

cadres with the experience of foreign communist parties. It was at first published every two months, but then became a monthly. Early in November 1957 PKI began to publish an English-language quarterly entitled "Marxist Science" which was aimed at the intelligentsia and scientists and contained news of the scientific advances in the Soviet bloc. It was soon changed to "Ilmu Marxis" (Marxist Science) in Indonesian. The most recent periodical is the quarterly "Ekonomi dan Masyarakat" (Economics and Society). This appeared in March 1959 and contains articles by both Indonesians and foreigners on economic, financial and social matters. All the new periodicals have been published regularly, but their high price must prohibit their purchase by any but Party committees and a few relatively wealthy Party members.¹

During 1956, the PKI published 700,000 copies of books, booklets and pamphlets² - a decrease compared

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In 1960, the price per copy of the PKI periodicals in Indonesian was about 3.50 rupiahs for Bintang Merah, one rupiah for Kehidupan Partai, six rupiahs for PKI dan Perwakilan, four rupiahs for Mimbar Komunis, seven rupiahs for Ilmu Marxis, and eight rupiahs for Ekonomi dan Masyarakat. The daily wage for an urban or estate worker was about ten to twenty rupiahs; for an agricultural labourer, 7.50 to fifteen.

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Njoto, "Soal Pendidikan dan kaum Inteligensia" (The Problem of Education and the Intellectuals), HR, July 5, 1957.

with 1955, but the 1955 figure had been bloated with the large printing of the new PKI constitution and the PKI programme and election manifesto used in the 1955 election campaigns. A target of one million copies was set for 1957, but there was no report of its having been achieved. In 1958, the communist publishing house issued 52 different books and pamphlets as well as over 50 issues of different periodicals.¹ By the end of that year there were available in Indonesian in booklet, pamphlet or article form many works of Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, as well as some by Liu Shao-chi, Ho Chi Minh, Marx and Engels, Dimitrov, Sharkey and lesser foreign communist figures. Communist fiction available in Indonesian included works by Gorki, Julius Fucik, and Ilya Ehrenburg. This wealth of translated material enabled the Party cadres to study many of the classical writings of Marxism-Leninism as well as much that has been written of the practical experiences of foreign communist parties, especially those of the USSR, China and Viet Nam.

Although translations from foreign communist sources constituted a majority of the titles published by the PKI, the great majority of total copies were of PKI

¹ HR, January 3, 1959.

materials: speeches and articles by the Party leaders, documents of central committee plenums, new printings of the Party constitution and programme, the materials for discussion in the sixth congress, course guides for Party schools and courses, and occasional important central committee statements, such as New Year messages. The largest publishing undertaking has been the two volumes of Aidit's selected works, covering the period from August 1951 to the sixth national congress in September 1959. The first volume, of 537 pages, appeared in mid-1959, but the second volume was delayed until May 1960.¹ These two volumes made readily available for study the most important articles and speeches on PKI in the period of the national united front.

The three-year plan also called for increased publishing activity by the Party's regional organizations. Several local Party periodicals appeared, including the twice-monthly "Suara Ibukota" (Voice of the Capital) published by the PKI in Djakarta Raja from the middle of March 1959, "Warta Sunda" (Sunda News) published in Bandung, "Suara Persatuan" (The Voice of Unity) published in Semarang, "Buletin PKI Djawa Timur" (East Java PKI

¹ Aidit, Pilihan Tulisan, vol.I, 537 p.; vol.II, Djakarta, 1960, 590 p.

Bulletin) published in Surabaya, and "Lombok Bangun" (Lombok Awakes) published in Mataram, Lombok. At the time of the 1957 and 1958 local elections in Java, South Sumatra, Riau and Kalimantan, election programmes were published in booklet form by the Party organizations in at least the five province-level regions of Java (that is, Djakarta Raja, West Java, Central Java, the special territory of Jogjakarta, and East Java), and also in some of the cities, such as Surabaya and Jogjakarta. The Party organizations at the kabupaten level also issued election programmes, but these were mostly mimeographed. A little work was done in publishing in the regional languages. In 1957, for example, there was mention of a work by Mao Tse-tung translated into Sundanese, and one by Stalin into Javanese.¹

Because in Indonesia wages for workers are low and the price of printed materials relatively very high, PKI faced the problem of how to make its publications available to the large number of cadres, members and sympathizers who could not afford to buy them. As a partial solution to the problem, the plan aimed to establish a library in every committee. To what extent

¹ N., "Buku-Buku Teori dalam Bahasa-Bahasa Daerah" (Books of Theory in Regional Languages), BM, January-February 1957, p.76.

the plan has been successful in this sphere has not been disclosed publicly, but the work has been taken seriously.¹ The value of the libraries was, however, limited by the illiteracy widespread among the ordinary members and lower cadres and by the 'very limited desire to read' among those who were literate.²

The final objective of the three-year plan in the field of education was the creation of educational institutions for non-Party progressives, especially the creation of a people's university. A committee to organize the Universitas Rakjat (UNRA, People's University) was established on September 19, 1958 on the initiative of PKI leaders and well-known fellow-travellers.³ Siswojo, a member of the PKI central committee, became its chairman.⁴ On October 31, a 21-person council of curators was formed and included Aidit, Sakirman and Njono, the chairman of SOBSI.⁵ Aidit was elected chairman of the council on January 17, 1959.⁶

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See, for example, Kisman, "Sedikit Pengalaman Mengusahakan Perpustakaan" (A Little Experience in Organizing a Library), KP, December 1958, pp.245-7.

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Wahjoedi, "Pengalaman Mengadjar", KP, December 1958, pp.240-1.

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HR, September 24, 1958.

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HR, September 22, 1958.

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HR, November 3, 1958.

6

HR, January 20, 1959.

When the UNRA committee was first established, it announced that the objective of the university was 'to develop scientific knowledge among the people'.¹ Aidit, however, revealed the true objective in an article in "World Marxist Review".² He wrote that UNRA was intended for those Party members and other progressives who were unable to attend the national or regional Party schools for lack of places or because their daily occupations did not afford them the opportunity. He further noted that:

The curriculum of the University is closely linked with the urgent tasks of the Party, namely the building of a national front and the Party. The education is aimed at eliminating ideological confusion, at deepening the understanding of present and future tasks.

UNRA courses opened in Djakarta and Jogjakarta in December 1958.³ Within a year there were branches in eight other towns: Kebajoran Baru, Bandung, Surakarta,

¹ HR, September 22, 1958.

² Aidit, "Ideological Work", World Marxist Review, July 1959, p.25.

³ Most of the following information was obtained from Siswojo, "Intensify the Anti-Imperialist Struggle on the Ideological Front", RI, September-October 1959, p.32; HR, September 28, 1959; and especially from interviews with H. Porkas, the national secretary of UNRA, Djaetun, the president of UNRA in Jogjakarta, and Sujitno, a member of the secretariat of the Surabaja UNRA.

Semarang, Surabaya, Malang, Palembang and Medan. Assistance in equipping UNRA was asked of foreign diplomatic representatives in Indonesia. They gave 'much assistance'. For example, the East German International Relations Bureau and the Indonesia-Soviet Friendship Association gave books and film projectors.

Students are admitted to UNRA if they have a junior high school level of education or the equivalent or if they are capable but have not had the opportunity to study. UNRA, in spite of its name, is not for the people. The fees are too high to permit workers or peasants to attend.¹ The UNRA leaders said in interview that their students consisted of lower civil servants, a few teachers, and cadres and activists from the trade unions, youth, women and other mass organizations. In at least some cases the mass organizations pay the fees for their members.

It is difficult to estimate the number of students in UNRA. In September 1959 the UNRA chairman claimed 2,816 enrolled students, but this figure has to be qualified, and the qualification throws some light on the difficulty faced by PKI in obtaining sustained activity

¹ In 1960 the entrance fee was fifty rupiahs; the monthly fee for each course was twenty to thirty rupiahs.

from its members. In Surabaya 600 students began the courses, but within a year only 300 were left; in Jogjakarta 350 started, but a year later only between 100 and 150 were left. Of the students who continued the courses 'very few indeed', according to the UNRA national secretary, attended every class. So many dropped out because they lost interest or because it was too much effort to attend or they found the fees too high. The reasons for absenteeism among those who continued were several: the wet season, many people had to work overtime or at two jobs and so had little time or inclination to attend night classes, and the cadres of the Party and the mass organizations were often sent out of town for days or weeks.

In May 1960, the permanent staff of UNRA included seven at the centre, and five in Surabaya. I did not find the numbers elsewhere. At the end of 1959 there were 250 UNRA teachers throughout Indonesia. They received no pay, only transport costs. The UNRA headquarters issues mimeographed monthly course guides, which the students must buy for two rupiahs each month. UNRA possessed no buildings of its own by the middle of 1960, and had to rent premises.

As of May 1960, UNRA offered five courses, each lasting two years. The one taken by the great majority

of students was political science which covered seven subjects: Marxist political science, the Indonesian independence movement, Indonesian society and economy, the history of Indonesia, constitutional law, geography, and the history of the world. Political science was taught in all UNRA branches. The second most important course was English, taught in eight branches, with an emphasis on translation from English to Indonesian, 'because many published materials arrive in English', and on conversation, 'because many foreign guests come to Indonesia'. Journalism was taught in two branches, its importance for PKI being obvious.¹ In the art course, which is taught in two branches, UNRA endeavoured to teach the students to see society and to portray a situation from it. The national secretary pointed out that pictures and caricatures are very important in Indonesia where a high percentage of the population is illiterate. Indonesian language and literature were taught in Djakarta.

One day before the first three-year plan ended on August 17, 1959, the central committee established two

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The editor of a Surabaya newspaper told me of the example of the local newspaper Trompet Masyarakat which was led by a non-communist but which frequently carried pro-communist material because its journalists were communists.

new educational institutions in Djakarta.¹ A campaign to raise funds for a central committee house of culture was opened in August 1956, and raised 4 million rupiahs. The house was finally opened on August 16, 1959 with Njoto as chairman of the supervizing committee. At the same time, Aidit proclaimed the establishment of the Aliarcham academy of social sciences, which was to teach Marxism-Leninism and also to study the social sciences from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint.

The preparations for the sixth national congress were used as a stimulus to the completion of the three-year plan, and a means of heightening Party activity in general and strengthening the ties of the Party with the masses.

On January 5, 1959, the politbureau called for a nation-wide competition in four fields: services to the people, promotion of the people's culture, education work within the Party, and the expansion of the Party organization.² In the congress, the banners for the best work were won by West Java in the fields of education and service to the people, Central Java in the promotion of

¹ RI, September-October 1959, p.33.

² RI, February 1959, p.6.

the people's culture, and South Kalimantan in the field of Party organization.¹

The most spectacular activity in the preparation for the sixth congress was the formation of voluntary work brigades of Party members. These served a triple purpose: to raise the work enthusiasm of ordinary members and candidate members, to bring the cadres into closer contact with the people, and to increase the people's support for the Party. The incomplete list of work done by the brigades included the repair or construction of 3,249 kilometres of roads, 985 kilometres of drains, 2,280 houses, 80 school buildings, 5,119 public lavatories, 3,133 public bathing places, and 1,477 bridges; the construction of 139 dams; the establishment of 351 anti-illiteracy centres; and the killing of 186,698 field mice.²

But probably the most important result for the Party of the congress preparations was the intensive discussion

¹ PKI, Dokumen-Dokumen, p.221. West Java won second place in the promotion of the people's culture, and third place in Party organization; Central Java won second place in Party organization and third in education; East Java won second place in education, third place in both service to the people and the promotion of the people's culture; and North Sumatra won second place in service to the people.

² Aidit, "The Sixth National Congress", RI, November-December 1959, p.40.

in all levels of the Party of the draft constitution, draft programme, and draft central committee general report which had been published in December 1958.¹

After 1956 the former heated attacks on the ideological deviations and the heinous 'isms' that could arise during the implementation of the national united front gave way to far more gentle reminders that these dangers still existed. The draft of the central committee report to be presented to the sixth congress, which was published in December 1958, reiterated the need to wage ceaseless war against subjectivism. But although the report as finally presented to the congress retained an outline of methods for combatting subjectivism, it dropped the sentence which had stated that 'subjectivism still exists up to the present'. That the Aidit leadership considered ideological deviation to have become a minor problem was shown markedly in Aidit's speech in May 1959, "Building the Organization is Important, but Building Ideology is Even More Important."²

¹ M.H. Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI (Concerning PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1959, pp.54-5; Njoto, Tentang Program PKI (Concerning PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1959, pp.8-9.

² D.N. Aidit, "Building the Organization is Important, but Building Ideology is Even More Important", RI supplement, June-July 1959, 8 p.

Instead of attacking a long list of deviations and errors, Aidit merely stressed the need to study the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism in order to avoid the errors caused by bourgeois ways of thinking.

When the second break occurred between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the PKI leaders dutifully warned against 'modern revisionism'. Its manifestations, the PKI leaders declared, were self-satisfaction, chauvinism, and slanders against the socialist peace camp, the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party.¹ But although Aidit told the sixth congress of the continuing danger of modern revisionism,² he boasted in February 1960 to the world communist parties that 'the Tito brand of revisionism has not found the slightest response in the Communist Party of Indonesia.'³

In order to explain why, during the first three-year plan, the Aidit leadership ceased its violent attacks on errors of ideology and methods of work, it is necessary to note the changes that had taken place within the Party. In brief, before 1956, and especially in the first years

¹ PKI, Bahan-Bahan, pp.68-9.

² Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi, pp.156-7.

³ D.N. Aidit, "For National Unity", World Marxist Review, February 1960, p.26.

after January 1951, the Aidit leadership used strident campaigns in order to justify the removal of the 'old' leaders, and to frighten any of their real or supposed followers into acquiescence to the new policies.

Furthermore, the new Party leadership had neither the material nor human resources to conduct a large-scale educational campaign within the Party, and made the attacks on the various erroneous 'isms' in order to pinpoint those errors which, after a reading of the history of the PKI and foreign communist parties, were deemed most likely to occur during a period of the national united front.

By the time the three-year plan was put into operation, the need for strident anti-error campaigns was removed. Firstly, the Aidit leadership was secure in its control over the Party and in the loyalty of its members. The 'old' leaders had long since been removed, there had been no signs of significant support for them, the new leadership showed no signs of division, and the large Party that had been built since January 1951 demonstrated a surprising solidarity.¹ Secondly, those cadres who had earlier exhibited error or tendency to

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The question of solidarity within PKI during the period of the Aidit leadership is discussed below, pp.195-207.

error had been weeded out or corrected. And thirdly, the Party now had sufficient teachers, funds and translated literature to permit the launching of a massive political education campaign which could tackle political education systematically and so remove the need for particular anti-'isms' campaigns.

5. Towards the Second 3-Year Plan

By the time of the PKI sixth national congress in September 1959, political freedom in Indonesia had been considerably curtailed. On June 4 the central war administrator had imposed a temporary ban on all political activities. From August 1 closed meetings were allowed only if the military authorities had been given prior notice. A ban was retained on public meetings and demonstrations and on all political activities in those regions where military operations against the rebels were in progress. In practice, however, after August 1 the political parties and their mass organizations still had to ask permission from the war administrators to hold closed meetings. Sometimes a representative of the military would attend them. When PKI asked permission to hold its congress, it was widely rumoured, and from sources in high government

circles, that the military authorities refused permission and retracted their refusal only after the intervention of Sukarno.

Despite, and perhaps stimulated by, the growing restrictions on political activity, the PKI leaders expressed to the sixth congress their determination to draw up and execute a second three-year plan of organization and education. They also showed the major lines the plan was expected to take.

In the field of organization, the objective was again the expansion of membership and the extension of the Party machine. Special attention was to be given to winning new members from the working class.

In attracting new members, orientation to the working class in the towns and villages is important in order to safeguard the composition of the Party membership so that the percentage of the proletarian element in the Party, although it does not constitute a majority, at least remains proportionate to elements from classes other than the working class.¹

In order to increase the percentage of working class members, Lukman called on all Party committees to devote special attention to the provision of elementary political education for working class candidate members so that they could become full members as soon as the minimum period of candidacy was completed.

¹
Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI, p.37.

Aidit gave some of the broad objectives in the field of education:¹

1. to educate all Party functionaries and activists and a majority of the rank and file;

2. to make the study of Marxist-Leninist philosophy the most important subject in all Party schools and courses, and to teach the international working class movement in all schools and courses;

3. to train cadres of theory, politics, and organization.

In the central committee report to the sixth congress, Aidit called on the provincial committees to present detailed and objective reports to the central committee planning bureau in order to enable the bureau to draw up a realistic plan.² The national rate for the plan went into operation on January 1 1960, but no details had been made public by the end of the year.

The uncertainty of the general political situation in Indonesia and the restrictions on political freedom make it unlikely that the second three-year plan will enjoy the smooth operation of its predecessor. At the

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Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi, p.149; "The Sixth National Congress", RI, November-December 1959, pp.45-6.

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Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi, p.149.

end of August 1960, the local war administrators of South Sumatra, South Kalimantan and South and South-East Sulawesi placed temporary bans on PKI activity in their areas. From September 13 to November 30 a nation-wide ban was imposed on all political activities, and when it was lifted, the ban on communist activities remained in force in at least South Sumatra/Djambi and South Kalimantan. While the bans are in force on political activities in general and communist activities in particular, both the expansion and organized education of Party membership must come to a virtual halt, and the recruitment of new members has probably been made far more difficult by the increasing repression of PKI, the general disillusionment with and decreasing importance of political parties, and the increasingly obvious hostility of the army, nationalist, and Moslem leaders to PKI, despite Sukarno's continuing patronage of the Party.

The successful work of the Aidit leadership in building a mass party is in striking contrast with the half-hearted, lackadaisical efforts made by the other political leaders in Indonesia. The PKI leaders have been building a vast Party network, winning and organizing the allegiance of millions of members and supporters, and training a large body of cadres, all in preparation for an irreversible seizure of power. At the

same time, the leaders of the other parties have, in general, been unconcerned with the masses, except to use traditional civil and religious authorities to mobilize mass support when it was regrettably necessary for occasions such as elections. They have been preoccupied with the intrigue and manoeuvring within the political elite for government office which they are so eager to use for their own short-sighted interests.

The successful construction of a large, united Party has been closely interwoven with the implementation of the second main task of the national united front policy, that is, attracting and organizing large sections of society. The means of attracting mass support have brought in the large Party membership, while the creation of a large, disciplined Party has permitted the organization of mass support reaching far beyond the confines of the Party.

6. Solidarity Within PKI Under the Aidit Leadership

Since the Aidit leadership assumed full control of the PKI in January 1951, there has been only one overt challenge, by Alimin in 1956, to the wisdom of the leadership's policies. Ten years free from 'Mensheviks', 'Trotskyites', 'Titoists' and other 'traitors' puts PKI

into a special category among communist parties.¹ This solidarity requires explanation. The following explanation is concerned with only the cadres of the Party, that is the committee members and other functionaries, from whom any revolt against the Party leadership would be expected. It is concerned with the reasons for the solidarity that exists among two groups of cadres: the middle and lower cadres, and the leaders at the national level.

The structure of the Party is the first, and most obvious, factor contributing to the solidarity with the central leadership that is found among the middle and lower cadres. All but four or five thousand of the more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ million present members of the PKI have entered the Party since January 1951. The Aidit leadership has therefore been able to use the technique of democratic centralism to prevent the rise of elements considered hostile or potentially hostile to itself. Any person wishing to enter PKI is first thoroughly scrutinized and then must spend a period of six months to two years of candidacy, depending upon his social and political

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It also means that the collection of information on PKI is made more difficult because there are virtually no important ex-communists from the post-1950 period.

background, during which he is closely watched. Then, if he is accepted as a full member, his election to a committee post requires the endorsement of a higher committee. Should he become a full-time cadre, he can gain promotion only if he proves fully satisfactory to the leadership. Therefore, because the Aidit leadership has used great care in supervizing the promotion of committee members and full-time cadres, there has been little chance that elements hostile to the central leadership could rise far within the Party.

At the same time as exercising this control, the central leadership has constantly stressed that 'there must be democratic life within the Party'.¹ It has encouraged cadres and ordinary members to air grievances, criticisms and queries within the privacy of Party meetings, and has worked to remove them by patient explanations and education. Errors committed by cadres have been met, since 1951, not by vituperation or expulsion but again by patient correction and education. This method has meant that any nascent opposition to the central leadership has been aired, discussed and removed

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D.N. Aidit, "Madju Terus Menggempur Imperialisme dan Feodalisme" (Continue to Advance to Destroy Imperialism and Feudalism), HR, January 2, 1961.

before it reached the point of deep dissatisfaction or expulsions or withdrawals from the Party.

The Aidit leadership has exerted considerable effort to provide political education for its cadres. The political schools and courses have been taught by higher cadres loyal to the central leadership, and they have used only materials which the leadership considers to justify its own policies and tactics. This education has been doubly effective due to the social and political origins of the cadres. Most cadres entered the Party after the Aidit leadership had won control, and have no first-hand experience of the older ideological or personal disputes within PKI or the international communist movement. Most cadres entered the Party either illiterate or semi-literate and with no previous political experience. Their political education has come solely from what might be termed Aidit channels, and they have no access to communist literature other than that which the central leadership writes or translates from foreign sources.¹

¹ There is the danger for the Party leaders, however, that the more they give political education to their cadres, and the more communist literature they make available in Indonesian, the more they increase the possibility that a politically self-assured body of cadres might be created from which they could be attacked on Marxist-Leninist grounds. Such a danger would loom

Another significant factor in maintaining the solidarity of the middle and lower cadres with the central leadership has been the ability of the leadership to distribute rewards and provide means for status advancement to loyal Party workers. The patronage at the disposal of the Party leaders includes positions in the Party itself and in the many communist-led mass organizations, all of which have been expanding rapidly and thereby providing wide promotion possibilities. It includes also positions in governmental bodies at the national and local levels,¹ and in kampong associations, elected village governments, and cooperatives. The Party leaders also decide which cadres shall participate in the many delegations invited to the countries of the Soviet bloc.

large if national or international imperatives forced an alteration in the Party's present overall strategy, or if a split occurred within the Aidit leadership.

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39 persons were elected to parliament on the PKI ticket in September 1955; 60 were elected to the Constituent Assembly in December 1955. After the September 1955 elections, PKI was allocated 624 seats in the provincial and local councils in Java alone, and in the 1957 local elections increased this to 973. Since 1956 PKI and/or its mass organizations have received a number of seats in the National Council, the Supreme Advisory Council, and the National Planning Council. Between 55 and 75 members of the new, appointed parliament, installed in June 1960, owe their positions to membership in PKI or its mass organizations.

The apparent validity of the policies and tactics of the Aidit leadership is also a factor which tends to maintain the cadres' loyalty to the leadership. Under Aidit's direction, PKI has grown from insignificance to being by far the largest and best-organized party in the country and the leader of mass organizations embracing over 8 million members. Under his care, PKI has approached, in the eyes of its members, steadily closer to government power. Aidit is not only honoured in his own country by President Sukarno, but also abroad by the leaders of two of the world's most powerful countries, the Soviet Union and China. In such a situation it is not surprising that his leadership has been virtually unchallenged - especially if victory and the distribution of far greater rewards (in status if not in material wealth) appear imminent.

An important factor which tends towards the solidarity of PKI as a whole, and of the cadres in particular, is the existence of a Party-centred community. We have seen how the Party can provide routes for status advancement. The Party and its mass organizations also provide a defence against hostile or potentially hostile forces, such as the landlord, the employer, the village head or a government official. They provide assistance in times of material need, such as when there are births,

illness or death in the family. When cadres travel away from their homes, their families are looked after. The Party and its mass organizations give education, both political and basic literacy, they organize sports, provide kindergartens, establish cooperatives. They not only provide employment to many cadres but also come to furnish them with their circle of friends. In short, a community is established within the general community - and the Aidit leadership has taken care that the cadres benefit most from the Party-centred community. Because serious opposition to the central leadership might lead to expulsion from the Party community, such opposition cannot be engaged in lightly.

A final factor, and a nebulous one, is the tradition of authoritarianism that is strong within especially Javanese society, from which the great majority of PKI members are derived. One does not openly disagree with one's 'superiors'. The most one does is to give public agreement and then quietly disregard what the 'superiors' have said or ordered.¹ This tradition operates in

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From the little the PKI leaders have published concerning opposition within the Party to their policies or instructions, it is clear that many of the lower committees give formal agreement to policies and then quietly shelve those they do not like. For example, some committees which opposed the concept of a mass party 'forgot' to implement the first membership drive, while some have

favour of overt obedience to the leaders of any organization, as long as the leaders are still recognized as leaders or superiors. Because the Aidit leadership has so far proved successful, it retains the overt loyalty and obedience of the cadres as well as of the ordinary members. But this tradition does not operate among those who regard themselves as national leaders, and the phenomenon of a decade of solidarity among the central leadership requires additional explanation to the one already given above.

Of the fourteen members of the central committee in January 1951, only three have been removed for political reasons: Tan Ling Djie, Alimin and Wikana. But all three were elected on the PKI list to the Constituent Assembly in December 1955, and Wikana was returned to the central committee in September 1959. Tan Ling Djie fully confessed his errors by the time of the fifth congress in March 1954, Wikana was not publicly chastised after 1951, and only Alimin has publicly opposed the

continued to be slow in promoting candidate members to full membership. Many committees which were unable to see the value of women members did not openly question or oppose the directive to increase women membership; they quietly ignored it. Still other committees have ignored but not openly questioned directives to collect membership dues or to forward stipulated percentages of those collected to the higher committees.

Aidit leadership. Nor have any of the other members of the central committee, including those who have entered since 1951, opposed the Aidit leadership - either publicly or, if the lack of rumours is any evidence, within the Party. This is an unusual record of solidarity for the central leadership of any communist party.

Apart from the factors discussed above as operating among the middle and lower cadres which also affect those above them, the explanation of this solidarity at the national level is to be found in an examination of the two groups that constitute the central leadership: the group which has entered the central leadership since January 1951, and the group which formed the central committee in 1951. The new group has been promoted by the Aidit leadership for ability but also for loyalty to the leadership. While the Party continues to grow stronger, and the leadership's policies thereby vindicated, it is not to be expected that this group of hand-picked, mostly very young communists who have received their only political education from the Aidit leadership, will give rise to an opposition to the Aidit-Lukman-Njoto triumvirate.

The 1951 group in the central committee has also accepted the leadership of the triumvirate with very few

public signs of resentment or disagreement. This is due to the personalities of the triumvirate, and especially to their success in guiding the Party. Aidit, Lukman and Njoto have maintained their unity, and only sparse and unsubstantiated anti-communist rumours have at any time indicated disagreement between them. Not only have these three worked together in a collective and amicable manner, but they have apparently succeeded in achieving the same result with the other members of the central leadership.

But of far greater importance in maintaining the solidarity of the central leadership has been the success achieved under the guidance of the triumvirate. This success has strengthened the triumvirate's position in four ways. First, it has increased the stature of the triumvirate vis-a-vis the other members of the central leadership. Second, with the enormous increase in the size of the Party, the overwhelming majority of members and non-central leaders know only the triumvirate as the legitimate Party leaders, have been subjected to their system of political education, and have no old loyalties or particular reasons for new ones towards the other members of the central leadership. Third, the unbroken and continuing success of the triumvirate's policies and tactics removes both grounds for opposition or grounds

that might gain much support within the Party. Fourth, when final success seems close because of the Aidit leadership's guidance, why risk total defeat by attacking the triumvirate?

The only public challenge to the wisdom of the Aidit leadership's policies has come from Alimin, the only veteran communist of any note to survive the Madiun rebellion. While Aidit was attending the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Alimin on March 26, 1956 circulated among the remaining leaders of the PKI a statement in which he strongly denounced the leadership of the Party and the policies it was pursuing.¹

Alimin claimed that an 'opportunist group or soft group' had taken over the leadership of the Party, and had then practised class collaboration, stifled democracy within the Party, neglected the revolutionary ideological education of its members, and brought the Party to the level of 'an ordinary bourgeois party that no longer teaches class consciousness'. The Party had grown quantitatively, but was now weak in quality. Alimin expressed 'disappointment, concern and anxiety' at the

¹ Alimin's statement is given in full in HR, July 4, 1956.

'increasingly unclear' political leadership given by the Party. Finally, he warned of the great danger that the 'ideological and political deviation' being followed by the Party would not bring the Party to victory. To cleanse the Party, he pleaded for 'The broadest self-criticism and criticism ... freely or without fear ... and against anyone'.

Alimin's criticisms would have been comprehensible to the old guard of PKI who had studied Marxist-Leninist literature widely and which still remembered the militant extremism that led to the 1926 communist rebellion in Indonesia. But almost all the old guard had died or had been killed or had left the Party. For the reasons that have been outlined above, Alimin's statement fell on barren ground and received no overt support within the Party. After confession of error on May 10, 1956, he was again obstinate and left the Party on August 8, 1956.¹

In November 1958 and September 1959, although he had re-established contact with the Party headquarters, Alimin published booklets which conflicted with Party policy,²

¹ Aidit, Bersatu untuk Menjelesaikan, pp.97-8; HR, August 9, 1955.

² Alimin, Peladjaran Karl Marx (The Teachings of Karl Marx), Djakarta, 1958, 15 p.; Perjuangan Kias Karl Marx (The Class Struggle of Karl Marx), Djakarta, 1959, 12 p.

but which produced no ripple within the Party. When I met him in May 1960 he was old, senile, ailing, lonely, no longer visited by Party members and obsessed with what he considered to be the Party leadership's flouting of the elementary principles of Marxism-Leninism. He confirmed that his opposition to the Aidit leadership evoked no response in the Party. The solitary nature of his opposition only illustrated the solidarity among the post-1951 leadership.

From the available evidence, it appears that while the Aidit-Lukman-Njoto triumvirate retains its solidarity, and while the triumvirate's policies and tactics lead to continued PKI advances, there is little possibility that the solidarity that has existed for a decade among Party cadres will break down. A break-down might occur only if there is a drastic change in the Indonesian or international political scene requiring a correspondingly drastic re-orientation in Party policies and tactics. At that point, which could be occasioned, for example, by the death of Sukarno, severe government repression of PKI, the development of a revolutionary mood, or a militant line by Moscow or Peking against the neutralist, bourgeois leaders of the newly-independent countries, disunity might be the result.

7. An 'Illegal PKI'?

PKI claims to have maintained an 'illegal PKI' from the end of the communist rebellion of 1926-7 to the return of Musso in August 1948.¹ With the outbreak of the Madiun rebellion in September 1948 and the Dutch occupation of the remaining Republican territory in Java in December, PKI was forced to go underground again. An 'illegal PKI' was retained throughout 1950 to guide the legal PKI, the Indonesian Labour Party and the Socialist Party. In other words, an 'illegal PKI' had existed for all but one month of the 25 years preceding the January 1951 change in the PKI leadership. Since then there have been reports and rumours of two kinds of illegal PKI: active guerrilla bands, and secret groups which prepare for an eventual revolutionary situation. The purpose of the following paragraphs is to examine the scanty available evidence in order to estimate whether the Aidit leadership has undertaken the organization of one kind or both kinds of illegal PKI.

There is no doubt that armed bands were active in East Java during the first half of 1951. Feith and

¹ PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, pp.31-51.

Kahin describe them as PKI-connected or PKI-financed.¹ These groups in East Java mostly ceased operations before the end of 1951, but an armed force in Central Java, known as the MMC,² carried out armed attacks until as late as 1955. Kahin goes so far as to claim that in 1952 the PKI leaders concentrated their armed bands into the MMC area 'and gave intensive military and political training to youths brought in from East and Central Java for short periods on a rotating basis'.³ Some slight confirmation that the Aidit leadership was at least contemplating guerrilla warfare (and Aidit and Lukman had returned in July 1950 after eighteen months in China and with the Viet Minh) is given by the translation by PKI late in 1950 and early in 1951 of two foreign works on guerrilla warfare.⁴

1

Herbert Feith, "Indonesian Politics, 1949-1957: the Decline of Representative Government" (Cornell University, Ph.D. thesis, 1961), p.327; Kahin, "Indonesian Politics" in Holland (ed.), Asian Nationalism and the West, p.140.

2

MMC stands for Merbabu-Merapi Complex. Merbabu and Merapi are two adjacent volcanos in Central Java.

3

George McTurnan Kahin, "Indonesia" in Kahin (ed.), Major Governments of Asia, Ithaca, New York, 1958, p.557, note 25. The anti-communist newspaper Pedoman on January 14, 1955 also mentioned rumours that the MMC area was being used to train military cadres.

4

Mao Tse-tung's "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War" was serialized in Bintang Merah and also published in booklet form; Vo Nguyen Giap's What is the Liberation Army? was published in booklet form. These

The communist leaders have denied publicly any connection with the MMC,¹ and as early as May 1951 blamed the imperialists for the terrorism which was labelled communist by the anti-communists.² Furthermore, in an article intended for internal Party consumption only, the PKI leaders in July 1951 condemned the plundering of peasant property in the MMC area.³ These protestations of innocence do not of themselves prove innocence. However, non-communists I spoke with in the Merbabu-Merapi area viewed the MMC as remnants of the Madiun rebels who held out for a while until their leaders were killed by the army or police. And it would be surprising if PKI could have brought many youths

two works were made available in Indonesian at a time when very few foreign communist materials had been translated. However, as the military phase of the revolution had just been completed, there was still considerable interest in materials on guerrilla warfare. Furthermore, as the preface to Mao's work in booklet form indicates, the young PKI leaders may have expected that Indonesia would have to take up arms again in order to rid herself of the semi-colonial status imposed by the Round Table Conference agreement.

1

See, for example, Ichtisar Gerakan Tani (Survey of the Peasant Movement), April 1951, pp.2-3; and HR, November 19, 1954.

2

PKI, "Praktek Gangster Amerika" (American Gangster Practices), BM, May 15-June 1, 1951, pp.276-7.

3

"Masaalah Tani di Indonesia" (The Peasant Question in Indonesia), BM, June 15-July 1, 1951, p.304.

into the MMC area, trained them there, and then returned them to their home areas, without detection by the authorities or anti-communists.

From the limited information available to me, it would appear that the Aidit leadership did not encourage the formation of PKI armed bands. Those that existed in East Java in the first half of 1951 quickly ceased operations, though it is not known if this was on instruction from the Party leaders or as a result of military pressure against them. The MMC is a separate and so far unsolved problem. Its leaders were communists from before the Madiun rebellion who fled to the mountains when the rebellion failed. They apparently gained many adherents from poor peasants and demobilized troops, and operated more as bandits than the creators of a small liberation base. Due to army and police attacks the MMC mostly ceased operations by the end of 1952, and completely by the end of 1955. As yet I have obtained no concrete evidence of a command link between the Aidit leadership and the MMC leaders, or of Kahin's report that the MMC area was used to train numbers of communist youths from other areas in political and military matters.

When viewed in the wider context of the national united front policy which the Aidit leadership pursued from about the end of 1951, it seems highly unlikely that

the PKI leaders would have encouraged the MMC. The advantages were too small, the disadvantages too great. The MMC area was restricted, and could have been, and was, eradicated by relatively small numbers of troops. Furthermore, the PKI leaders could not risk the exposure of their part in the MMC terrorism, for this might have negated the painstaking work to create the image of PKI as respectable, democracy-loving, anti-terrorist.¹

The second kind of 'illegal PKI' that has been persistently rumoured since January 1951 is that of a network of secret groups preparing for an eventual revolutionary situation. Several newspaper reports seem to confirm the rumours. In November 1954, sixteen PKI members from Temanggung, Central Java, were gaoled for recruiting a secret section of the Party which was to organize a 'liberation army' to be used if PKI fared badly in the 1955 general elections.² The Djakarta weekly newspaper "Geledak" reported on May 31, 1959 that the headquarters of a 'PKI-Malam' (Night PKI) had been raided by the authorities in Rembang, Central Java, and a

¹ For a description of this effort at image-building, see below, pp.240-56.

² Keng Po, January 13, 1955; Pedoman, January 14, 1955.

number of weapons seized.¹ PKI-Malam was reported to have branches in Central and East Java and to be preparing for a rebellion to establish a people's democracy. The Jogjakarta newspaper "Nasional" carried a report on April 11, 1960 of the arrest and imprisonment in Pati (incidentally only some 25 miles from Rembang) of six persons, including five members of the Pati representative council, for holding a subversive meeting.² Materials confiscated at the meeting included notes and letters on "How PKI can carry out an armed movement in 1960", and a "3-day plan to replace the bupati and pamong pradja".³

Many factors must be considered in attempting to unravel the rumours and reports of an illegal PKI that is preparing for eventual rebellion. First, it is logical that the PKI leaders should have prepared plans for the eventuality of being forced underground by government repression, and that it has at least a skeleton underground organization even if its projected members are at

¹ Geledok, May 31, 1959.

² Nasional, April 11, 1960.

³ Bupati is the title given to the civil servant in charge of a kabupaten; pamong pradja is the name given to the members of the rural administrative civil service.

present working above ground. Second, the Sukiman government was unable to substantiate the charge of plotting to overthrow the government on which it arrested 2,000 communists and communist-supporters in August 1951. Nor have later governments or even anti-communists revealed concrete evidence to support such a charge against PKI. Third, the creation of a PKI-Malam by PKI before legal political activity was repressed would destroy much of the image PKI has built itself as an essential part of the national united front policy. On the other hand, if the possibility of severe repression seemed great the PKI leaders might consider the risk of establishing an underground PKI worth taking. But such a possibility did not loom large from 1951 until about the beginning of 1960, with the doubtful exception of a brief period after the installation of the Masjumi-led Burhanudin Harahap cabinet on August 12, 1955. Fourth, the PKI-Malam as reported in "Geledak" could be comprised of members of the small groups of extremist, self-styled communists such as belong to Ibnu Parna's Acoma. And, fifth, it is possible that PKI contains extremists, militant elements, who are dissatisfied with the national united front policy and have, without the sanction of the central leadership, established their own minor underground organizations.

In short, there is no concrete evidence that the Aidit leadership has organized an underground section of the Party which is preparing for the eventuality of revolution. Rather, the leadership will have made preparations for important cadres and for a skeleton force of middle and lower cadres to go underground in the event of severe government repression. Reports of PKI-Malam and similar organizations probably stem from the activities of non-PKI extreme leftists or of PKI members acting without the authorization of the central Party leadership.

III. COMMUNIST FUNDS IN INDONESIA

PKI is indisputedly the wealthiest political party in Indonesia. It can afford to maintain more full-time organizers, publish more literature, and run more costly election campaigns than any other party. The purpose of this section is to examine the limited available material concerning the PKI's income and expenditure. The income and expenditure of PKI in this analysis refers not only to the Party but also to the many communist-led mass organizations, because together they constitute a financial as well as political unit.

PKI has been unable to tap those government sources which have provided most income for at least PNI and NU of the other major parties. The openly acknowledged sources of income for the Party and its mass organizations fall into five categories: Party membership fees, the membership fees of the mass organizations, donations, special fund-raising campaigns, and the wages of representatives in governmental bodies.

Under the April 1951 PKI constitution, membership fees were fixed at about 0.33 per cent of income for the lower income brackets, about 0.75 per cent for medium-high ones, and a minimum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for higher incomes.¹ This rate was reduced in the September 1959 constitution to 0.2 per cent for members in the lower incomes, and a minimum of 1 per cent for those in the higher incomes.² The entrance fee has remained unchanged as the equivalent of one month's membership fees. If the membership fees were collected regularly and fully, they would be an enormous source of income, especially after claimed Party membership passed the one million mark by the beginning of 1956. Various pieces of evidence would indicate, however, that the payment of

¹ PKI, Konstitusi PKI, 1951, pp.53-4.

² Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI, p.90.

fees is at a low rate and that the fees collected by the lower Party organizations are not forwarded in stipulated percentages to the higher committees.

An article by Anwar Sanusi in October 1956 shed light on the efficacy of the collection of membership fees in West Java.¹ Sanusi stated that the work of the West Java provincial committee was not being performed as well as it should, because not enough money was coming in. Of the 22 section committees in West Java at that time:

only a few send money to the provincial committee every month or occasionally. The average amount that enters each month from the section committees does not reach 20 per cent of the amount that is really needed for the varied work of the provincial committee to be done well.

He added that:

From some kabupatens and large towns, subscription money does not reach the higher committees, especially the provincial committee and central committee or does so only in very small amounts, because ... it is used up by the lower committees.

An article the following month by Isk of the Djakarta Raja committee² reported that 'the Party in

1

Amir Anwar Sanusi, "Sedikit tentang Penarikan Iuran dan Penjetorannya" (A Little about the Collection and Forwarding of Membership Fees), KP, October 1956, pp.8-12.

2

Isk, "Mendjadikan Soal Keuangan Masaalah bagi Seluruh Partai" (Make the Problem of Finances a Matter for the Whole Party), KP, November 1956, pp.24-7.

Djakarta Raja experiences almost the same situation' as that described by Sanusi. Isk complained of the belief, widely held within PKI, that members and candidate members need not pay membership and entrance fees because the Party could always receive money from people outside the Party. He also complained that some section committees and subsection committees considered it unimportant to forward membership fees to the higher committees.

In July 1957 and May 1958 Party leaders referred to continuing deficiencies in the collection of membership fees,¹ and when I was in Java in 1959 and 1960 Party cadres indicated to me that the inflow of fees was still low.

The articles on West Java and Djakarta Raja touched upon a problem which has been serious in PKI: that the lower committees which collect the fees keep more than their share and pass on little or nothing to the higher committees. In order to eliminate this 'wastage', the central committee issued an order at about the end of July 1956 that the 10 per cent of membership fees

¹

Audit, "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan", HR, July 5, 1957; "Untuk Melantjarkan Pemasukan Uang Iuran" (To Speed Up the Entry of Membership Fees), KP, May 1958, p.67.

allotted for the central committee henceforth be forwarded directly by the subsection to the central committee instead of trickling upwards via the section committees and provincial committees as formerly.¹ This order was not implemented fully. A central committee circular to all subsection committees in April 1958 stated clearly that not all subsections were fulfilling the earlier instruction.²

The above information gives evidence of a certain weakness in Party discipline, but also suggests that the higher Party committees were not receiving from membership fees sufficient funds to operate properly.

The second source of funds for the communist movement in Indonesia is the membership fees of the communist-led mass organizations which claimed, in mid-1960, a combined membership of over 8 millions. I spoke with leaders of the trade union federation, SOBSI, the peasant organization, BTI, the youth organization, Pemuda Rakjat, the women's organization, Gerwani, and the village officials' association, PPDI, and all complained of the impossibility of collecting more than a tiny percentage of membership

1

Anwar Sanusi, "Sedikit Tentang Penarikan Iuran", KP, October 1956, pp.11-12.

2

Aidit, "Untuk Melantjarkan Pemasukan", KP, May 1958, p.67.

fees. There is also some published information on SOBSI, BTI and Gerwani as well as personal information from Pemuda Rakjat which supports the generalization of their national leaders.

In June 1956, SOBSI published a booklet which gave some statistics on the income of the communist-led trade unions.¹ According to this booklet, in 1955 the SOBSI national council received only about 12.5 per cent of the subscriptions it should have according to the number of members. Few of the national councils of the member unions received more than 30 per cent. The notable exception was the railway workers' union which achieved 75 per cent because membership fees were deducted from the pay packet before it reached members. The booklet further commented that 'a deficit in the budget is still a common phenomenon'. Two basic causes of the lack of funds were listed: that fees were not collected on a large scale, and that those collected were not forwarded properly to the higher committees. These are the same complaints expressed by the PKI leadership, but within the mass organizations both problems seem to be more acute. SOBSI planned to raise the entry of membership

1

SOBSI, Mengatasi Keuangan dalam Serikat-Buruh (Overcoming the Problem of Finances in the Trade Unions), Djakarta, 1956, 29 p.

fees to 50 per cent during 1958, but the amount that did reach the national council was only 10 per cent of what it should have been based on membership figures¹ - a decrease compared with 1955.

The BTI leaders have been less open in their discussion of the organization's finances. An article in May 1957, however, mentioned that the entry of fees was only 1-1½ per cent of what it should have been, and also that the lower committees were keeping an unfair share of those fees that were collected.² The Gerwani national council in June 1956 complained that the entry of membership fees in the preceding year had been only about 11 per cent of which it should have been, and that the percentage was steadily declining.³ From April to June 1956 the total income for the national council was only 296 rupiahs - or about a month's wage for a labourer. The national council revealed to the third Gerwani

¹ Moh. Munir, Pedoman Penjelesaian Plan Organisasi 1958 (Survey of the Implementation of the 1958 Plan of Organization), Djakarta, 1959, p.29.

² Djadi, "Sekali Lagi tentang Keuangan" (Once Again about Finances), ST, May 1957, pp.6, 15.

³ Gerwani, Meluaskan Aksi-Aksi untuk Memperkuat Tuntutan Hak-Hak Wanita-Anak-Anak dan Perdamaian (Extending Actions to Strengthen the Demand for the Rights of Women and Children and for Peace), Djakarta, 1956, p.34.

congress in December 1957 that in the 31 months from April 1955 to October 1957 its average monthly income from entrance and membership fees was 702 rupiahs, while the expenses of the council were over 8,000 rupiahs per month.¹ At the time of the congress, the national council had a debt of over 60,000 rupiahs. The causes were again two: 'shyness' in collecting fees, and the refusal of lower committees to forward collected fees to the higher committees in the prescribed percentages.

One of the most illuminating pieces of information on the inflow of membership fees into the mass organizations was given in April 1960 in an interview with a Pemuda Rakjat leader in Jogjakarta. He said that although the membership fee of Pemuda Rakjat was only $\frac{1}{4}$ rupiah per month, at the most only 5 per cent was collected. Most of this 5 per cent was used by the lower committees, none reaching the five kabupaten-level commissariats in the region. He added that none of the about 20 Pemuda Rakjat full-timers in the Jogjakarta area were financed from membership fees. I did not ask him to elaborate on what other sources were tapped.

1

Gerwani, Lebih Giat Meluaskan Gerakan untuk Terlaksananya Piagam Hak-Hak Wanita Indonesia (More Active in Extending the Movement for the Implementation of the Charter of Indonesian Women's Rights), Djakarta, 1958, pp.78-9.

From the available evidence it would appear certain that none of the communist-led mass organizations receive even an important percentage of their operational costs from entrance and membership fees.

The third acknowledged source of funds for the communist movement is donations. The 1951 PKI constitution lists among the sources of Party finances, 'contributions from non-Party persons and groups'.¹ This the September 1959 constitution re-worded as 'non-binding contributions'.² Similar clauses are contained in the constitutions of the mass organizations. Leaders of Pemuda Rakjat in East Java said in interview on May 9, 1960 that their four province-level full-timers relied on money and other help from 'sympathizers' outside the organization. But although the constitutions and members of the PKI and its mass organizations acknowledge contributions from sources outside their organizations, these sources and the amounts received from them have not been disclosed. It is on these points that the interested non-communists do most speculation.

The fourth acknowledged source of funds, and an important one, is that of special fund-raising campaigns.

1

PKI, Konstitusi PKI, 1951, p.53.

2

Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI, p.90.

Two kinds of fund-raising methods are used, although any one campaign may use both: the direct collection of money, and the collection of materials that can be converted into money.

Examples of the direct collection of money include the campaigns to finance the March 1954 Party congress, to build a permanent headquarters for the central committee, and to build PKI's house of culture. In order to finance the 1954 congress, Aidit ordered every Party member and candidate member to contribute at least one rupiah.¹ On December 11, 1953, the central committee secretariat issued a further order that each Party member and candidate member give three rupiahs during a 3½ month period in order to finance a central committee building.² The central committee decided in August 1956 to collect funds for a PKI house of culture, and later claimed that four million rupiahs had been collected.³ From the published information, however, it is not possible to ascertain how much of the funds raised in the campaigns were from Party members or should be

¹ HR, November 17, 1953.

² HR, December 14, 1953. The new building was opened on August 19, 1954.

³ RI, September-October 1959, p.33.

placed in the category of donations from non-Party persons. But if the Party has found great difficulty in persuading its members to pay membership fees or its lower committees to forward the collected fees to higher committees, it seems fair to assume that similar difficulties are faced in the special fund-raising campaigns, and that donations from outside the Party constitute a sizeable element. As part of its campaign to raise funds for the 1957 local elections, at least the East Java provincial committee obliged each member and candidate member to collect money or produce, such as rice, bananas, coconuts and cassava, from persons outside the Party.¹

Most PKI members and sympathizers are poor and unable or unwilling to give money to the Party. Fund-raising has therefore had to take on special forms. In order to help finance the 1955 and 1957 election campaigns, members collected old sacks, oil bottles, old newspapers, ink bottles, stamps, old clothes, old tins as well as produce; and groups were organized to catch fish and green frogs, collect sand and stones from the rivers,

1

Ruslan, "Peranan Anggota/Tjalon-Anggota dalam Gerakan Dana Pemilihan DPRD" (The Role of Members and Candidate Members in Financing the Local Elections), KP, April 1957, pp.59-61.

and gather banana leaves. The results of their labour were sold to the benefit of the Party.¹ The PKI also instituted the 'Party tree', 'Party hen', 'Party sheep' etc. system under which Party members plant a fruit tree or coconut tree or raise a bird or animal for the Party, and give the produce to the Party for sale² - a system also used by BTI.³

The best-documented PKI fund-raising campaign was that for the September 1959 national congress,⁴ though again it is impossible to ascertain how much was raised from the Party and how much from outside. Not only were 3½ million rupiahs in cash collected, but the delegates were provisioned, at least in part, by produce gathered

1 "Pengumpulkan Fonds Pemilihan Umum" (Collect General Election Funds), KP, March 1955, p.38; S. Ridwan, "Pekan Sokongan Sukarela" (A Week of Voluntary Support), KP, May 1, 1955, p.72; Ruslan, "Peranan Anggota", KP, April 1957, p.61.

2 Aidit, "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan", HR, July 5, 1957.

3 Hartojo, "Luaskan Aksi-Aksi kaum Tani untuk Mengembangkan Kekuatan Progresif" (Extend Peasant Actions in Order to Develop the Progressive Force), ST, October 1957, p.11.

4 Jusuf Adjitorop, "Kongres jang didukung Rakjat" (A Congress Supported by the People), BM, September-October 1959, pp.370-1.

by the Party and its mass organizations.¹ When the congress was concluded, over 2½ million rupiahs surplus remained, which was then used to extend the central committee building and help finance the Party house of culture.²

Each of the communist-led mass organizations also holds special fund-raising campaigns for conferences and congresses, and, from their own evidence, find it far easier to obtain money for specific and only occasional purposes than for regular membership fees. These special campaigns, however, are not always successful. For example, the BTI leaders complained in March 1957 that the debts incurred for its September 1953 congress were still not settled.³ And in August 1960, the PKI leadership sent out urgent instructions to all Party committees to assist Pemuda Rakjat in raising funds for its forthcoming congress.⁴

1

The produce collected consisted of over 5 tons of rice, 10 quintals of sugar, 5 quintals of coffee, 30 kilograms of tea, 234 kilograms of salted fish, over 1,000 coconuts, 10 quintals of cassava, more than one ton of vegetables, and 20,000 cigarettes.

2

The surplus congress funds which went towards the construction of the house of culture may have been included in the four million rupiahs that was claimed to have been collected for the house.

3

Editorial, ST, March 1957, p.1.

4

Mimeographed circular, August 1960.

A fifth source of funds for the communist movement in Indonesia is the wages of the PKI and mass organization representatives in parliament, in the Constituent Assembly, in local representative councils, and now in the Supreme Advisory Council, the National Planning Council, and the People's Consultative Assembly.¹ All PKI members who hold positions in the name of the Party must hand their wages to the Party and receive in return an honorarium.² Members of local representative councils are paid according to the number of meetings they attend, but average about 400 to 500 rupiahs per month. This amount is the bare minimum required outside Djakarta to maintain a full-time middle or lower cadre. Members of the councils' executive committees earn much more. Because council work takes only a small amount of time, PKI full-time cadres who are also members of councils are in fact financed by the councils, and those council members with other jobs can hand over all their council wages to the Party.

1

See footnote 1, on p.199, for the number of communist representatives in parliament, the Constituent Assembly, and the local representative councils. The number in the Supreme Advisory Council and the National Planning Council is low. The number in the People's Consultative Assembly is unknown, but includes all members of parliament plus others.

2

PKI, Konstitusi, 1954, (third edition), p.64; Lukman Tentang Konstitusi PKI, p.90.

The three main fields of expenditure for the communist movement in Indonesia are: the routine work of running the Party and the mass organizations, special activities such as congresses, conferences and the celebration of national and international anniversaries, and election campaigns.

One of the major items in the cost of the routine work of the Party and its mass organizations is the full-time personnel. The size of this personnel is a closely guarded secret, and any estimates are necessarily tentative in the extreme. In September 1959, PKI claimed to have in Java alone an organization in 18,722 villages and 1,430 ketjamatans.¹ At higher levels, the Party constitution provides for section committees in each kabupaten and municipality, of which there are 99 in Java and 212 in all Indonesia. In Djakarta Raja in mid-1957 there were 19 section committees,² and the larger towns of Java each have several. At the time of the sixth congress in September 1959, there were about 22 major district and island committees. The number of full-timers in the different committees varies widely from area to area. In some areas each village committee has

¹ Anwar Sanusi, Results of the First Three-Year Plan, p.3.

² HR, June 4, 1957.

a full-timer, but in others even the section committees are without one. It would probably be correct to say that there are several thousand full-time Party workers, including cadres and typists.

Parallel to the Party full-timers, and often interwoven with them because cadres are often full-timers for the Party and one or more mass organizations, are the full-time workers of the mass organizations, numbering probably several thousands in Java.

I was told by many non-communists wherever I travelled in Java that a PKI full-time worker at the village or urban neighbourhood level received between 500 and 1,000 rupiahs per month.¹ Observation of the clothes and homes of some of the medium-level full-timers of the Party and its mass organizations showed that they were far below middle class standards, and indicated a monthly income of perhaps 500 rupiahs. To the cost of the full-timers' wages must also be added their travel expenses and also the cost of maintaining and equipping offices. The total must be at least two million rupiahs per month,

¹ Compton, writing from East Java in April 1956, repeated reports that branch chairmen of PKI were receiving 1,000 rupiahs per month, activists in any field a basic salary of 500 rupiahs; Boyd R. Compton, Red Surabaya, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1956, pp.6, 8. He commented that 'It appears that no other Indonesian party can afford to pay out so much to its important lower-level workers.'

remembering that some full-time Party workers receive wages from the governmental bodies.

Within what might be termed routine expenditure is the financing of national and local schools and courses.¹ Some indication of the cost incurred in the field of education is given by examples from SOBSI. At the beginning of January 1957, the SOBSI national council announced that a campaign was to be completed by the end of February to collect the 1 to 2 million rupiahs necessary to open SOBSI's cadre schools.² By September, however, the campaign had brought in only 388,722 rupiahs.³ In 1958 and 1959 the SOBSI headquarters held twelve shifts of the national school, training in all about 300 cadres who stayed in Djakarta for the month's duration of a shift.⁴ The cost of the national school was not disclosed, but the total cost of the education program for SOBSI alone is indicated by figures for

1

The extent of formal cadre training in PKI has been mentioned above; that in the communist-led mass organizations is given below in the sections on the various organizations.

2

BB, January 9, 1957, p.5.

3

SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen Konferensi Nasional SOBSI (1957)
(Documents of the SOBSI National Conference, 1957),
Djakarta, 1958, p.97.

4

Information from conversation with a member of the SOBSI headquarters staff.

East Java.¹ From 1958 to May 1960, the East Java SOBSI provincial council organized 7 cadre courses of one month's duration. The cost averaged 25,000 rupiahs for each course (or 833 rupiahs per course member), of which the Ministry of Labour paid 10 per cent.² These scraps of information give some indication of how great must be the total cost of the schools and courses organized by PKI and its mass organizations.

A second major item of expenditure is publishing. PKI now publishes a vast array of periodicals, booklets and pamphlets besides the daily newspaper. Most of the mass organizations publish at least a periodical and occasional booklets and pamphlets. What evidence there is on the financing of the publications indicates that income trails far behind costs. The PKI monthly "Bintang Merah" was forced to cease operations from December 1951 to August 1952 with a debt of 20,000 rupiahs; and in January 1953 the central committee published a list of thirty Party committees with debts to "Bintang Merah" and thirty-six to "PKI-Buletin".³

1

Information from interviews with members of the East Java SOBSI headquarters.

2

The students taking part in schools are lodged together in hostels so that they can more easily participate in study and discussion groups and undertake self-study.

3

PKI-B, March 7, 1952, pp.6-7; February 10, 1953, p.19.

The peace committee's periodical "Damai" (Peace) incurred a deficit of 8,077 rupiahs in the first five months of existence from November 1952 to March 1953, with total income only 650 rupiahs.¹ The national council of SOBSI revealed that from January to October 1955 it had expended 100,603 rupiahs on publications but received only 60,731 rupiahs from them, while the national council of its estate workers' union had spent 105,772 rupiahs and received 29,381.² It also revealed that during 1955 the national council of its railway workers' union on average each month had spent 27,000 rupiahs and received 17,000 rupiahs for publications. Before January 1955 the average income of the SOBSI national council for publications had been only 10 per cent of the expenditure. In March 1957 the income for the SOBSI periodical "Bendera Buruh" was only 40 per cent of its cost.³ In December 1957 Gerwani declared that it had a debt of 'tens of thousands of rupiahs' to the printers.⁴ Pemuda Rakjat was forced by financial difficulties to cease the publication of its chief periodical.

¹ Damai, (April 1953), year 1, no.5-6, p.16.

² SOBSI, Mengatasi Keuangan, p.18.

³ BB, March 13, 1957, p.4.

⁴ Gerwani, Lebih Giat, p.77.

Only two figures are available as to the cost of the various congresses or conferences: BTI estimated before its September 1957 congress that it would cost 200,000 rupiahs, and the September 1959 PKI congress cost 500,000 rupiahs.¹ The communist movement in Indonesia celebrates with much show several national and international anniversaries, including May Day, May 20 (the Day of National Awakening), May 23 (foundation of PKI), August 17 (national independence day) and November 12 (the outbreak of the 1926 communist rebellion). The cost of the celebrations has not been published, but must be considerable for the often lavish decorations and receptions.

No figures have been published on the cost to PKI of the 1955 and 1957 election campaigns. In 1955 PKI spent far more than any other party on such as large billboards and small cards showing the Party symbol, on travel expenses for the Party leaders, on carnival-like 'people's festivals' and the celebration of anniversaries, on the printing of pamphlets and brochures, and on the large-scale use of full-time paid elections workers.²

¹ Editorial, ST, March 1957, p.1; Adjitorop, "Kongres yang didukung Rakjat", BM, September-October 1959, p.371.

² Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, pp.27-8.

The Socialist Party leader, Sjahrir, estimated that PKI probably spent 200 million rupiahs on the 1955 campaigns.¹ PKI spent even more proportionately than the other parties in the 1957 local elections. One astute non-communist in Jogjakarta told me that he had heard that PKI spent five million rupiahs in the Jogjakarta Special District - an area with only 976,948 of the 27,130,661 voters in Java.

Although the evidence is sketchy, it seems that PKI must have spent at least 200 million rupiahs on the 1955 and 1957 election campaigns. This figure might be reduced if one takes into account the large amount of voluntary and free labour that could be mobilized by the PKI and its mass organizations. But it remains a substantial figure and one which, in the opinion of non-communist Indonesians and foreign observers, could not possibly be extracted from members of the Party and its mass organizations who are for the most part poor peasants and town dwellers for whom 6 to 12 rupiahs was a day's wage.

After the above examination of the limited information on the sources of income and items of expenditure

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Robert S. Elegant, The Dragon's Seed, New York, 1959, p.247.

of PKI and its mass organizations, it would appear correct to state that the Indonesian communists rely on 'contributions from non-Party persons and groups', on 'non-binding contributions', for a sizeable proportion of their income. The other sources do not appear to provide even half of what is expended. Who, then, are these non-Party donors? Visible, but limited, assistance is given by the Soviet Union, China and other Soviet bloc countries whose books, periodicals and pamphlets, usually in Indonesian, are sold in all communist bookshops. Presumably the bookshops are given a good profit margin on this literature. Another way the Soviet bloc countries assist the Indonesian communists is by financing delegations to visit the Soviet bloc. But the main source of non-Party contributions is the more than 3 million Chinese living in Indonesia.

Kahin states that PKI taps the Chinese business community for 'substantial funds'.¹ Some Chinese pay willingly, he writes, but:

undoubtedly they usually do so because of persuasion or pressure from the Chinese embassy or pressure from the Communist-controlled labor unions and the threat of retaliatory action in case of noncompliance.

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Kahin, "Indonesia" in Kahin (ed.), Major Governments of Asia, p.559.

Feith believes that the greater part of the PKI's 1955 election campaign funds came:

from individual Chinese businessmen resident in Indonesia, and very possibly also from overseas Communist governments through their consular and business representatives in Djakarta.¹

Doak Barnett reported in 1955 the generally-held belief in Indonesia that the contributions from Chinese businessmen 'make up a significant source of its [PKI's] ample political funds'.² In Djakarta, Jogjakarta, Surakarta, and Surabaya, the information I received from non-communists confirmed what Kahin, Feith and Barnett had written.

The Chinese business community in Indonesia is large, far wealthier than the native Indonesians, but it is treated as alien by Indonesians in general, discriminated against by the Indonesian government and would be unable to obtain police protection against, say, extortionary threats by a trade union. At the same time Chinese youngsters are full of enthusiasm for the new China and communism. It would be most surprising if PKI did not exploit this source of funds. The non-communist parties

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Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, p.27.

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A. Doak Barnett, A Choice of Nationality: Overseas Chinese in Indonesia, American Universities' Field Staff Reports, New York, 1955, p.26.

have been financed, in general, from the proceeds of government corruption and from large individual donations, and are therefore in no position to criticize PKI for tapping the Chinese businessmen.

I know of no concrete evidence of PKI's receiving funds from the communist embassies, legations and trade missions. Feith, however, did report that in 1952 the Chinese embassy gave both money and literature to the Party;¹ and in 1960 a Russian Intourist agent was arrested on the charge of smuggling several million rupiahs into Indonesia for purposes unknown.

To summarize, PKI and its mass organizations incur, for routine and occasional matters, an expenditure far exceeding the expenditure of any other political party in Indonesia. But although PKI and its mass organizations have succeeded in extracting from their members some membership fees and perhaps more funds for special purposes, the total income from these sources is far below total expenditures. The deficit is made up by donors, mostly non-Party persons as few communists are wealthy. PKI cannot tap government sources of wealth,

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Herbert Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-1953; a Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1958, pp.37-8.

and it seems reasonable to believe that a major part of Indonesian communist funds is derived from the large Chinese business community and also possibly from the foreign communist missions in Indonesia.

PART THREE: BUILDING MASS SUPPORT

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BUILDING MASS SUPPORT

I. THE CULTIVATION OF GENERAL APPEALS

As the Aidit leadership embarked on the implementation of the national united front policy, it hoped to win mass support primarily among the workers, the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie. Winning this support would depend ultimately on the Party's ability to represent effectively the specific material interest of these groups, and much of the Party's efforts, especially through its mass organizations, have been directed towards such representation. But the Aidit leadership had the immediate task of making the Party generally acceptable to its potential supporters. It had to create the favourable image of PKI as a nationalist, anti-colonial party, as a party sympathetic to religion, as a responsible party, opposed to the use of violence in the pursuit of political objectives, and as the resolute defender of democracy. That PKI lacked this image at the beginning of 1951 was partly a result of the Madiun rebellion, in which the communists had attacked the

central government during the war against the Dutch, and in which they had murdered many santris. From 1951 on, much of PKI's propaganda and actions were directed successfully to building a favourable image, without which it would have been very difficult, probably impossible, to win mass support and, from this support, to build a large Party. Without such an image, it would also have been impossible to accomplish the other main task of the national united front: alliance with the non-communist political forces.

The first task of the Aidit leadership was to disprove the accusations that the Madiun rebellion had been an anti-national insurrection. In September 1950, shortly after the return of Aidit and Lukman to the Party leadership, PKI published an account of Madiun which set the lines for a new, patriotic interpretation.¹ It denied that a rival Republican government had been formed at Madiun, that the national flag had been lowered and the national anthem banned. The 'affair' had become bloody only when President Sukarno ordered the elimination of the communists and their allies, who then fought in self defence. In later years, refinements were added to

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Sin Po, September 26, 1950.

the new version of the 'affair'.¹ At Madiun anti-imperialists and true patriots were mercilessly butchered by those ready to treat with the imperialist enemy; American imperialists had planned the provocation which forced the heroes of Madiun to fight in self defence; and the real Indonesian instigators of the provocation turned out to be Hatta, Sukiman and Natsir, and not Sukarno, whose name was omitted from post-1951 versions of the 'affair'.

The evidence suggests that the PKI leaders were pleading their case before a largely sympathetic public. It was easy to establish the Party's anti-Dutch character, which had been demonstrated on many occasions since 1920. Many non-communist political leaders believed that there certainly had been provocation before the rebellion began. And most Indonesians, especially those in the groups PKI

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For the major pronouncements of the Aidit leadership on the Madiun rebellion, see "Keterangan CC PKI tentang Peristiwa Madiun" (PKI Central Committee Statement on the Madiun Affair), Sin Po, February 10, 1951; Mirajadi, "Tiga Tahun Provokasi Madiun" (Three Years Since the Madiun Provocation), BM, August-September 1951, pp.39-52; PKI, Buku Putih tentang Peristiwa Madiun (White Book on the Madiun Affair), Djakarta, 1953, 32 p.; D.N. Aidit, Aidit Menggugat Peristiwa Madiun (Aidit Accuses the Madiun Affair), Djakarta, 1955, 64 p.; D.N. Aidit, Konfrontasi Peristiwa Madiun (1948); Peristiwa Sumatera (1956) (Confrontation with the Madiun Affair, 1948; the Sumatran Affair, 1956), Djakarta, 1957, 47 p.; PKI, PKI 40 Tahun (PKI 40 Years), Djakarta, 1960, pp.56-8.

has sought to attract, had little access to news at the time of the rebellion, so that, except among the more santri population, the anti-communist version of the rebellion would not have been heard or, if heard, not given much credence. It is important to note that the Madiun area is still a communist stronghold, that is, that the peasants and workers in the area of the rebellion itself did not consider the 'affair' an anti-national insurrection. But the communist leaders still felt the need to present their version of Madiun in a manner that would free them from any taint of anti-national activity.

The revamping of Madiun was the logical prelude to the Aidit leadership's attempt to portray PKI as the most nationalist of parties. After the revolution against the Dutch, which ended only in December 1949, the level of Indonesian nationalism ran high. Most politically-aware Indonesians still considered their country's sovereignty to be restricted or threatened by the remnants of Dutch power, whether in the form of economic power or in the form of the continued occupation of West Irian. PKI was obliged to identify itself with the popular mood. In a speech of May 23, 1952, Aidit declared:

For the communists, service to the Party, to the national interest, to the interests of the homeland and to its people is one and indivisible. If a communist does not serve the interests of the nation, of the homeland

and of the people, it means that he does not serve the interests of the Party and that he is not a good communist ...

Every communist is a patriot, and if there is a patriot who is not a communist then the door of PKI is always open to receive him as a member.¹

As positive proof of its patriotism, PKI has paid warm respect to the symbols of Indonesian nationalism: the national anthem, the national flag, the national language, nationalist anniversaries, the honouring of nationalist heroes, Pantjasila,² and the Proclamation Republic founded on August 17, 1945.³ Beginning with the celebration of National Awakening Day on May 20, 1952, PKI joined with other political groups in organizing

¹ D.N. Aidit, Menempuh Djalan Rakjat (Along the People's Road), (fourth edition), Djakarta, 1954, p.32.

² Pantjasila was revealed by Sukarno on June 1, 1945 as the five basic principles of Indonesian nationalism: nationalism, internationalism, representative government, prosperity, and belief in God the Almighty.

³ See, for example, Aidit's claim, made during the campaign for the Constituent Assembly elections of December 1955, that:

PKI in the Constituent Assembly will staunchly defend all elements of the Proclamation Republic that bind the greater part of the people. These elements, among others, are: the national flag Merah-Putih, the national anthem Indonesia Raja, the Indonesian language as the language of unity ... and the Republic's motto "Unity in Diversity".

D.N. Aidit, Pertahankan Republik Proklamasi 1945! (Defend the 1945 Proclamation Republic!), Djakarta, 1955, p.32.

nationalist celebrations.¹ This cooperation has been maintained in succeeding years.

In keeping with their new-found nationalism, the PKI leaders during 1952 gradually reduced their attacks on President Sukarno. This change was inspired partly by the recognition that for the great majority of at least the Javanese, Sukarno enjoyed great personal popularity as a nationalist hero; and partly by the realization that, unlike Vice-President Hatta, he was not avowedly anti-communist but was, if anything, opposed to the extreme anti-communist forces. By the time of the 1955 election campaigns, PKI was even attempting to link the name of the great nationalist leader with itself. The need to effect the link increased after 1955 as Sukarno's power increased and as he became the major barrier to an assumption of power by the largely anti-communist army leaders.

The Aidit leadership, despite its preference for denunciation of American imperialism, publicly accepted the popular estimate of what was the major imperialist threat to the country. Although attacks on the American

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Herbert Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-1953: a Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1958, pp. 86-7.

imperialists were not halted, Aidit conceded in March 1954 that:

The first enemy of the Indonesian people, from the viewpoint of its great power in several spheres, particularly in the economic sphere, is Dutch imperialism. Therefore the national united front must be aimed in the first place at the liquidation of Dutch imperialism, and not at the liquidation of all foreign imperialism in Indonesia.¹

Even as late as September 1959, after all Dutch enterprises had been seized by the Indonesian government, Aidit, while describing American imperialism as 'the most dangerous enemy of the Indonesian people', nevertheless conceded to Indonesian nationalist feeling that 'Dutch imperialism still constitutes the first enemy of the Indonesian people'.²

The communists' anti-Western position has stood them in good stead in their effort to demonstrate their nationalist fervour. For example, they attacked the Round Table Conference agreement from the first as a grave restriction of Indonesia's sovereignty, they accused the imperialists of aiding the anti-Republic

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D.N. Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat bagi Indonesia (The Indonesian Road to People's Democracy), Djakarta, 1955, p.38.

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D.N. Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi dan Kabinet Gotong Rojong (For Democracy and a Mutual Cooperation Cabinet), Djakarta, 1959, pp.13, 12.

Moslem rebels in West Java and Atjeh, and they heatedly denounced the alleged American, SEATO, and Kuomintang assistance to the PRRI-Permesta rebels as an attempt to overthrow the legitimate government and replace it by one subservient to the imperialists' interests.

To prove to Indonesians in general that PKI shared Indonesian nationalism was a relatively easy task, but the Aidit leadership was faced with the much more complex problem of proving to the religious that PKI was sympathetic to religion. As early as May 1951, Aidit, speaking in Bogor, a heavily Moslem town, stressed that under communism religion would not be suppressed but would thrive, and that PKI certainly would not refuse to admit religious people into the Party.¹ From 1952 onwards, PKI and its mass organizations have publicized annually their greetings for Idul Fitri, the Moslem feast marking the end of the Ramadan fast. At the same time,

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Sin Po, May 12, 1951. PKI has received help from both the USSR and China in its efforts to dispel Moslem fears about persecution of religion under communism. Many delegations consisting of or including Indonesian Moslems have been invited to both countries. Their impressions have been almost always favourable and have been widely broadcast by PKI. For an example of how well the Indonesian Moslem delegations are treated, see V. Jefremov, Delegasi Ulama Indonesia di Sovjet Uni (An Indonesian Ulama Delegation in the Soviet Union), Djakarta, 1957, 48 p. Both the Soviet Union and China publish periodicals in Indonesian which occasionally contain articles purporting to portray the free life of Islam under communism.

the PKI leaders have had to make it clear that they opposed Masjumi and the Darul Islam rebels not because they were Moslem, but because they were anti-national and serving the interests of Indonesia's external enemies. In August 1953, for example, after PKI had attacked Masjumi and the Darul Islam rebels during the period of discussions that preceded the formation of the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, Aidit explained:

The accusation that PKI's anti-DI [Darul Islam] policy is the same as anti-Islam is a very dirty and a very stupid slander. In its statements PKI does not urge the disturbance of the Moslem religion, nor does it even oppose Masjumi people. PKI always urges its members to hold high freedom of religion, including the Moslem religion, and to cooperate with the members of all parties including Masjumi ...

Contrary to Masjumi, PKI clearly and resolutely defends freedom of religion, including the Moslem religion, because PKI's anti-DI policy is a policy of fighting the groups that dishonour religion.¹

During the 1955 general election campaign, in particular, Aidit urged Party members to explain that PKI attacked Masjumi because it was anti-communist, not because it was a Moslem party.²

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PKI-B, August 25, 1953, p.138.

2

D.N. Aidit, Untuk Kemenangan Front Nasional dalam Pemilihan Umum (For the Victory of the National Front in the General Elections), Djakarta, 1955, p.23.

Besides proclaiming that they were not hostile to religion, the communists actively sought to win the support of religious people. It was obvious that their efforts to do so would be hampered until they could win the neutrality, or sympathy, of the kiajis, the Islamic religious teachers who held great authority among the Moslem masses. There are some indications that PKI went out of its way to influence kiajis. For example, a member of the South Kalimantan provincial committee has described in an article how PKI in his region set about winning over the local kiajis.¹ Party workers would send communist literature to those kiajis who liked to read, they would deferentially discuss political subjects with kiajis who liked to talk and discuss, they would join the kiajis' religious instruction classes and there politely but skilfully propound the virtues of PKI, and they would participate in social work of a religious nature (such as cleaning graves and repairing mosques and prayer houses) in order to consolidate the kiajis' sympathy for PKI. In August 1957, it was claimed that such patient work was producing results among the kiajis. 'They are beginning to say that PKI is good, and that this

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Amar Hanafiah, "Pengalaman Tjara Menarik Simpati Kiaji-Kiaji" (Experience in Methods of Winning the Sympathy of Kiajis), KP, May-August 1957, pp.69-72.

or that religious party is not good and only uses religion as a mask, and so on.' Some were already disposed to vote for PKI.¹

The Christian minority, which remains small and tightly integrated, has not been an object of PKI recruitment to any extent, although occasional efforts have been made to prove that 'the aims and teachings of the communists are in accord with the Bible's directives'.² But the Party leaders remain alert to the need to appear sympathetic to religion, especially Islam.

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That the Aidit leadership is even willing to claim that work for the Party is the implementation of God's law, is exemplified by the following quotation from a speech made by a communist kiaji in the Constituent Assembly. The speech was in reply to one made by a Masjumi member.

To the honourable Mr H. Moh. Thaha, from my own kampong in Solo, I express my thanks for his urging me to return to Islam. But Mr H. Moh. Thaha himself knows that I have never left Islam. And if the honourable gentleman urges me to return to Islam, in the meaning of to carry out God's law in political practice, then according to my own experience of 33 years in the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), that is the only place to practice the law of God in its political meaning, and not anywhere else. When the honourable gentleman truly wishes to carry out God's law and to devote himself wholeheartedly to good works, then let him do it with me within the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).

From the speech of K.H. Achmad Dasuki Siradj, in Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia (Concerning the Basis of the State of the Republic of Indonesia), vol.II, Djakarta, no date, p.336.

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HR, December 9, 1955.

Lukman, speaking at the sixth PKI congress in September 1959, reminded delegates that without a correct attitude on the religious question, 'the Party's united front work would face more difficulties and obstacles and could even experience defeat'.¹

The same skill which the Aidit leadership employed in presenting PKI as a staunchly patriotic party and one sympathetic towards religion, was also employed to convey the impression that PKI was a fully responsible party, ready to take its place in the building of a united and nationalist Indonesia. The Party leaders have been concerned to stress that PKI places the national good before its own interests as a party, and that it therefore shuns the voluntary use of force as a political instrument and welcomes the opportunity to work with the other political forces, even with the 'reactionary' parties if to do so would benefit the nation. This professed concern for the good of the people as a whole has been the basis of the Party's appeals for all-embracing governments of national unity. In June 1955, for example, PKI altered its election goal from a people's democracy to a national coalition government which would

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M.H. Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI (Concerning PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1959, pp.25-6.

be supported by 'all democratic parties and groups, especially nationalist, Moslem and communist parties' and which would represent 'the interests of the majority of the people and of all the revolutionary classes'.¹

It has been easier for the PKI leaders to create the image of PKI as 'the party of the people',² because the Party has been excluded from cabinet office since 1948. They have been able to take up popular demands without the worry of having to implement them. As the self-appointed spokesman of the people, PKI has advanced such demands as reductions in food prices, general increases in wages, the adequate provision of basic consumer articles, increased educational and health facilities, and a progressive taxation system directed against foreign companies. It is important to note that each demand has been presented as reasonable, and often has been accompanied by an outline of how it may be met. At another level, PKI has put forward proposals for improving Indonesia's economic policies. In March 1957, to take an example, the economic department of the PKI central committee published a study to show how economic development

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TI, June 27, 1955.

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Herbert Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, Ithaca, New York, 1957, p.15.

could be undertaken without calling on private foreign capital.¹ In November 1957, Runturambi of SOBSI and Aidit took part in a national consultative conference on reconstruction,² while since the creation in August 1959 of the National Planning Council, to which communist representatives were appointed, PKI has taken an important part in the formulation of long-term national economic policies. The demands and proposals put forward by PKI are contrived proof that PKI has the interests of the whole people at heart, that it promotes these interests in a responsible manner, not seeking merely to embarrass governments and ministers, and that PKI is ready and able to accept responsibility in national administration. In short, PKI wants to be respected as a responsible and restrained party, imbued with a strong sense of the welfare of the people and of the nation as a whole.

The Aidit leadership has been at pains to explain that PKI, providing it was not attacked first, would

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PKI, "Construct a National Economy Without New Foreign Investments", RI, March 1957, pp.28-33.

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Runturambi's speech in the conference has been published in booklet form as Runturambi, Politik Pembangunan Sekarang (Development Policy Now), Djakarta, 1957, 22 p. Aidit's speech has been published as D.N. Aidit, "Let Us Carry Out Planned Construction of Our Country", RI, December 1957, pp.27-30.

never resort to violence to realize its goals. As the leaders pledged in 1951, when several thousand communists and communist sympathizers had been arrested on an (unsubstantiated) charge of plotting to overthrow the government:

In the struggle to realize their political convictions, the communists will not use force while the ruling class still leaves the peaceful, the parliamentary way open. If there is the use of force, the spilling of blood, a civil war, it will not be the communists who start them but the ruling class itself.¹

These sentiments have been repeated down to the present,² and the PKI leaders have even eschewed the use of force

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Sobromalisi, "Tentang Perebutan Kekuasaan" (Concerning Seizure of Power), BM, August-September 1951, pp.10-15.

2

For example, when, after the 1956 Soviet Communist Party congress, the PKI central committee considered the question of whether Indonesia could peacefully make the transition to a people's democracy, the conclusion reached echoed the 1951 article:

it is a possibility, and one which we must strive with all our strength to make reality. Thus, if it depends on the communists, the best way, the ideal way, for transition to the system of people's democratic power ... is the way of peace, the parliamentary way. Thus, if it depends on the communists, the road of peace will be chosen because the communists certainly are not murderers.

Quoted in D.N. Aidit, "Revolusi Oktober dan Rakjat-Rakjat Timur" (The October Revolution and the Peoples of the East), BM, October-November 1957, p.381.

in disputes between labour and management, peasants and landlords, and between itself and other political groups.¹

Indeed, the Aidit leadership has tried not only to present PKI as a party willing to work within a parliamentary regime, but also as a protagonist of that regime, in fact, as a tireless defender of democracy. In October 1951, for example, PKI claimed that it was 'the foremost defender of parliament's prestige, and always will be so',² while in May 1953, Aidit declared that:

the communist parties and the democratic parties can gather the masses around them only if the Party honours the banner of bourgeois democratic freedom that has been discarded by the bourgeoisie.³

During 1951 PKI was one of the groups most vocal in calling for full democratic freedoms, and at the time of the October 17, 1952 'affair', it defended the parliamentary system as being 'far better than the fascist military dictatorship system'.⁴ The defence of

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There are a few exceptions to this generalization, but very few.

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From the speech of S. Utarjo on October 29, 1951, Risalah Perundingan 1951 (Indonesian Parliamentary Debates, 1951), vol.XV, p.7324.

3

D.N. Aidit, Menuju Indonesia Baru (Towards a New Indonesia), (second edition), Djakarta, 1955, p.44.

4

HR, October 18, 1952.

democratic liberties was an important theme in PKI propaganda during the 1955 election campaigns. Since 1956, with the rise of Sukarno and the army to a dominant political position, there has been a gradual constriction of democratic liberties and of the power of parliament. But PKI could not spring militantly to the defence of democracy because the Party was dependent upon its alliance with Sukarno in order to prevent stern anti-communist measures that the army was believed to advocate. PKI has protested, however, against the most flagrant infringements of democratic rights, and if its protests are more subdued than in previous years, they are still far more numerous and courageous than the protests expressed by PNI and NU leaders.¹ As a result, many millions of Indonesians have come to regard PKI as the most sincere and courageous defender of democratic liberties in general, and of the parliamentary system in particular.

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For a discussion of PKI's struggle against the restrictions on democracy after April 1957, see below, p.568 et seq.

II. APPEALS TO SPECIFIC SECTIONS OF SOCIETY

The winning of mass support involved the Aidit leadership in two basic tasks. I have discussed in the preceding section how the Aidit leadership endeavoured to create among the social groups most likely to support the Party, an image of PKI as patriotic, as tolerant of and even sympathetic to religion, and as a responsible, peaceable party working within and defending parliamentary democracy. Such an image was designed to create a climate of opinion in which PKI could pursue with relative ease its second task, that of attracting and organizing mass support by representing the material interests of the different sections of 'the people'. The Party itself remained the focal organization, assimilating members and extending its organizational network as fast as possible. But because of the low level of political awareness of the Indonesian urban and rural poor in general, the Aidit leadership built nominally independent mass organizations as a means of mobilizing, if only for simple action, a vast body of sympathizers who would otherwise remain beyond the Party's influence. The mass organizations could also be relied upon to tap hitherto inaccessible resources of member and cadre talent for PKI itself, and

apparently they became the chief source of new recruits for the Party.

Lukman made clear his party's concept of mass organizations in an article he wrote early in 1951:¹

By mass organization we mean a non-political organization of the masses, of the people. A mass organization binds together several groups of the people according to their social position, for example: a workers' organization (trade union), peasants' organization, youth organization, women's organization, and so on. Also included in the mass organizations are various social and cultural organizations. The mass organizations arise on the basis and stimulus of the most simple and direct interests of the respective groups of the masses. Thus a trade union organization arises on the basis and stimulus of the simple and direct interests of the members ..., and so on.

Lukman went on to declare that a mass organization should not have the same basis as the Party, that is, Marxism-Leninism, but:

must be based on the ties of everyday social-economic needs and must be broad in nature. In order to meet these conditions, the most simple consciousness of the masses of the need to organize is sufficient to be condition of membership of the respective mass organizations.

If Marxism-Leninism was maintained as a basis, two dangers would arise: either membership would be restricted to

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M.H. Lukman, "Partai dan Organisasi Massa" (The Party and Mass Organizations), BM, February 15, 1951, pp.104-5, 119.

those who first agreed with and worked hard to understand Marxism, which would prevent mass membership; or Marxism-Leninism would not be maintained as a fighting faith, in which case its meaning 'would become merely an empty slogan' and the working class struggle led by PKI would be harmed. The purpose of the mass organizations, Lukman declared, was to make the masses aware of the importance of organization, 'Even though it is the simplest awareness and based only on their own direct interests'.

Lukman also defined the role of the Party vis-a-vis mass organizations. The Party must:

give leadership to the mass organizations in their actions, which means to train and raise the awareness of their members. This is the task, the duty of the Party fractions in the mass organizations. The broader the mass organization, the more the masses can be united, the broader the masses we can influence and give leadership to. That is why every communist must fight hard for the unity of each kind of mass organization. Splitting a mass organization is not the work of communists but of Trotskyites and social democrats (socialists). Communists in mass organizations led by Trotskyites and social democrats ... may not leave the mass organization because that would mean allowing the masses to continue under the leadership of persons who are truly the enemies of the people. We communists must have the slogan: where the masses are, that is our place! Therefore we communists cannot refuse to work in a mass organization, however reactionary it may be.

Finally, Lukman emphasized that although mass organizations should be non-political, in fascist or colonial or semi-colonial countries their struggle to achieve social-economic goals necessarily involved them in politics. Therefore:

it is the communists' basic responsibility gradually to train and to give progressive political leadership to all mass organizations. Therefore those persons are clearly wrong who believe that the mass organizations cannot give 'satisfaction' to people who wish to participate in political action but are still unable to fulfil the conditions for entering PKI.

Analysis of the activities of the communist-led mass organizations during the decade of the Aidit leadership shows that their political role has been broadly fourfold:

1. To gather the widest possible sections of society into organizations led by PKI, to arouse in them an awareness of the importance of organization, to give them basic political education, and gradually to discipline them.

2. To open up new social and geographic areas to PKI penetration. One or more mass organizations have been established where it would have been impossible to establish PKI directly because of political ignorance or opposition to communism. Their basic education in organizational and political matters has then created a favourable environment for the establishment of the Party itself.

3. To provide a source of Party members and cadres. The leaders and cadres of the mass organizations are open or covert Party members; they watch to see which of their activists are most susceptible to political education, and then gradually draw them into the Party.

4. To assist PKI in its political struggle. The mass organizations have been used, for example, to gather votes for PKI by assisting in the work of propaganda, organizing meetings, and mobilizing the people to go to the polls; to back PKI's position on various matters or PKI demands by petitions, demonstrations, telegrams, letters, delegations, and the threat of strike action or general unrest; and to impress and woo Sukarno by gathering large crowds for his meetings, mobilizing large contingents for independence day parades, and so on. The mass organizations are also expected to provide a major source of strength for PKI in case the Party ever has to use force in order to resist repression or bid for power.

The Party and its mass organizations work closely together in mutual assistance. It is quite common for a cadre or activist to work for the Party and for one or more mass organizations. In some areas the Party organization has been established first, and has then used its cadres to create mass organizations that widen the PKI sphere of influence and control and that prepare

the way for a further expansion of the Party itself. In other areas, if the time is not yet ripe for the establishment of the Party, the cadres have first set up one or more mass organizations that then prepare the ground for the Party organization. Not enough information is available to estimate which is usually established first, the Party or the mass organization. It would appear, however, that in the first years of the Aidit leadership, when the Party feared government repression and had not achieved the respectability, association with Sukarno, and physical size (with a large number of trained Party cadres available) which it had by 1955, it was more usual for mass organizations to be established first. This was more especially so in the rural areas, where PKI had little organization before mid-1954. I received some information to indicate that in more recent years, in some areas where PKI and the mass organizations have been established for some time, the Party has taken over the work formerly done by its least efficient mass organizations, such as BTI, the peasant organization.

The obligation of every Party member:

To serve the people, to consolidate the Party's connections with them, to study their wishes

and correctly report these to the Party in time,
and to explain Party policy to them,¹

has not been taken lightly. The Aidit leadership has made great efforts to learn the desires and hopes of each section of society, the pressing problems they face in their daily lives. And it has created an extensive network of Party and mass organizations which can present organization, programme and course of action that seem capable of fulfilling the desires and hopes, of tackling the problems. The work of PKI and its mass organizations does not, however, give a full explanation of the success achieved in winning and organizing the support of many millions of Indonesians. The expansion of the Party organization has been facilitated by the apathy of the other parties towards organizational work at the grass roots. This apathy has been even more marked in their work of building mass organizations.

The following sections deal with the activities of the PKI and its mass organizations designed to attract and organize support among the different sections of the

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PKI, Konstitusi Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1951, p.21. This obligation, worded slightly differently, has been incorporated in succeeding Party constitutions. The constitutions of the mass organizations contain a similar obligation for their members, with, of course, 'the Party' being replaced by the name of the particular organization.

Indonesians 'people': workers, peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, youth, women, the ethnic groups and ethnic minorities, and the veterans of the revolution.

1. The Workers

Communist leaders believe that the workers constitute the most revolutionary, the most reliable, and the most easily organized social basis of communist support. In Indonesia after independence, unlike in China after 1927, no major obstacles were placed between the communist leaders and the workers. Therefore the Aidit leadership has given first priority to organizing the workers. As the PKI leaders acknowledged in their May Day message of 1958:

Since the source of the strength and of the cadres of the Communist Party lies primarily in the trade union movement, it goes without saying that the foremost task of the communists is to work in the trade unions.

The trade union federation, SOBSI, has been built as the chief means of attracting and organizing the workers, and the following section is concerned largely with SOBSI and its member unions. Mention is also made of other means employed by the Aidit leadership to win the allegiance of the urban poor in general.

1

RI, May 1958, p.5.

(a) SOBSI.

1. The Consolidation of PKI control over SOBSI.

SOBSI had been founded in November 1946 as an all-embracing trade union federation with the basic task of mobilizing the workers for the defence of the Republic. Before the Madiun rebellion it had a virtual monopoly in the field of organized labour within the Republic. Communists and non-communists had been about evenly divided in its leadership, but no disputes had arisen between the two groups who were united by a feeling of leftist solidarity in the struggle to defeat the Dutch and to create a socialist Indonesia. This solidarity was broken by the rebellion, but communists remained in control of the major part of the organization. Hence the problem for the PKI leaders after Madiun was not to establish a new trade union federation, but to consolidate their position in SOBSI, to shape SOBSI into an efficient organization under complete Party control, and to extend its membership and organization.

When the rebellion broke out in September 1948, many of the communist leaders in SOBSI either went into hiding or made their way to Madiun. Harjono, chairman of SOBSI, and Maruto Darusman, chairman of the largest member union, the estate workers' Sarbupri, were killed along

with many other communist trade union cadres. But because SOBSI as an organization did not participate in the rebellion it was not declared illegal. Nineteen of the 34 member unions withdrew from the federation in protest against the involvement of some of its communist leaders in the rebellion.

Discussions to re-unite the unions were in progress when the Dutch attack on the Republic in December 1948 temporarily stopped all trade union activity. In May 1949 efforts were resumed towards the creation of a single all-Indonesia trade union federation. By the end of October 1949 SOBSI was again functioning. The newly reorganized leadership was already clearly PKI-dominated and the non-communist acting chairman, Asrarudin, left the organization. In attempting to explain the communist domination of SOBSI so soon after Madiun, Asrarudin has suggested two reasons: that many of the non-communist individuals and trade unions had withdrawn from SOBSI at the time of the rebellion and thereby increased the already high proportion of communists in the SOBSI leadership; and that PKI won the allegiance of many trade union cadres and activists by its ability to pay regular wages and to provide trips abroad as rewards for good service.¹

¹

Interview with Asrarudin.

Other reasons must include the concentration of PKI efforts and personnel in SOBSI, in contrast with the other parties' lack of interest in trade union work; and that PKI was the only party which appeared to be truly concerned with the interests of the workers and their activists.

On January 5, 1950 a nine-man SOBSI delegation, headed by Njono, left for China to study the workers' struggle there. It was not until November 19 that four of the delegates, including Njono, returned.¹ The other five members remained longer. Presumably the members of the delegation underwent education in political and trade union matters while in China, and on their return provided PKI with a well-trained leadership for SOBSI. Njono, aged 28 when he returned, took over the leading position in SOBSI and has retained it until the present.²

According to Kahin's analysis, by mid-1951 almost the entire membership of SOBSI looked to PKI for leader-

¹ Sin Po, November 21, 1950.

² Although Njono did not officially ask to join PKI until December 1954, he has been a close associate of the Aidit leadership and might even be considered a member of it. He was elected to parliament as a communist representative in September 1955, and in September 1959 was elected to the PKI central committee and, more important, as one of the two candidate members of the politbureau.

ship, while most of the member unions were PKI-dominated, and the remainder PKI-influenced.¹ A few leaders refused to recognize the leadership of PKI, but they were gradually ousted. Among the last non-communists to leave the SOBSI leadership was Ahem Erningpradja, the present Minister of Labour in the Sukarno cabinet. He had been left as acting chairman of Sarbupri when the chairman was killed in the Madiun rebellion. In the Sarbupri congress at the end of 1952 he was finally excluded from the leadership, but he did not leave Sarbupri finally until April 1954 and the SOBSI parliamentary group until June 1954. His successor as Sarbupri chairman, Coerdian, who was at the same time a member of the finance section of the SOBSI central bureau, also proved unwilling to accept PKI guidance. Coerdian was forced out of Sarbupri and SOBSI along with Ahem.²

SOBSI claims that some 3,000 of its cadres and members were imprisoned during the August 1951 arrests of

1

George McTurnan Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism", in William L. Holland (ed.), Asian Nationalism and the West, New York, 1953, p.138.

2

For the resolutions adopted by the Sarbupri national council on the 'removal' of Ahem and Coerdian, see Sarbupri, Untuk Kebebasan Demokrasi dan Melawan Pemerasan jang Kedjam (For Democratic Freedom, and Opposing Cruel Repression), Djakarta, 1954, pp.16-17, 18.

government opponents.¹ But despite the arrest of PKI and SOBSI leaders, few branches of SOBSI or its member unions took protest action. This warned the PKI leaders that their control over SOBSI was not deeply rooted. Control of the top leadership was already fairly effective, but not yet of the middle and lower cadres. As a result, the PKI membership drive which began in March 1952 had as one of its major aims to bring under Party discipline a greater number of the middle and lower level cadres and activists of SOBSI and its member unions.² By November 1954, in the judgment of Boyd Compton, SOBSI's:

top leadership is communist, its second-echelon leaders are communist or communist-dominated, and its rank and file are generally communist-directed.³

In the middle of 1960, when I was last in Indonesia, it appeared that virtually all cadres of SOBSI and its unions were members of PKI, or, if not actually Party members, had been subjected to schools and courses

1

John Wolfard, "Strengthening the Indonesian Trade Union Movement", World Trade Union Movement, May 1-15, 1953, p.17.

2

Boyd R. Compton, Indonesian Communism: the Ranks Swell, American Universities' Field Staff Report, New York, 1954, p.8.

3

Ibid., p.7.

arranged and taught by the communist leaders. Communist control of the leadership of SOBSI had ensured that only persons who were Party members or had proved themselves amenable to PKI control were chosen as cadres and received promotion within the unions. For all others the channels of promotion were closed.

At the same time as being completely controlled by PKI, SOBSI maintains the fiction of being tied to no political party. As 'proof' of this political independence, SOBSI points to K. Werdojo, member of the SOBSI national council and also a member of parliament for the small party Permai. However, of the 61 persons elected to the national council at the SOBSI congress of January 1955, over half were known to be members of the Party. In the September 1955 parliamentary elections eight members of the national council were elected on the 'PKI and non-party' list, six as PKI members and two as so-called non-party men. The nine-man SOBSI central bureau elected in 1956 consisted of these eight members of parliament in addition to Werdojo.

PKI has had to pay a price for the consolidation of its hold on SOBSI. As communist control became increasingly evident, many non-communists withdrew, others were forced out, and the non-communist parties began to establish their own trade union organizations.

The non-communist unions are still disunited and organizationally weak, but the system of labour dispute arbitration enforced by the government has permitted them to survive, and their effect of breaking the former SOBSI monopoly in the various labour fields seriously weakens the political usefulness of SOBSI - a question that will be discussed below.

2. The growth of SOBSI. The official SOBSI claim is that as soon as the Round Table Conference agreement was signed in December 1949, SOBSI began a rapid expansion.¹ With the slogan 'cancel the Round Table Conference agreement' and the basic demand for Lebaran bonus,² SOBSI won much support. Furthermore, many new unions sprang up in the former Dutch-occupied areas and then affiliated themselves with SOBSI. SOBSI branch offices were opened in virtually every kabupaten capital, and within a year of its re-establishment in September 1949, SOBSI claimed to contain 25 vertical trade unions, many local unions, and 2½ million members. From 1950

1

SOBSI, Sedjarah Gerakan Buruh Indonesia (History of the Indonesian Labour Movement), Djakarta, 1958, pp.86-7.

2

Lebaran is the Moslem holiday and feast at the end of the Ramadan fast. In Indonesia the workers expect to receive a bonus for Lebaran equal to one month's pay.

until 1955 SOBSI continued to claim 2½ million members, but the number of SOBSI branch offices increased from 117 in November 1951 to 125 two years later.¹ At the second national congress in January 1955 a membership of 2,661,970 was claimed, and 128 branch offices.² In September 1957 the central bureau announced that after the simplification of trade unions, SOBSI now included 31 national unions; there were eight SOBSI regional offices and 150 branches.³ As of November 1960, SOBSI claimed 2,732,909 members, 165 branches, and 5 preparatory branches.⁴

The official SOBSI picture has been a total membership since 1950 of between 2.5 and 2.73 millions, virtually static, but a steady increase in the number of SOBSI regional and branch offices. The figures for the number of offices are presumably correct as they can be readily checked, but the membership claims have been widely challenged by non-communist Indonesian and foreign

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HR, November 27, 1951; November 26, 1953.

2

HR, January 11, 1955; SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen Konferensi Nasional SOBSI (1957) (Documents of the SOBSI National Conference, 1957), Djakarta, 1958, p.93.

3

SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen, loc.cit.

4

SOBSI, Forward for the Consistent Realization of the Political Manifesto, mimeographed, Djakarta, 1960, p.1.

observers. It is extremely difficult for an outsider to judge whether or not total SOBSI membership has declined since about 1951 due to the establishment of competing non-SOBSI unions in many fields, or if SOBSI membership has remained more or less static, advances among formerly unorganized workers balancing losses to the new non-communist unions.¹

In the early part of 1952, Goldberg estimated the total number of organized workers in Indonesia to be far less than 2 millions, with SOBSI's share 800,000 to 850,000.² Tedjasukmana, a former Minister of Labour, estimated in 1958 that some 3 to 4 million workers were organized, of which SOBSI accounted for more than 60 per cent,³ or for at least 1,800,000 to 2,400,000.

Richardson, writing in October 1958, however, reported

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It is even difficult in Indonesia to define what is a trade union member. Very few 'members' pay any dues, and it has been often commented that SOBSI has become so popular among workers because it receives funds from elsewhere and can afford not to collect dues. Furthermore, many workers obtain employment only seasonally. A SOBSI member must therefore be defined as someone who considers himself a member; he may pay dues or not, but he would take any problem to the SOBSI activist for solution, would attend some meetings organized by SOBSI, and would in general participate in labour action led by SOBSI.

2

Harry Goldberg, Gerakan Buruh di Indonesia (The Labour Movement in Indonesia), Djakarta, 1952, p.19.

3

Iskandar Tedjasukmana, The Political Character of the Indonesian Trade Union Movement, Ithaca, New York, 1958, pp.25, 28.

the estimate of 'experienced observers' that the total number of organized workers may well have been below two millions.¹ Both Goldberg and Tedjasukmana had access to government and other materials, and their evidence would suggest a considerable increase in SOBSI membership between 1952 and 1958, and would indicate that SOBSI's earlier claims to large membership were bluff to lend weight to SOBSI's demands and PKI's political bargaining position. But, as Richardson's evidence indicates, much research is still required before any fairly accurate estimates can be made of trade union membership.

3. Strengthening SOBSI. Although SOBSI is a federation of national and local trade unions, it endeavours not only to coordinate the policies of its member unions but also, through the SOBSI regional and branch offices, to coordinate, control and assist trade union activities down to the local level.

All workers belonging to member unions are also considered as direct members of SOBSI. Ordinary members participate in the 'basic organizations' of the trade unions, and wherever there is more than one basic organi-

1

J. Henry Richardson, "Indonesian Labor Relations in Their Political Setting", Industrial and Labor Relations Review, October 1958, vol. XII, no. 1, pp. 65-6.

zation in one field of work, a coordinating committee is established. The ordinary trade union members 'in the various fields of work are coordinated and led by the SOBSI branch whose area is determined by the SOBSI regional council'.¹ The regional councils have the dual task of coordinating and leading the member unions at the regional level, and of supervising the work of the SOBSI branches.² Among other duties, the national council assists in the simplification of member unions, assists and coordinates the central leadership bodies of the member unions, and gives leadership to the lower levels of the SOBSI organization in the implementation of the decisions of the national congress.³ Both the SOBSI regional councils and branches also coordinate and assist the lower levels of the member unions in implementing SOBSI decisions.

In short, SOBSI is more than an ordinary federation of trade unions, especially as the leadership of SOBSI and the member unions is unchallengeably in communist hands. Major policy decisions are taken by the central leadership, which is closely coordinated with the PKI leader-

¹ SOBSI, Konstitusi SOBSI (SOBSI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1955, pp.27-8.

² Ibid., pp.28-9.

³ Ibid., p.35.

ship, and the SOBSI machinery is used to ensure the correct implementation of policy right down to the places of work. What might be termed the leadership role of SOBSI is balanced by the assistance SOBSI gives to the member unions in their everyday work - in such matters as administration, the creation and training of cadres, the maintenance and expansion of membership, the methods of solving labour disputes - while SOBSI by its very size can add weight to their demands and can also, presumably, assist those in financial need. The following section deals with the effort made to strengthen the SOBSI organization, which is also the effort to strengthen PKI's control over SOBSI and thereby over the SOBSI members.

A large number of cadres and activists of SOBSI and its member unions were brought into PKI during the first PKI membership drive which began in March 1952. Before 1956 the only thorough political and organizational training they received was from PKI itself; SOBSI and its member unions did no more than give their cadres organizational training in an incidental manner.

It was only in February 1956, when SOBSI was freed from the hectic work of the general elections campaigns, that the national council decided that SOBSI should

establish an education system reaching from the centre to the branches.¹ The intention was to set up a SOBSI central school for cadres of the SOBSI regional councils and the national councils of member unions; SOBSI regional schools for cadres of the SOBSI branches and the member unions' regional councils; SOBSI branch courses for cadres of the member unions' branch councils and for leaders of the member unions' basic organizations; and schools organized by the national councils of the member unions for their own cadres.² On October 23, 1956, the central bureau, adapting for SOBSI the educational programme drawn up in July for PKI, decided that the SOBSI schools and courses would teach four main subjects: the history of the labour movement, SOBSI's social and economic programme, the national united front, and problems of organization.³

In mid-November 1956 the SOBSI regional council in Central Java opened its first cadre school. The central school went into operation in the first quarter of 1958. By the end of 1958, 133 students had received training in

¹ BB, December 5, 1956, p.3.

² SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen, pp.96-7.

³ BB, December 5, 1956, p.3; interview with a member of the SOBSI national headquarters.

six 'shifts' of the central school - each shift lasting one month, the students living in a hostel together and undertaking full-time study during their shift.¹ A total of 21 school shifts had been held at the regional level, branch courses had been begun in November and December, a seminar on education had been arranged, and Sarbupri and the railway workers' union had each held one shift of their central schools. During 1959 the SOBSI central school held six more shifts, bringing the total number of 'graduates' to about 300.² The regional and branch schools and courses were running smoothly.³ Besides the four main subjects, cadres and activists were also being taught Indonesian language and history, and general knowledge.⁴

¹ ITUN, December 1958, pp.8-9; Moh. Munir, Pedoman Penyelesaian Plan Organisasi 1958 (Survey of the Implementation of the 1958 Plan of Organization), Djakarta, 1959, pp.27-8.

² Interview with a member of the SOBSI national headquarters.

³ Leaders of SOBSI in East Java told me, for example, that the regional council in their province had organized seven shifts of its school between the beginning of 1959 and May 1960, each shift meeting every day for a month, and each attended by about thirty cadres. At the kabupaten level courses were held regularly, lasting for from 15 days, if full-time attendance could be achieved, to 1½ months.

⁴ Njono, Untuk Mempertahankan dan Memperluas Hak-Hak kaum Buruh (To Defend and Extend the Workers' Rights), Djakarta, 1959, p.69.

This scale of cadre education must ensure not only considerable PKI control or influence over the cadres of SOBSI and its member unions, especially when the SOBSI education system is bolstered by the PKI educational programme for Party members, but also a considerable increase in the skill of the cadres in their everyday work of attracting and organizing the workers. The massive SOBSI education programme also provides the means of creating new cadres from the rank and file:

For the rank and file there are opportunities to be acquainted with the basic problems of the labor movement and with elementary rules of trade unionism. The best among the membership are then given the chance to qualify themselves for union posts. In this way talents are discovered and prospective cadres and leaders are recruited from the rank and file.¹

It goes almost without saying that no other Indonesian trade union organization has an educational programme of any scale. Nor can any other trade union organization offer the reward and political indoctrination of the free trips to the Soviet bloc countries that have been enjoyed by many tens of SOBSI cadres.

As part of the education programme has been the attempt to increase the circulation of the SOBSI

¹

Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.71.

periodical "Bendera Buruh" (Workers' Flag).¹ In May 1957 circulation was only 5,500; this increased only slightly to 5,750 in April 1958, not a large number among a claimed membership of 2.6 millions. A plan to have "Bendera Buruh" received in every basic organization of the member unions by the end of 1958 was not fulfilled,² but it was claimed that during 1959 circulation was raised to 15,000.³

The first comprehensive plan to improve the SOBSI organization was drawn up in September 1957 and implemented during 1958.⁴ By the end of 1958 it was clear that the SOBSI leaders had grossly overestimated the efficiency of their organization and its ability to make rapid

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In 1954 a small, twice-monthly Buletin SOBSI had been issued, reaching a total circulation of 10,000 in May 1955. In March 1956 it was replaced by the larger Bendera Buruh.

2

Njono, Untuk Mempertahankan, p.68.

3

ITUN, March 1960, p.7. According to information given by a member of the SOBSI national headquarters early in 1960, this figure is exaggerated and should have been 7,000 to 8,000. The ITUN figure could be true and yet deliberately misleading: while Harian Rakjat was temporarily banned for two weeks in December 1959, the copies printed of Bendera Buruh probably were greatly increased.

4

The complete plan, including sections dealing with education and with women members, was published as SOBSI, Plan Organisasi 1958 (1958 Plan of Organization), Djakarta, 1957, 15 p.

improvements.¹ Many basic organizations had still not brought their members into groups, and, for various reasons, the work of attracting 'the medium and high workers' and government officials was proceeding slowly. New SOBSI regional committees had been established in East Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, Atjeh and Bali while one was in preparation in Central Kalimantan, but the outbreak of the PRRI-Permesta rebellion in February 1958 had prevented the establishment of new regional committees in other areas. On the other hand five new SOBSI branches had been opened, and seven were in preparation. The part of the plan to increase the number of full-time workers in SOBSI branches² had been achieved basically in East and Central Java although, in general:

the work of improving the SOBSI branch leadership bodies has not yet been successful, while the work of the SOBSI branches increasingly piles up.

Efforts to equip SOBSI branch offices with such as a typewriter, roneo machine and bicycle were still being

1

The results of the 1958 plan were given in Munir, Pedoman, 34 p.

2

The plan had called for one full-time leader and one staff member in each SOBSI branch with up to 5,000 members, two leaders and one staff member in each branch with up to 10,000, and so rising progressively to five full-time leaders and four staff members for each branch with over 50,000 members.

made. And SOBSI and its member unions fell far short of the goal of receiving 50 per cent of membership fees. In 1958 the SOBSI national council received only 10 per cent of the fees it should have according to membership figures.¹

In the latter half of 1958, SOBSI, at the same time as PKI was doing the same in preparation for the first national conference of peasants and fishermen, undertook a 'go down' campaign:

in order to further strengthen the relations between the organization and the masses and between the higher and lower levels of the organization, as well as to avoid subjective methods of leadership not in accordance with the objective facts.²

The central secretariat set up a special committee to implement the campaign.

A plan of organization for 1959 was drawn up by the SOBSI national council with targets in a wide range of activities but concentrating on education, an increase in the number of full-timers, and increased collection of

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As of January 1, 1958, however, the 0.20 rupiah paid by each member to SOBSI was increased by an extra 0.30 rupiah 'permanent contribution'.

2

Editorial, "SOBSI 12 Tahun" (SOBSI 12 Years), BB, November 20, 1958, p.1.

membership fees.¹ The results of the plan have not been published, but in the absence of a successful solution to the financial problem, and such a solution was nowhere in sight at the end of 1958,² a rapid increase in the number of full-time cadres could not be implemented.³

The formation of groups of ordinary members, begun with intensity in 1958, could be of great significance in binding the ordinary members to the union leadership and in increasing the participation of ordinary members in union activities. Group leaders are brought into the activities of the leadership of the basic organization: they participate in delegations to meet employers, they gather members to give explanations of union policy, to collect fees, and to read SOBSI publications and "Harian Rakjat" together, and they organize assistance to work

¹ Mardjoko, "Triwulan Terachir dalam Pelaksanaan Plan Organisasi 1959" (The Last Quarter in Implementing the 1959 Plan of Organization), BB, October 5, 1959, p.1.

² Njono, Untuk Mempertahankan, p.60.

³ As has been discussed above, the communist movement in Indonesia receives considerable sums from outside sources. It is presumed that by 1959 these sources were being tapped efficiently and that the Aidit leadership was already apportioning the funds obtained in fairly static proportions. Furthermore, as the PKI central committee plenum in December 1960 made clear, the Party was continuing to emphasize work among the peasantry. Therefore any further considerable increase in SOBSI's income, in order to pay for many more full-time cadres, could only come from within the organization itself.

comrades in times of need, such as deaths, marriages and births.¹ But to what extent the groups of ordinary members have been formed and are active has not been revealed.

Finally, it is important to make some estimate of the full-timers working for SOBSI and its member unions because it is the existence of a large body of relatively well-paid full-timers enjoying adequate promotion possibilities that distinguishes SOBSI from the other trade union organizations and that greatly facilitates SOBSI's work of organizing the masses and attracting potential cadre material. The evidence is fragmentary, but less so than that for PKI or the other communist-led mass organizations.

In the SOBSI headquarters in Djakarta there were, in the early part of 1960, 50 full-timers including the chauffeurs for the two cars, the odd-job men, and the women cleaners and cooks.² The number of full-timers at the regional and branch levels varied greatly because, in general, the SOBSI regions and branches parallel the government administrative divisions which embrace widely

1

Kastari, "Sekali Lagi Masalah Klompok" (Once More the Question of Groups), BB, February 25, 1960, p.2.

2

Interview with a member of the SOBSI national headquarters.

different total populations and numbers of workers. In East Java, a relatively well-organized region with claimed total of 510,000 SOBSI members, in mid-1960 there were 9 full-timers in the provincial office, and 15 in the Surabaya city office; in each of the 29 branch offices there was an average of two full-timers.¹ In the Jogjakarta Special District, with a larger population than Surabaya but far fewer trade union members, the SOBSI branch office had 9 full-timers,² though a visual examination of the office showed that several of these were female clerical staff. Evidence supplied by SOBSI leader Munir suggests that the number of full-timers in the member unions is high.³ In December 1958 he reported that the basic organizations of government trade unions and small unions in private concerns had no full-timers, but that those in large private concerns, such as estates, and the sugar and oil industries, in general had them; the coordinating committees for the basic organizations in unions in private concerns generally had at least one

1

Interview with SOBSI leaders in East Java. The total of 510,000 members included 130,000 seasonal workers.

2

Interview with leaders of SOBSI in Jogjakarta.

3

Munir, Pedoman, pp.21-2.

full-timer. In November 1960 there were 'about 7,000 basic organizations.'¹

Thus, within Java SOBSI itself maintains a large staff at the centre and in the large cities, and an average of perhaps two full-timers for each of the approximately 100 to 130 branches in the island. This would mean about 300 SOBSI full-timers in Java alone, added to which is the number of full-timers of the member unions which must reach to well over 1,000 and probably much higher. With this now well-trained and indoctrinated cadre force, SOBSI, and therefore PKI, is able to organize over 50 per cent of the unionized Indonesian workers and mobilize them for PKI's political advantage. But before examining the work SOBSI and its member unions have done in order to win their members, a brief section will indicate the major SOBSI unions so as to show where SOBSI and PKI have their greatest strength among the workers.

4. The SOBSI member unions. The SOBSI unions are not restricted to the towns. Some of the largest unions 'are composed of people who are still bound to village and

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SOBSI, Forward for the Consistent Realization, p.1.

country life with its traditional social ties':¹ Sarbupri, the estate workers' union, SBG, the sugar workers' union, and Sarbuksi, the forestry workers' union. In the first years after 1950, when Sarbupri was still the only important estate workers' union, membership claims of 700,000 were made. More reasonable were those for 370,000 and 390,000 made in October 1956.² The SBG, founded on March 3, 1946, claimed 305,000 members in 1957, including seasonal and non-active workers;³ Sarbuksi in May 1960 claimed 250,000 members,⁴ but many of these too would be seasonal workers. Other SOBSI unions with large memberships that include a high number of seasonal and rural workers are: SEBDA, founded in June 1947 for workers and employees of local government at the kabupaten and autonomous town level, with a claimed membership of 82,000 in May 1960; and SBPU, for workers of the provincial-level autonomous regions, with 48,000 claimed

¹ Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.80.

² BB, October 10, 1956, p.3; October 24, 1956, p.3. These figures correlate closely with Goldberg's estimate in 1952 that Sarbupri membership was 350,000 or a little more; Goldberg, Gerakan Buruh, p.19.

³ BB, March 13, 1957, p.3; Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.31.

⁴ HR, May 21, 1960.

members in May 1960.¹ All of the above five unions have proved important channels by which communist cadres and sympathies as well as the rudimentary consciousness of class and of the importance of organization have entered rural areas.

Control of transportation would be a vital weapon in the event of a political crisis in Indonesia, and with the trend towards a possible showdown between PKI and the army, the PKI sixth national congress in September 1959 called for improved work among the transport workers.² The largest of the SOBSI transport workers' unions is that for railwaymen, SBKA, founded in March 1946, and claiming 68,000 members in May 1960.³ The second largest, SBPP, was formed in 1950 as a merger of several seamen's and harbour workers' unions, and in 1956 declared 50,000 members.⁴ SBKB, for chauffeurs, truck drivers and other workers in motor transport, claimed 50,000 members in 1956. In 1955 the SOBSI post, telegraph and telephone workers' union claimed 50,000 members, but lost most of

¹ HR, May 21, 1960; May 7, 1960.

² PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum CC PKI Kepada Kongres Nasional ke-VI (Resolution on the PKI Central Committee's General Report to the Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1959, p.90.

³ HR, May 7, 1960.

⁴ Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, pp.21, 31.

these when a rival non-communist union was established in 1956. SERBAUD, for workers and employees in air transport, has less than 3,000 members.

In the industrial sphere, SOBSI unions are strong among textile workers, oil workers, miners, cigarette workers, and metal industry workers. The textile and clothing workers' union, including batik workers, claimed 65,000 members in May 1960.¹ The oilworkers' union claimed 60,000 members in July 1950 when it was formed as a merger of four vertical and two local unions; in November 1959 it claimed only 30,000.² The miners' union claimed 19,570 members in 1956, the cigarette workers' union 51,000 in 1957, and the metal industry workers' union 8,685 in February 1957.³

Of the approximately 800,000 government officials and employees, not including 'workers', SOBSI claims that 531,946 are members of 40 SOBSI unions.⁴ Among the more

¹ HR, May 6, 1960.

² HR, July 20, 1951, and November 26, 1959; Thahib, "The Indonesian Oil Workers Form a Single Union", World Trade Union Movement, February 1-15, 1952, p.34.

³ Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.32.

⁴ BB, July 15, 1959, p.2; SOBSI, Forward for the Consistent Realization, p.1. I am not sure if these figures include employees and officials of the autonomous districts and towns.

important SOBSI unions of government employees is the union for Ministry of Defence employees, with a claimed membership of 60,000. A small but perhaps in the long run politically important union is the SB Kependjaraan of prison workers and employees. This union has no competitor. In April 1958 it claimed 8,736 members in 217 prisons, out of a total of 10,500 employees in 344 prisons and prison offices, and reported that it was still growing rapidly.¹

Another SOBSI union worthy of note is Sarbufis, for film and stage workers, with a claimed membership of 5,320 in 1956.² Included in Sarbufis are actors of ketoprak,³ a popular traditional Javanese drama form which is often given contemporary political content.

5. The 'moderate' SOBSI policy.⁴ During 1950, 1951 and the early part of 1952 the SOBSI leaders were concerned to use in militant action against the employers the genuine grievances of the workers at the miserably low

¹ BB, April 30, 1958, p.6.

² Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.32.

³ BB, September 30, 1957, p.1.

⁴ The term SOBSI here includes also its member unions because general policy comes from PKI and is implemented throughout the SOBSI organization and unions.

wages and the grossly deficient work conditions and social security. A halt to this 'sectarianism' was called in a PKI central committee resolution of March 1, 1952 which elaborated the role SOBSI was to play in the newly evolved national united front policy.¹ SOBSI was to organize the broadest possible section of the workers, cooperate with the non-SOBSI unions, and even maintain friendly relations with other social classes.

According to the central committee resolution, 'The workers' front must constitute the strongest, most united, most progressive and most conscious front in the broad national united front'.² In order to attract the mass of workers and also establish good relations with other trade unions and the employers:

the sections of the working class that are already militant must purge themselves of sectarian diseases and of empty 'left' slogans ... Sectarianism is a disease that must be ceaselessly and violently eradicated. Only by the removal of sectarianism can the sections of the working class who are already militant attract the mass of workers who are still backward, and draw the entire people into the struggle for peace and national independence.³

Even a strong workers' united front, including a large number of militant workers and cooperation towards

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PKI, Kewadjaban Front Persatuan Buruh (The Duty of the Workers' United Front), Djakarta, 1952, 24 p.

2

Ibid., p.19.

3

Ibid., p.23.

common goals between SOBSI and non-SOBSI unions, would not be sufficiently strong, so the PKI central committee resolution claimed, to withstand the imperialists and internal reactionaries. Therefore the workers' front (which in fact meant SOBSI and any alliance between SOBSI and other unions) had to establish and maintain good relations with other classes. This could only be done by toning down the workers' actions, by union support for the demands of other classes, and by winning the friendship of the national employers.

The central committee called on the workers to ensure that any action they took fulfilled three conditions: that it was considered correct and just by the majority of the people and so received their sympathy and support; that it was begun where the possibility of success was great; and that it was begun and concluded at the correct time. But at the same time as limiting their own demands and the militancy of their actions, the workers had to lend support to the demands of other classes who should be included in the national united front:

Through actions of solidarity, through sympathy strikes and other forms of political action that are intelligible, that can receive the sympathy of and be supported by the broad masses, the Indonesian workers will steel the fighting unity of the masses, and will gradually emerge to the fore as the defender of democratic

rights and freedom, the champion of peace, the leader, the uniter of all groups of the people and the builder of the national united front.¹

The workers, as an instrument of the Party's national united front policy, were even instructed by the central committee resolution to strive to remove any hostility felt towards them by the national industrialists. The workers had to explain that sometimes they would demand improvements, but at the same time they would have to assist the national industrialists in their struggle against imperialist monopoly and explain that a people's democracy, the workers' political goal, would guarantee the existence of the national industrialists.

A SOBSI national conference from September 27 to October 12, 1952 accepted the role of SOBSI within the national united front policy. 'Sectarianism and the "closed-door" policy were thrown far away.'² A new constitution was adopted, to be endorsed by the second national congress in January 1955, from which were deleted all terms that sounded communistic, such as 'socialism,' 'democratic centralism,' 'people's democracy' and 'class struggle', 'because they have created a

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Ibid., pp.23-4.

2

B.O. Hutapea, "Menjambut Tahun 1953" (Welcoming 1953), BM, December 1952, p.163.

division between the SOBSI unions and those who belong to no trade union federation'.¹ The SOBSI central bureau explained that the 1947 constitution had stated SOBSI's intention 'to mobilize all workers to achieve a socialist society', but because the revolution had failed:

the duty of the Indonesian workers now is not to oppose capitalism and build a socialist society, but, together with the peasants, the petty bourgeois and the non-compradore national bourgeois, to oppose imperialism and build a people's democratic society as the first step ... towards a socialist society.²

B.O. Hutapea, prominent in both PKI and SOBSI, wrote an article in September 1952 which explained the new line taken towards the national industrialists.³ He repeated the PKI argument that small and medium capital, which is usually Indonesian, developed an opposition to giant capital and could therefore side with the anti-imperialists.

The proletariat must be able to mobilize this strength [of the small and medium capitalists], not only by supporting the economic and social demands of the national industrialists ... but

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A.M. Adinda, "Menjambut Lahirnja Konstitusi Baru SOBSI" (Welcoming SOBSI's New Constitution), Zaman Baru, October 15, 1952, p.3.

2

Zaman Baru, August 30, 1952, p.1.

3

B.O. Hutapea, "Sikap SOBSI Terhadap 'Modal Nasional'" (SOBSI's Attitude towards 'National Capital'), Zaman Baru, September 30, 1952, pp.11-13, 16.

also by limiting the demands of the workers who work in their enterprises, though without neglecting the workers.

Under the new constitution drawn up by the 1952 conference, membership of SOBSI was opened to:

all organized workers, through their respective trade unions, ... irrespective of ethnic origin, descent, sex, religion and political conviction.¹

The fiction of SOBSI's political independence has been meticulously maintained down to the present. In November 1957, for example, the SOBSI leaders claimed that:

In SOBSI we see each person is free to choose the party he likes. We have persons from Masjumi, PKI, PNI and so on, and a large part are non-party persons.²

At the same time the leaders further claimed that:

The attitude of SOBSI towards the parties is determined by the political activities of the parties for the interests of the workers in general The sympathy of SOBSI and the workers for PKI is because PKI in words and deeds is always active in fighting for the workers' interests. This attitude of SOBSI is also held towards other parties that carry out a programme that benefits the workers.³

Presumably this fiction of political independence must be aimed to deceive the rank and file members and

¹ SOBSI, Konstitusi SOBSI, p.20.

² BB, November 29, 1957, p.1.

³ Ibid., p.4.

potential members who are non-communist but not politically conscious. It could hardly be expected to deceive non-communist politicians and trade unionists. Probably another purpose of this fiction is to officially dissociate SOBSI from PKI so that if the latter were to be subjected to repression, SOBSI could claim immunity as a politically independent organization.¹

Since 1952 the SOBSI leaders, implementing the national united front policy, have been unwilling to antagonize either the government or the national employers. In the words of the central bureau report to the September 1957 national conference:

All persons and groups, irrespective of political affiliation, religious conviction, ethnic group, and party, who are not proved to be agents of Dutch monopoly and who are not proved to be agents of the warmongers, are the friends of the workers.²

Only those who had proved themselves to be 'very reactionary' were to be combatted, while towards others 'we must avoid excessive demands' in the interests of the broadest possible unity. Njono, speaking to the national council at the end of December 1958, elaborated on the theme of

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SOBSI ineffectually claimed such immunity at the end of August 1960 when three regional army commanders placed temporary bans on the activities of PKI and associated organizations.

2

SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen, p.25.

different categories of antagonism within society and the different methods to be employed for their solution: contradictions that arose between the workers and the armed forces, the current cabinet, and the national businessmen, were not major ones.¹ They should be solved by 'democratic means' in order to strengthen the national unity required to solve the most fundamental contradiction, that between the Indonesian people and imperialism.

From the formation of the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet on August 1, 1953, until the end of 1959, with the exception of the brief period of the Masjumi-led Burhanudin Harahap cabinet, SOBSI carefully avoided blaming the government for the deteriorating economic situation, instead blaming the imperialists and their agents. What is more, the SOBSI leaders frequently stated their desire to assist in the economic development of the country. In November 1957 the SOBSI national conference declared of the government's five-year plan that 'the trade unions must assist in its accomplishment', and stated SOBSI's policy to be that of 'struggle within

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RI, January 1959, p.33.

the framework of the country's economic development';¹ in the same month a SOBSI representative participated in the government-sponsored national consultative conference on reconstruction;² and in August 1959 a SOBSI representative took his place on the Sukarno-appointed National Planning Council entrusted with the task of formulating a comprehensive plan for national development. After the government take-over of Dutch enterprises in December 1957, both SOBSI and PKI pledged their support to the efforts to keep them running.

Concerning the non-government Indonesian employers, SOBSI has not only limited its demands upon them, but has continued to declare that its unions 'always assist the national industrialists to overcome the difficulties facing them'.³ SOBSI even has stated its desire to raise productivity and efficiency in their enterprises on

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Sugiri, "The Great Horizons Open to Indonesian Trade Unions", World Trade Union Movement, August-September 1958, p.42.

2

The speech of the SOBSI representative in the conference has been published in booklet form as Runturambi, Politik Pembangunan Sekarang, 22 p.

3

Njono, Tegakkan Pandji-Pandji Persatuan (Uphold the Banners of Unity), Djakarta, 1956, p.9.

the basis of mutual profit.¹ Such magnanimity could be carried too far, however, and the PKI leaders rejected the idea of an increase-production movement to welcome the sixth Party congress on the grounds that such a movement 'could even be a good deed for the bourgeoisie or for the enemies of the people, so that it could harm the people'.²

At the PKI congress in September 1959 Aidit once again expressed concern at the danger of radical labour action.³ He said that economic instability, a decline in the people's standard of living, the threat of mass dismissals and efforts to reduce trade union rights had caused:

unrest among the working masses and may result in desperate or extremely radical measures if they are not given correct leadership. That is why greater attention must be given to improving work in the basic organizations.

In other words, PKI, and therefore SOBSI, was not only not inciting the workers to militant action, but, for the sake

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SOBSI, Program SOBSI Mengenai Perbaikan Ekonomi guna Perbaikan Upah dan Djaminan Sosial kaum Buruh (SOBSI's Programme for Improving the Economy in order to Improve the Workers' Wages and Social Security), Djakarta, 1955, pp.12-13.

2

Editorial, "Mendjelang Kongres ke-VI Partai" (Preparing for the Party's Sixth Congress), KP, November 1958, p.222.

3

Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi, p.169.

of the national united front policy, was preparing to restrain them from radical measures provoked by the worsening economic situation.

Since the beginning of 1952, then, SOBSI and its unions have moderated their demands and actions for the sake of PKI's national united front. The emphasis has been on 'reasonable and just' demands,¹ on the solution of disputes between the workers and national employers, governmental and private, by friendly means. This has not decreased SOBSI's attractiveness for the Indonesian workers for four reasons. First, SOBSI has far greater finances, personnel and zeal with which to make its presence felt among the workers. Second, almost all other trade union organizations are either tied to political parties associated with one or more cabinet - and therefore strictly limited in the militancy they could show and associated with the cabinets' failure to improve the condition of the workers -, or they are specifically religious groupings with a severely limited potential membership among the largely abangan workers. Third, the great majority of Indonesian workers, as the PKI central

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SOBSI, Masaalah Front Persatuan Buruh (The Question of the Workers' United Front), Djakarta, 1959, p.32.

committee resolution of March 1, 1952 indicated, are loath to take radical action. And, fourth, SOBSI has been, despite its moderation and reasonableness, the most effective defender of the workers' interests, the most courageous in pressing for improvements in wages and working conditions.

The following section deals with SOBSI's work in defence of the workers' interests, that is, SOBSI's basic trade union work by which it has won the allegiance of over 50 per cent of organized workers in Indonesia.

6. SOBSI's defence of the workers' interests. It is outside the scope of this thesis to make a detailed analysis of all the work undertaken by SOBSI and its member unions in the promotion of the workers' interests, but this section discusses some aspects of this work, namely, the struggle for trade union freedoms, the formulation of comprehensive and popular programmes of demands, and some examples of large and small successes achieved by SOBSI unions for their members.

SOBSI protests were in part instrumental in ending the prohibition of strikes in 'vital' industries issued first by some regional army commanders in the latter half of 1950 and then by the Natsir government at the beginning

of 1951.¹ The emergency law which replaced it in September 1951 removed the prohibition but established a compulsory labour disputes arbitration system and laid down rules which in effect greatly restricted the opportunity for strikes or lock-outs.² This also drew SOBSI criticism, but it became less raucous when the national united front policy was put into practice. Partly as a result of SOBSI and PKI demands, the September 1951 regulation was replaced by a new law in June 1958 which laid down a slightly altered arbitration system, but which brought trade union representatives into the arbitration committees.³ Meanwhile, however, the state of emergency decreed in March 1957 had placed far greater restrictions on trade union freedom. Because the PKI wished to antagonize neither Sukarno, who had issued the decree, nor the army, which played a major administrative

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The Natsir government's regulation is given in Kementerian Perburuhan (Ministry of Labour), Peraturan Perburuhan dan Peraturan Administrasi Perburuhan (Labour Regulations and Labour Administration Regulations), Djakarta, 1953, pp.435-40.

2

The September 1951 emergency law is given in Kementerian Perburuhan, Himpunan Peraturan-Peraturan Perburuhan (1945-1955) (Collection of Labour Regulations, 1945-1955), Djakarta, 1955, pp.41-9.

3

Interview with Surjanatakusuma, secretary of the central labour disputes arbitration and conciliation committee since its founding in 1951.

role under the decree, SOBSI made few open protests at the infringement of trade union freedom - nor did it protest when, on August 14, 1957, strikes were prohibited in 'vital' enterprises, which meant that virtually all strikes would be illegal.

With the general economic deterioration, in which continuous and sometimes rapid inflation has constantly reduced the already low real value of wages, SOBSI has found no difficulty in discovering grievances to represent. More or less comprehensive lists of demands have been presented to the government on each May Day and New Year, by each SOBSI congress, conference and national council meeting, and during periods of cabinet formation. SOBSI has gained popularity by its repeated demands for wages to be adjusted in line with price increases, for the provision of essential commodities at low prices, for a Lebaran bonus equal to one month's pay, for the provision of increased job opportunities, and for the prohibition of mass dismissals.

The scope of the SOBSI programmes of demands is illustrated by those drawn up by the SOBSI leadership for endorsement by the August 1960 national congress.¹ Within

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The programmes of demands endorsed by the January 1955 congress were not quite so full. They are given in SOBSI, Program SOBSI, pp.13-27.

the draft "Programme of Demands for National Economic Development", designed to appeal to all sections of workers, were 80 points grouped under the headings 'lower prices and speed up production', 'nationalize Dutch enterprises and strengthen the state's sector of the economy', 'increase internal production and implement foreign economic relations of benefit to Indonesia', measures for increasing the production of rice, textiles, oil, sugar and fish, and measures for improving communications.¹ The draft programme of social and economic demands was divided into six categories: a general category dealing with trade union rights and democracy; 44 demands for government employees; four demands for workers in the former Dutch enterprises; 37 demands for workers in private enterprises, with special sub-headings for workers in large foreign enterprises, in national enterprises, and in small enterprises; two demands for young workers; and six 'for the rights and interests of women workers'.² Thus the SOBSI leaders try to appeal to the working class as a whole and to each worker in his particular employment.

¹ BB, May 15, 1960, pp.2-4.

² BB, April 28, 1960, pp.2-4.

Obviously lists of demands without concrete results would hardly serve to maintain SOBSI membership. Examples of some of the major successes achieved by SOBSI since 1949 are given.

The first major SOBSI success was the Sarbupri strike of August and September 1950 when work in virtually all private estates was brought to a halt.¹ The government finally intervened and established a minimum wage for estate workers that was far higher than the previous average wage rate.² Also in 1950 the oil workers successfully struck against dismissals and for workers' compensation and a non-contributory pension.³ In September 1953 Sarbupri strike action forced the government to alter a decision of the arbitration committee and grant a 30 per cent wage increase at a time of stable prices.⁴ SOBSI successes during 1955 included general

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For the background to this strike, the Sarbupri demands, and the favourable government attitude to the strikers, see Kementerian Perburuhan, Dokumentasi Pemogokan Sarbupri sampai 28-8-1950 (Documentation of the Sarbupri Strike up to 28-8-1950), mimeographed, Jogjakarta, 1950, 24 p.

2

Kahin, "Indonesian Politics", in Holland (ed.), Asian Nationalism and the West, p.159, note 19.

3

Wolfard, "Strengthening the Indonesian Trade Union Movement", World Trade Union Movement, May 1-15, 1953, p.20.

4

Hutomo, "Indonesian Plantation Workers Want Higher Wages", World Trade Union Movement, October 16-31, 1953, p.30; Bank Indonesia, Report for the Year 1953-1954, Djakarta, 1954, p.143.

victory of the demand for Lebaran bonuses, wage increases of 10 to 20 per cent for workers in private industry, the free or cheap distribution of essential commodities in some enterprises, a new wage scale for government employees and workers, and considerable increases in wages and benefits for workers in the Shell and Standard Vacuum oil companies.¹ In 1956 strong SOBSI and PKI opposition was in part responsible for the failure of the plan of the Minister of Finance to cut drastically the number of government employees.

During 1957 SOBSI claimed as successful its efforts to obtain a provisional wage increase for government workers.² In the latter half of 1958 all trade unions of government workers jointly raised the demand for a minimum wage of 135 rupiahs per month, a demand previously raised only by SOBSI; in December a resolution incorporating this demand was tabled by PKI and SOBSI members of parliament, and was carried unanimously, accepted by the government, and put into effect as of January 1, 1959.³

¹ Njono, Tegakkan, pp.8-9; RI, April 1957, pp.29-30.

² Njono, "Some Problems of the Indonesian Workers", ITUN, May 1957, p.4.

³ Ngadiman Suseno, "Successes in the Beginning of the Year", ITUN, February-April 1959, p.9; HR, December 18 and 19, 1958.

When the government took over the Dutch enterprises in December 1957, a grave dislocation of inter-island shipping occurred and at the end of 1958 several tens of thousands of harbour workers and seamen were still fully unemployed. SOBSI then proposed that seamen of the former Dutch shipping company who were still unemployed should receive full pay until they found work; the government agreed to give full pay until the middle of 1959.¹

Most of SOBSI's social-economic successes have not, however, been in the spectacular category. They have been won under the slogan formulated at the end of 1951, 'small but successful', as opposed to 'large but failed'.² Within the scope of such 'small but successful' actions are demands for small wage increases, the issue of work clothes, the provision of a trade union room, sports facilities, meal breaks, and increased distributions of essential commodities free or at low prices.

The above scattered examples of successful SOBSI action in the promotion of the workers' interests indicate that SOBSI has effectively proved its worth as an

1

ITUN, January 1959, pp.7-8.

2

Ngadiman, "Apa 'Ketjil Hasil' Itu?" (What is 'Small but Successful?'), BB, December 20, 1957, p.3.

efficient industrial organization. A comparison of the socio-economic gains won by SOBSI through the use of all means at its disposal with those won by other trade union organizations, suggests that SOBSI has been far more active and successful in the basic trade union work which attracts members and binds them to a trade union.¹

7. SOBSI's relations with other trade unions. A PKI central committee resolution of March 1, 1952 viciously attacked the non-SOBSI unions but expressed nonetheless the need to cooperate with them.² SOBSI was slow to seek unity with the competing unions it had been denouncing as imperialist agents, but gradually developed an increasing enthusiasm for this work. The main fields of cooperation have been three: joint committees of trade unions in particular fields of work, joint committees for national celebrations, particularly for May Day, and joint trade union delegations to fill invitations to the Soviet bloc countries.

What is called the cooperation meeting of government employees' trade unions was established in 1953 with

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This general conclusion was reached largely through interviews with officials of the Ministry of Labour, and especially with officials of the labour disputes arbitration and conciliation service.

2

PKI, Kewadjiban, pp.17-18.

originally 32 members, and grew to include 71 unions and 90 per cent of all government workers by July 1959.¹

The cooperation meeting of trade unions in foreign enterprises was established in 1955, and by January 1960 was reported to include 40 unions with 1½ million members.² The cooperation body of estate workers' organizations was formed in 1957 and included Sarbupri plus seven major non-SOBSI unions.³ By September 1957, a cooperation meeting of oil workers' unions had also begun to function.⁴

The first joint May Day committee was formed in 1953 when SOBSI and five other trade union federations, including PNI's KBKI, established a central committee.⁵ Joint May Day celebrations have been held in succeeding years. The countries of the Soviet bloc early invited the Indonesian trade unions to send joint delegations on free visits. One of the earliest reported joint

¹ SOBSI, Sedjarah, p.95; BB, July 15, 1959, p.2. SOBSI claimed that of the workers represented in the 'meeting' in July 1959 sixty per cent belonged to SOBSI unions.

² SOBSI, Sedjarah, p.95; HR, January 7, 1960.

³ HR, December 3, 1959; interview with Iskander Wahono, secretary-general of KBKI, the PNI trade union federation.

⁴ SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen, p.18.

⁵ HR, March 30 and 31, 1953.

delegations attended the 1953 May Day celebrations in Peking and the seventh all-China congress of trade unions, and then went on a tour from Mukden to Canton.¹ Since 1953 the flow of joint trade union delegations to the Soviet bloc has been considerable.²

The question arises, have the joint actions benefitted SOBSI? And the answer would appear to be negative. Joint meetings have provided SOBSI leaders with broader audiences, but they have also presented the SOBSI rank and file as an audience for the non-SOBSI leaders. Joint actions, especially through the various cooperation meetings and bodies, have apparently brought the unions greater success than individual action would

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World Trade Union Movement, July 16-31, 1953, pp.9-10. On their return, the SOBSI and non-communist GSBI delegates issued a joint statement full of praise for the Chinese government, and concluding with the call to all Indonesian trade unionists:

to take more positive action to form a workers' united front. With their united strength the Indonesian workers can certainly take the road of China, free themselves from the shackles of imperialism and build up their homeland.

2

44 Indonesian trade unionists were invited, for example, to attend May Day celebrations in 1957: 20 to China, 11 to the Soviet Union, 8 to North Korea, 3 to North Viet Nam, and 2 to East Germany. Of the 44, only 16 were from SOBSI, while 18 were from other trade union federations, 3 from non-federated unions, 1 from the communist-led village officials' association, and 6 from unidentified unions. BB, April 24, 1957, p.6.

have achieved, but all unions benefit from them and especially the smaller unions, usually non-SOBSI, whose bargaining position would otherwise be much weaker. It is also possible that SOBSI's efforts towards trade union unity have in fact brought the non-SOBSI unions closer together. In the period from 1950 to 1960 trade union organization was characterized by the fragmentation of existing non-SOBSI federations and the creation of a large number of new federations and new unfederated unions - in other words, the opposite of a trend towards unity. On SOBSI initiative, however, the non-SOBSI federations and unions were brought together on various joint committees and for joint actions. Recently they have begun to hold informal talks among themselves in order to prevent SOBSI control of the joint committees and actions, and a trend towards non-SOBSI trade union unity has been observable.¹

In other words, SOBSI's friendship towards and cooperation with the non-SOBSI trade union federations and non-federated unions have not been of direct benefit to SOBSI itself.² The policy has been dictated by PKI's

¹

Interview with Iskander Wahono.

²

The only post-1950 example of militant action by SOBSI against another trade union perhaps gives some evidence that SOBSI would have benefitted from more aggressive

overriding concern to pursue the national united front policy at the level of national politics.

8. SOBSI's political usefulness to PKI. Efficient trade union work in the defence of the workers' interests is not the primary purpose of SOBSI under the guidance of the Aidit leadership. That work is necessary in order to attract the broad mass of the workers, but the primary goal of the PKI leaders is to create in SOBSI, as in every mass organization, an organization that can lend support to the Party's political struggle. Until the present, SOBSI has proved politically useful in a number of related ways: it has provided a source of Party cadres and members, it has provided a platform for pro-communist propaganda, and it has been a valuable assistant in supporting and strengthening the Party in its relations with the other political forces. The Aidit leadership also has endeavoured to create in SOBSI a major source of strength that could prove decisive in the event of a political showdown.

The communist leaders of SOBSI and its member unions are constantly searching for potential Party cadres and

action. In May 1955, SOBSI used its members to break a strike by the PSI-led KBSI, and SOBSI leaders claimed later that the collapse of the strike and the 'unmasking' of the KBSI leaders caused many members of KBSI unions to leave them and join SOBSI.

activists among their members, and use the SOBSI educational machinery, both formal and informal, to raise and guide the political consciousness of their own cadres and activists to the point where they voluntarily enter PKI. Through their publications, bulletin boards and cadres, SOBSI and its unions have faithfully publicized the current PKI line and PKI's defence of the workers' interests. And SOBSI, like the other communist-led mass organizations, has been an important vehicle for preparing the way for the geographical spread of the Party.

The assistance SOBSI has given PKI in the latter's political struggle is far more complex, and can be considered under four headings: the mobilization of electoral support, assistance in creating a favourable atmosphere for the development of the national united front policy, direct pressure to assist PKI on particular issues, and additional support for PKI in conferences and governmental bodies.

In the two national elections of 1955 and the local elections of 1957/1958, SOBSI played a significant part in mobilizing votes for PKI. Before the 1955 elections, SOBSI appointed, at all levels down to the basic organization, general election action committees or special cadres with the task of assisting in the election

campaigns;¹ and on July 15, 1955 the SOBSI secretariat issued a call to all member unions and all SOBSI regional committees and branches to prepare the workers for voting by showing them how to punch the hole through the appropriate symbol on the voting paper.² SOBSI was also used to distribute PKI literature and mobilize crowds for Party meetings.

We have seen how SOBSI has adopted a moderate pose in its dealings with the government and Indonesian employers, and how it has sought cooperation with non-SOBSI unions, - all in order to create the impression that communists are reasonable, responsible persons, and worthwhile allies. SOBSI's moderation and even friendliness were perhaps calculated to allay any fears and suspicions which the non-communists may have harboured regarding the disruptive and aggressive nature of the Indonesian communists. The ability of SOBSI to work amicably with the non-SOBSI unions for their mutual benefit, and perhaps even for the greater benefit of the non-SOBSI unions, should be a lesson to the non-communist politicians that cooperation with PKI at the political level could be beneficial. And if the PKI and its mass

¹ Buletin SOBSI, June 20, 1955, pp.1-2.

² Buletin SOBSI, August 20, 1955, p.8.

organizations are in fact reasonable and well meaning, how then can they be regarded as dangerous? Why should their repression be considered necessary?

The positive pressure that SOBSI, like the other communist-led mass organizations, has applied in support of PKI has been in the form of statements and resolutions, mass meetings and demonstrations, posters and banners, letters, cables, petitions and delegations to the president, to cabinet ministers, speakers of parliament, the president of the supreme court, the attorney-general, the army chief and any other conceivable government authority, and the use or threat of political strikes. Two major examples of SOBSI's use of or threat of political strike action occurred in March 1957. On March 18, SOBSI in South Sumatra held a 24-hour general strike to protest the seizure of power by the regional army commander and to demand the restoration of civil government; and on March 19 a SOBSI delegation warned Suwirjo, the cabinet formateur, that if a cabinet was formed with Masjumi but without PKI, 'SOBSI will not hesitate and is always in readiness to lead a total strike action all over Indonesia'.¹

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ITUN, March 1957, p.6.

On July 12, 1957 a 45-member National Council was installed by Sukarno to assist the cabinet, and for the first time the president included 'functional groups' in governmental bodies. SOBSI received one seat on the National Council, one on the 45-member National Advisory Council appointed on August 15, 1959, one on the 77-member National Planning Council appointed on the same day, and about eight in the appointed parliament installed on June 25, 1960. The SOBSI seats by themselves are not significant, but when added to those of the other communist-led mass organizations they do give important additional representation to PKI.

If the national united front policy fails to enable PKI to take power by peaceful means, then SOBSI might be of crucial importance in any possible show of strength between the political forces. In SOBSI, PKI has an organization that reaches into government ministries, that might be able to bring the economy to a standstill, and that might be able to mobilize large numbers of workers to the side of PKI. Perhaps the threat, spoken or implied, of the use of the massive PKI network given at a time of major political crisis might be able to bring PKI to power. The fundamental question, the real strength of PKI vis-a-vis the other political forces, will be dealt with in the concluding chapter. But some examination

needs to be made here of SOBSI's real strength in the labour field because SOBSI is PKI's most important mass organization, well supplied with funds and cadres, and organized in vital sectors of the economy among those who should be, according to PKI's Marxist analysis, the most militant and politically conscious of the Party's supporters.

The strength SOBSI could exert in the event of a political crisis depends not only on the size of its own membership and body of well-trained cadres but also on other factors: the size, and occupational and regional distribution of the non-SOBSI unions and of the unorganized workers, and what might be termed the character of the SOBSI membership.

Until the Madiun rebellion, SOBSI and its member unions had a virtual monopoly of trade union activities within the Republic. But, as has been seen, the rebellion and the later tightening of PKI control over SOBSI led many trade unions and unionists to leave. The history of the appearance, disappearance, fragmentation and growth of the non-SOBSI unions since Madiun is most complicated, but the general outline indicates a steady increase in the combined size of the non-SOBSI unions.¹

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The story of trade union developments in this period is given in outline in Sandra Nitidihardjo, Gerakan Buruh

The following paragraphs are concerned only with indicating the relative sizes of the non-SOBSI unions in 1960.

Several trade union federations exist that are tied to particular political parties. The largest, PNI's KBKI, was founded in December 1952 and by 1958 claimed over one million members; at the beginning of 1960 it claimed 143 branches with at least one full-timer in each branch.¹ The Socialist Party's KBSI in March 1958 claimed 376,000 members,² and contained three important unions: the railway workers' PBKA with a claimed membership of 32,000 at the end of 1959, the estate workers' Perbupri with 120,000, and a union of civil aviation workers which claimed 60 per cent of all workers in that field.³ The Labour Party runs a small federation with perhaps 30,000 members. Among the trade union federations based on religion, the largest is the Masjumi-

Indonesia (The Indonesian Labour Movement), mimeographed, Djakarta, 1956, pp.79-97; Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, pp.25-130; also in the Ministry of Labour's periodical Tindjauan Masa'alah Perburuhan (Survey of the Labour Question). I also received much assistance from officials of the Ministry of Labour, and especially from cadres of the various trade union federations.

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Interview with Iskander Wahono.

2

Tindjauan Masa'alah Perburuhan, May 1958, p.8.

3

Interview with A.Z. Abidin, secretary-general of KBSI.

inclined SBII, founded at the end of 1947 and hopefully claiming 850,000 members at the end of 1959.¹ Three other Islamic trade union federations exist, but their combined size cannot be above 100,000 members. Both Christian Protestants and Roman Catholics also have their own small federations.

In 1954 there were about 980 trade union organizations, with a total claimed membership of 711,000, unaffiliated to any central federation. They included many of the trade unions for white collar workers in banks, air transport, the police, government ministries and public services.² Among the more important non-federated unions is the teachers' union, with 128,000 members, and a North Sumatra estate workers' union with up to 100,000 members.³

The rise of the non-SOBSI unions has broken the monopoly of almost every SOBSI union in its particular sphere.⁴ SOBSI leaders, non-SOBSI unionists and Ministry

¹ Interview with Agus Sudono, first secretary of SBII.

² Richardson, "Indonesian Labor Relations", Industrial and Labor Relations Review, October 1958, vol.XII, no.1, p.65.

³ ITUN, February 1960, p.2; Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.39.

⁴ For example, the monopoly of Sarbupri has been broken by the rise of the KBSI affiliate Perbupri, Sarbupri-SOBRI, Sarbupri-Coerdian, the KBKI's estate workers'

of Labour officials alike estimate that SOBSI now includes perhaps 50 to 60 per cent of all organized labour. But the collapse of the SOBSI monopoly means that there is now virtually no labour area in which SOBSI could cause a complete stoppage without the support of the non-SOBSI unions. Furthermore, the reservoir of unemployed and non-unionized workers¹ faces any go-it-alone strike by SOBSI with the possibility of defeat - unless it were in a highly skilled field.

The second major factor involved in any estimate of SOBSI's real strength in the labour field is the character of the SOBSI membership. In other words, how militant are the SOBSI members? How far would they follow the

union, SBII, Sarbumusi of the NU, and regional unions; the monopoly of SBKA among railway workers has been broken by the KBSI affiliate PBKA, which is now dominant in West Java and is increasing in East Java with the help of the Moslem parties, and by the small, PNI-led KBKA; Perbum now has perhaps only 50 or 60 per cent of all oil workers; and the SOBSI post, telegraph and telephone union now contains only a minority of workers in that field.

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See above, p.37, footnote 2, for estimates of the number of unemployed and underemployed. The number of non-organized workers has been estimated by Njono at three millions, by Tedjasukmana at about two millions; Njono, "Beberapa Peladjaran dari Kongres Nasional ke-II SOBSI" (Some Lessons from SOBSI's Second National Congress), BM, January 1955, p.8; Tedjasukmana, The Political Character, p.25. Tedjasukmana's estimate specifically excluded workers in 'very small undertakings' who 'usually do not form associations'.

SOBSI leaders in the event of a political crisis in militant action that would be clearly pro-PKI? The answers given by non-communist trade union leaders, security police officers and Ministry of Labour officials are fairly uniform: 'I do not believe that PKI could lead the workers in political strikes', 'SOBSI no longer dare start a strike alone; it could not, alone, lead strikes, especially of a political nature',

The SOBSI members have a strong attachment to their trade union leaders, but I am not at all convinced that in a political crisis many would follow PKI against the government for clearly political purposes,

'If there was a grave political crisis, the SOBSI workers would say "go fight for yourself" and then go home'.¹

The extent to which the SOBSI members would follow their leaders in clearly political action would depend, of course, on where the lines of political division were drawn. But if PKI were opposed to the government and without a powerful ally such as the president, it is very doubtful indeed whether the SOBSI members, with some few exceptions, would militantly support PKI. This relative passivity requires some explanation.

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These are representative quotations from conversations with me.

Four factors mentioned in the Introduction help explain the passivity of the Indonesian workers.¹ First, the majority of workers are in small enterprises, which in any country are the most difficult for trade unions to organize for militant action. Second, the small employers still accept, in general, a certain fatherly responsibility towards their workers, which helps prevent the growth of antagonistic labour relations. Third, about 35 per cent of the workers are women, and more in some of the largescale industries,² who also constitute an obstacle to the development of militant trade unionism, the moreso in a country where women are traditionally 'malu', shy. Fourth, and most important, the Indonesian workers are usually not far removed in time or family connections from the peasantry, and retain a strong sense of acceptance of authority or the tradition of open obedience. Certainly the ingrained behavioural patterns of the village have undergone change with the migration to the cities, especially among the literate and skilled workers and among those who have lived in the towns for a long time; but the patterns do not appear to have changed so much among most workers.

¹ See above, pp. 26-7, 32-4.

² See below, p.442 , note 1.

Throughout their history, moreover, Indonesian trade unions have been sternly discouraged from militant action. The workers have received neither the leadership nor the experience in industrial action necessary to rid them of their obedience to established authority and to develop the traits of solidarity in action and aggressiveness in politics. During the Dutch and Japanese rule the growth of trade unions was severely curtailed,¹ and the few strikes were quickly suppressed.² When trade unions were formed after the proclamation of independence, they were not the spontaneous creation of the workers but the fabrication of literate middle class persons. Even today, the national and regional leadership of SOBSI and its member unions contains hardly a single cadre of other than white-collar origin, and the SOBSI leaders complain in private of the great difficulty of finding workers who can be trained as trade union cadres. During the revolution strikes were anti-patriotic and reduced to a minimum, and from the end of 1950 military and government regulations as well as PKI's national united front policy

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In 1935 there were 111 trade unions with 72,675 members, and in 1939 75 unions with 109,547 members; Peter H.W. Sitsen, Industrial Development of the Netherlands Indies, New York, 1942, pp.46-7.

2

In 1939 there were only 18 strikes, of from 1 to 18 days, involving a total of 1,628 workers; ibid., p.47.

have also reduced the number of strikes. There have been very few strikes since 1956.

When an ordinary worker enters a trade union, what does he expect to put into it, and to receive from it? He joins because the union offers to help him face problems raised by his employment, and more often than not he joins a SOBSI union because it is the largest, the best organized and most successful. His membership is, however, largely passive. Under the labour disputes arbitration and conciliation system established in 1951, when the worker has a complaint or a problem he takes it to the trade union cadre, usually a person of higher, 'superior' social status, who then takes it to the employer or a government committee for solution. The worker himself rarely participates in direct action. Whereas in the village the peasant traditionally has taken problems to the 'bapak' (father) lurah or government official, the urban worker takes his problems to a new 'bapak' who then negotiates with 'the authorities' on his behalf.

If the above general picture is correct, the workers have no or very little experience in methods of direct action (and SOBSI is still striving to prevent 'radical' actions), they are not conscious of the power they could exert by such action, and they look upon the union as a

sort of 'bapak' who mediates between themselves and the more or less incomprehensible forces that weigh upon them. Such a picture is over-simplified and certainly would not apply to some of the SOBSI unionists, perhaps, for example, the more skilled railway workers. But it does seem to have wide validity. And if it does, then it means that SOBSI could not be of the importance its numbers indicate were PKI to face a show of strength with its political enemies. The workers do not have the militancy, the unity, the training in direct action, or even the belief in their own strength, to follow SOBSI and PKI against 'the authorities' if 'the authorities' were to demonstrate their determined opposition.¹

(b) Direct Party Work.

Although the Aidit leadership has used the mass organizations to gather support and potential members, it has been careful not to obscure PKI's primary position as the militant defender of the working class. The mass

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As an illustration of this point, in March 1960 the SOBSI seamen's and harbour workers' union, which has a virtual monopoly in the ports of Java, tried to stage strikes in Tandjung Priok, Semarang and Surabaya. A display of force by the army caused the strikes to collapse immediately and the workers to submit without protest to the arrest of the union cadres. And in this example the union was pressing justifiable social-economic demands, not political ones.

organizations swell the vociferous campaigns for popular demands, such as the provision of essential commodities at low prices, but PKI is pointed to as the clear leader of the campaigns. At one level, PKI is presented to the workers as the party most able in representing their material demands, but at another level PKI is presented as the champion of a political system which will ensure social and economic justice for the masses.

At the present stage of the Indonesian revolution, PKI offers a people's democracy. The PKI programme endorsed in March 1954 promised that for the workers people's democracy would mean industrial expansion, a minimum wage, an annual holiday of at least two weeks with full pay, a social security system paid for by the state and the capitalists, price controls, a six-hour work day in mines and other unhealthy employment, the abolition of 'semi-feudal exploitation of work', such as contract labour, the prohibition of female, child and youth labour in unhealthy work, the free development of trade unions, and the right of labour to make collective agreements.¹ In the election manifesto endorsed at the same time, the

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PKI, Program PKI (PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1954, pp.16-17.

PKI promise was contained in a single sentence: 'For the workers, to vote PKI means rice, fair wages and just social security'.¹

For the 1957/1958 regional and local elections, PKI issued election programmes for each province and for each kabupaten and autonomous city. The PKI election programme for Surabaya illustrates the promises PKI has made to the workers.² Apart from promises of a general appeal, such as improved educational and medical facilities, those designed particularly for the urban worker included:

1. to fight for a minimum daily wage of seven rupiahs for municipal workers;
2. to increase the supply of water;
3. to endeavour to increase the supply of electricity to the kampongs;
4. to build and repair alleys, roads and bridges;
5. to fight for the immediate legalization of houses built by squatters on disputed land;

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PKI, Manifes Pemilihan Umum PKI (PKI's General Election Manifesto), Djakarta, 1954, p.19. It should be noted that the verb 'memilih' means both 'to vote' and 'to elect'.

2

Program Secom PKI Kotapradja Surabaya untuk Pemilihan DPRD Kotapradja Surabaya (The Programme of the Surabaya City PKI Section Committee for the Elections for the Surabaya City Representative Council), Surabaya, 1957, pp.9-10.

6. to make more land available for kampongs and industry;

7. to fight for the removal of discrimination against women in the spheres of wages and jobs; and

8. to increase the number of courses for teaching the various trades.

The PKI slogan to attract the Surabaya workers was: 'For the workers and government employees, to vote PKI means proper wages, housing, social security and work conditions'.

Besides promises of a better life, and its work in the mass organizations, PKI has also undertaken a variety of tasks aimed at winning the support of the urban population. The Party and its mass organizations have collected relief for victims of floods and kampong fires,¹ and some Party committees have formed local fire brigades to assist the municipal brigades.² PKI work brigades have also helped to clean kampong gutters, and to build and repair kampong houses, public lavatories and bathing

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The danger of fire in the densely packed and inflammable kampongs is very great during the dry season, and each year thousands of homes are destroyed.

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In November 1959, for example, the PKI Djakarta Raja committee instructed all committees, cadres and members in its area to form fire brigades in each kampong; HR, November 5, 1959.

places, and gutters.¹ So far, however, PKI and its mass organizations have been unable to inspire any large number of their members to join such brigades.

An important function filled by PKI and its mass organizations among the poor sections of society, both urban and rural, is the provision of mutual assistance in times of need, such as deaths, marriages, births, and illness, a valuable service to people near or at subsistence level and with no or few social security services. Since 1958 PKI has written and talked much on the need to establish cooperatives, including consumer cooperatives which would free especially the workers from the speculative practices of the shopkeepers. As yet, however, concrete results have not been announced, and as the emphasis of the cooperative campaign has been in the rural areas, the campaign will be dealt with more fully in the section on the peasantry.

In many cities of Java a system of kampong government has been established distinct from the municipal and national government structure. Rukun-rukun tetangga (associations of neighbours) are united in rukun-rukun kampong (kampong associations) which in turn are united

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For the results achieved by Party work brigades in preparation for the September 1959 congress, see above, p.187.

in an all-city federation. The strength, and sphere of activities of the kampong government systems vary from city to city and they have disappeared altogether in some, such as Malang,¹ but in Surabaya, the second largest town in Indonesia and the most important industrially, PKI built the RKKS (Rukun Kampong Kota Surabaya, Surabaya City Kampong Association) into 'a system of community organizations ... strong enough to compete with the official local administrative system'.²

The Japanese had originally established the rukun kampong system in Surabaya during their occupation as a distribution network for scarce commodities, as a mutual surveillance system, and as a means of mobilizing forced labour and semi-military guard units.³ In January 1950 the RKKS was established under PKI direction. In the absence of a government structure below the level of the 'lingkungan', of which there are 37 in Surabaya, the RKKS became the effective government in the kampongs. When, in the second half of 1950, the government appointed

¹ Letter from Irene Tinker Walker to the author, October 25, 1960.

² John D. Legge, Problems of Regional Autonomy in Contemporary Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1957, p.23.

³ The best account of the RKKS is given in Boyd R. Compton, Red Surabaya, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1956, pp.8-15.

officials for the lingkungan, they were mostly the candidates proposed by the RKKS branches.

During the succeeding years, it was difficult to distinguish between the functioning of the R.K.K.S. branch at the ward level and the ward government itself.¹

The RKKS collects fees from each household, builds schools, organizes community work to clean gutters and repair alleys, subsidizes burials, and arranges for the night guards that are usually led by a member of Pemuda Rakjat.

The political usefulness of the RKKS to PKI has been considerable: it has mobilized people for rallies and demonstrations, mobilized voters in elections, and has served to bring those kampong dwellers with greater initiative into the PKI orbit and then into the Party itself. Although the local army commander in April 1958 issued a regulation forbidding the RKKS to engage openly in politics,² the RKKS could not be banned because, in the absence of a government structure below the lingkungan level, it was needed to perform the government duties of census taking, kampong cleaning and security, and the distribution of coupons for essential commodities. As of

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Ibid., p.9.

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This regulation is given in Kotapradja Surabaya (Surabaya City), Madjalah Penerangan (Information Magazine), no.6, 1959, pp.17-20.

May 1960, PKI members or sympathizers still controlled 26 of the 27 lingkungan offices.

The importance of the rukun kampong system in other Javanese towns is not comparable to that of the RKKS, but the PKI exploitation of the system outside Surabaya still awaits research.

2. The Peasants

(a) The PKI Attitude to the Peasants.

During the revolution PKI had largely ignored the peasantry. Then, in August 1948, the politbureau admitted past errors and declared that 'Without the active support of the peasants, the national revolution will certainly be defeated'.¹ One of the main tasks of the fifth national congress scheduled for October 1948 was to formulate an agrarian programme that could unite the poor, small and medium peasants with the workers, that is, with the Party.² The congress was not held nor the programme formulated because in September the Madiun rebellion broke out and in December the Dutch launched their second

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PKI, Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia (New Road for the Indonesian Republic), (seventh edition), Djakarta, 1953, p.10.

2

PKI, Lahirnja Partai Komunis Indonesia dan Perkembangannja (The Birth and Growth of PKI), Djakarta, 1951, p.22.

attack on the Republic. For almost five years after Madiun the PKI leaders devoted their resources to reconstructing and expanding support in the towns and in the trade unions. Some work was done in analyzing rural conditions,¹ but it was not translated into practical action. This phase came to an end in July 1953 when Aidit published an article which turned the major focus of Party activity onto the rural areas.²

Aidit stated that 'The agrarian revolution is the essence of the people's democratic revolution in Indonesia'. Therefore it was vital for the Party to win the allegiance of the peasants. He admitted that the peasant mass was indifferent to and not rarely suspicious of the Party, and blamed this on several factors: first:

there is not yet a single Party member who thoroughly understands, and very few who know about, agrarian relations and the life and demands of the peasants ;

second, the communist-led peasant organizations had raised the slogans 'the right of the state over all land' and 'nationalization of all land', which made the peasants

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See, for example "Masaalah Tani di Indonesia" (The Peasant Question in Indonesia), BM, June 15-July 1, 1951, pp.303-6; PKI, "Program Perubahan Tanah dan Tuntutan kaum Tani" (The Programme of Land Change and Peasant Demands), BM, December 1951, pp.7-22, 32-6.

2

D.N. Aidit, "Haridepan Gerakan Tani Indonesia" (The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement), BM, July 1953, pp.332-40.

suspicious because they did not understand them; and third, the Party did not yet have a 'correct and revolutionary' agrarian programme to attract the peasants. He called for an end to the 'serious deficiency' in Party work among the peasants, and for an expansion of Party membership in the villages, especially among the labourers and poor peasants.

Aidit scornfully rejected the statements of some cadres in the rural areas that the peasants in their areas had no problems which could be exploited in order to bind them to the forces of the revolution. All cadres must realize that the peasants had many demands, and that:

For each demand a movement can be made based on a slogan, for example: 'lower land rents', 'lower the interest rate on loans', 'lower state taxes', 'cancel arrears in land tax', 'abolish setoran paksa', 'abolish pologoro', 'abolish rodi', 'don't touch the land that is worked by the peasants', 'give unworked land to the peasants', 'the peasants' right to determine the rent of the land leased to foreign estates', 'arm the peasants in order to crush the DI, TII and other terrorist gangs', 'assistance in seeds and tools for the peasants', 'one agricultural school for each ketjamatan', 'abolish the fee for permission to kill and sell livestock', 'abolish the fee for identification papers', 'improve the old irrigation and make new', 'form a village government that defends the people', etc., etc. [sic] These are not all the slogans of the peasants' everyday demands. There are too many to be included here.¹

¹

Ibid., p.339. Pologoro is unpaid labour and services performed by the villagers for the village officials; rodi

It was the duty of Party cadres and members, Aidit wrote, to decide, through discussion with the peasants, which was the most urgent demand in any place at a given time.

As the basic slogans with which the Party could attract the peasant masses, Aidit laid down 'land for the peasants', 'distribution of land to the peasants', and 'peasant private ownership of land'.

With these slogans the peasants will certainly have no doubts about our programme, and they will even support it with all their strength. This is the guarantee for firm alliance between the workers and peasants, the guarantee for a strong national united front, the guarantee for our victory.¹

Aidit was aware, however, of the danger of 'adventurism', of trying to bring the peasants' struggle to a higher level without preparatory organizational and educational work, and he carefully laid down techniques by which the peasants could be brought by stages towards the point of implementing the 'land for the peasants' slogan.

is compulsory, unpaid labour for the government. Setoran paksa, in this context, is probably the compulsory sale of a certain proportion of the rice harvest to the government, at prices fixed by the government and below the market price.

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Ibid., p.335. Aidit made clear to the Party cadres who would be reading his article, however, that peasant private ownership of land would not be the final stage of the agrarian revolution. The peasants' own experience plus 'the leadership and education of the Party' would lead to the voluntary abandonment of private for collective agriculture.

The March 1954 Party congress endorsed the new emphasis on the importance of peasant participation in the revolution, and clarified:

the basic and most immediate tasks of the Communist Party, that is, to mobilize the peasants and draw them into the struggle to eliminate the remnants of feudalism, and to develop the anti-feudal agrarian revolution.¹

Since the fifth congress the Aidit leadership has continued to acknowledge the agrarian revolution as the essential element of the Indonesian revolution. In December 1960, for example, Aidit referred to 'the emphasis on activities among the peasants within the framework of strengthening the national front.'²

The Aidit leadership has classified the peasantry into several broad social divisions based on land ownership.³ It has been aware that in order to mobilize the support of the non-landlord elements, then it must first understand the specific interests and demands of the different social divisions. Because the conditions of the peasants vary widely from region to region, and even

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D.N. Aidit, "Indonesian People in Struggle for Complete Abolition of Colonial Regime", FALP, August 27, 1955, p.5.

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D.N. Aidit, "Madju Terus Menggempur Imperialisme dan Feodalisme!" (Continue to Advance to Destroy Imperialism and Feudalism!), HR, January 2, 1961.

3

See above, pp.71-3.

from village to village, and because so little information is available concerning agrarian relations in Indonesia, the Party leaders have endeavoured to collect their own information. This task was begun systematically early in 1958. At the end of that year Party cadres were instructed to 'go down to the villages', to live, eat and work with the peasants, in order to gather first-hand information in preparation for the PKI national peasants' conference in April 1959.¹ Since the conference, both PKI and BTI have continued to compile information from villages (especially in Java) on such matters as land tenure, interest rates charged by moneylenders, and the survival of feudal customs.² It is hoped that this information will enable PKI and BTI to make their appeals to the different sections of the peasantry more concrete and therefore more effective.

(b) Building an Organization among the Peasants.

1. PKI. Prior to the March 1954 congress, PKI had made few direct inroads into the villages. At the

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"Laporan Mengenai Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan kaum Tani" (Report on Party Work among the Peasants), BM, April-May 1959, p.138.

2

For some of the results of the information-collecting campaign, see ST, January 1959, p.10; and Asmu, "Masaalah Landreform" (The Question of Land Reform), BM, January 1960, pp.21-5.

congress it was announced that less than half of the 165,206 Party members were of peasant origin. It is reasonable to assume that a good proportion of those of peasant origin were in the estate, forestry and sugar-mill areas where SOBSI unions had already been active for some years. The membership drive which followed the congress was aimed particularly at the peasants. Before the end of 1955 claimed Party membership had passed one million, and was given as one and a half millions at the beginning of 1958, at which figure it stayed until the sixth congress in September 1959. In December 1958 it was reported that peasants constituted over half the Party membership, while the sixth congress was informed that the proportion of peasant members was still increasing.¹ These official Party figures indicate that between March 1954 and December 1958 the number of peasant members increased from less than 80,000 to well over three-quarters of a million.

In his report to the sixth congress in September 1959, Anwar Sanusi presented statistics on the distribution of the Party organization in Java at that time

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PKI, Bahan-Bahan untuk Kongres Nasional ke-VI Partai Komunis Indonesia (Materials for the Sixth PKI National Congress), Djakarta, 1958, p.53; PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum, p.66.

which also can be used to visualize the situation in July 1956.¹ According to his figures, in July 1956 PKI had a branch in about 34 per cent of the 21,047 villages in Java, and increased this to 84.2 per cent in the next three years; in July 1956 PKI had a subsection in about 70 per cent of the 1,449 ketjamatans, and increased this to 98.7 per cent. From an analysis of the 1957 local election results, the 'vacant' villages and ketjamatans would be in the strongly Moslem areas of West Java and East Java, including Madura.

Vital to strengthening the Party organization in the rural areas has been the creation of good cadres for work among the peasants. This has been difficult in the Javanese villages for a number of reasons.² First, the more literate and politically conscious peasants who tend to become cadres in both the Party and the mass organizations are often middle and rich peasants or even landlords, and retain the attitudes of their social position towards the poorer peasants. Second, in the relative social peace of the village, many cadres,

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Amir Anwar Sanusi, The Results of the First Three-Year Plan, mimeographed, Djakarta, 1959, p.3.

²

The following information was gathered largely from conversations with cadres of PKI and its mass organizations; see also, "Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, pp.135, 144-5.

themselves of peasant origin, are loath to create social disunity in the village or have failed to recognize the existence of landlord exploitation. Third, some PKI cadres have tended to become landlords once they become village officials, and to ignore the sufferings of the poorer peasants. Fourth, the educational level of peasant members is generally so low that they must be taught literacy and basic general knowledge before they can receive political training. And, fifth, cadres from urban areas often do not know the regional language required, or are simply unwilling to engage in rural work.

The low level of the quality of peasant cadres was admitted in "The Report on Party Work among the Peasants" submitted to the PKI national peasants' conference in mid-April 1959:

The majority of Party cadres at the subsection and branch levels in the villages have not yet deeply studied the class divisions, the characteristics of each class and the class relations in the village. In general they are still unable to distinguish the landlord from the rich peasant, and still do not know the difference between the rich peasant and the medium peasant. This means that they do not yet thoroughly know who are the friends and who are the enemies of the revolution.¹

Worse still, the cadres even up to the section level did not, in general, know:

¹

"Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.131.

who constitute the landlord group and what is the history of their land ownership, the means by which the landlord steals the peasants' land, the forms of exploitation and the evil nature of the exploitation of the landlord and moneylender, the way the landlord and moneylender squeeze and deceive the peasants, the way the landlord uses government officials and thugs to oppress the peasants.¹

The work of the Party in educating a body of cadres has been detailed in the section on building the Party. But special attention has had to be given to peasant cadres because of their generally lower quality. A report presented to the central committee in July 1957 proposed conferences between peasant activists as a means of improving their quality.² Before the national peasants' conference the Party launched a 'go down to the villages' and 'three-togethers' movement, as has been described above, partly as a way to increase the middle and upper cadres' understanding of village life. In the conference itself, the Party leaders called for special schools for peasant cadres, and for the replacement of Party rural

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Ibid., p.132.

2

"Laporan Tambahan Mengenai Masaalah Mengembangkan Pekerdjaan Massa kaum Tani" (Additional Report on the Question of Developing Mass Work among the Peasants), HR, July 10, 1957.

workers whose individual interests conflicted with those of the peasants.¹

In short, by September 1959 the PKI organization had been extended into the great majority of Javanese villages and into virtually every village in the strongly PKI area of Central and East Java. An intensive effort in cadre education had greatly increased both the number and quality of rural cadres. Their quality still left much to be desired, but the Party leaders were aware of the deficiencies and were taking measures to eradicate them.

It should be noted here that the Aidit leadership in its work of attracting and mobilizing the peasants had used not only PKI and the specifically peasant mass organizations but also the youth organization and the women's organization, the majority of whose members are villagers.

2. BTI. When the Aidit leadership won control of PKI in January 1951, the Party had complete control of one national peasant organization, RTI (Rukun Tani Indonesia, Indonesian Peasants' Union), disguised control of BTI, and influence in a third, SAKTI (Sarekat Tani Indonesia,

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"Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.146; B.O. Hutapea, "Some Lessons from the First National Peasants Conference of the C.P.I.", RI, August 1959, pp.32-3.

Indonesian Peasants' Association). On July 2, 1951 these three organizations established the FPT (Front Persatuan Tani, Peasants' United Front) with a joint programme of demands.¹ For over two years the FPT operated as a fairly closely-knit body, issuing statements and demands concerning the major peasant problems and political events. In December 1952 the FPT even organized a joint cadre course, using as study material what had been used in an RTI cadre course in June 1951, the first reported peasants' cadre course in Indonesia.² In December 1951, the FPT claimed half a million members,³ the great majority of whom must have been in Java.

At the beginning of 1953 the communist leaders of RTI proposed the fusion of BTI, SAKTI and itself. The communists in BTI had finally removed the remaining non-communists from the leadership of the organization and readily agreed to the proposal. But although the SAKTI executive committee also agreed, an internal struggle with members of the small Trotskyite party, Acoma,

¹ Ichhtisar Gerakan Tani (Survey of the Peasant Movement), July-August 1951, p.15.

² BTI, Tentang Agitasi dan Propaganda (Concerning Agitation and Propaganda), Djakarta, 1954, p.3.

³ Sin Po, December 27, 1951.

prevented the fusion for over two more years.¹ From September 14 to 20, 1953 BTI and RTI held a fusion congress, the joint organization retaining the name BTI.² At the time of the fusion, BTI claimed 240,000 members, RTI 120,000.³ Once the communist wing in SAKTI was confident of its own control of the organization, a SAKTI congress was held in June 1955 which accepted fusion with BTI.⁴

By the time of the fusion between BTI and RTI, PKI was concentrating its efforts in the rural areas, and BTI began to grow rapidly. In March 1954 it claimed 800,000 members.⁵ One year later it claimed 170 branches in 136 of the 162 kabupatens in Indonesia, sub-branches in 7,638 of the 43,249 villages, and a total membership of 2,027,500.⁶ When SAKTI fused with BTI it claimed to

¹ The difficulties faced by the communist leaders of SAKTI in bringing about fusion with BTI are given in Sidik Kertapati, Untuk Persatuan dan Memperluas Perjuangan Tani (For Unity and Extending the Peasants' Struggle), Djakarta, 1955, pp.24-37.

² HR, September 21 and 22, 1953.

³ D.N. Aidit, "Mengatasi Kelemahan Kita" (Overcoming Our Weaknesses), in his Pilihan Tulisan, vol.I, p.502, note 14.

⁴ Sidik Kertapati, Untuk Persatuan, p.44.

⁵ "Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.129.

⁶ HR, April 5, 1955.

have 42 branches, 378 sub-branches, and 200,000 members.¹ At the end of 1955, after what must have been a massive membership drive parallel to the drives by PKI and its other mass organizations in preparation for the general elections, BTI claimed 3,315,820 members.² Thus, according to the figures issued by the peasant organizations, the number of peasants in the PKI-controlled organizations had risen from 360,000 in September 1953 when RTI fused with BTI, to over 3.3 millions at the end of 1955.

The BTI national council meeting from March 26 to 28, 1955 reviewed the work of the organization.³ Until that time, BTI had been active principally in the areas of estate and forestry lands where BTI could easily exploit the problems of the peasant squatters who had occupied large tracts of land during the Japanese occupation and the revolution. The council decided that while consolidation was required in such areas, BTI had to extend its activities into the ordinary villages. This required cadre courses to explain the BTI constitution and the

¹ Sidik Kertapati, Untuk Persatuan, p.23.

² HR, July 23, 1956.

³ The report of the executive committee of the national council to the council meeting is given in full in ST, March 1955, pp.1, 6-7.

class divisions and forms of exploitation in the villages; the increased distribution of the periodical "Suara Tani" (Voice of the Peasants); and improved methods of work, the implementation of collective leadership, and the activation of members' meetings. The question was also raised of purging those landlord elements in the organization, especially those in positions of leadership, who had entered in order to intimidate or persuade the peasants against resorting to 'radical' action.¹

By July 1956 BTI claimed to have 188 branches in 148 kabupatens and cities, and an organization in 1,290 of the 3,139 ketjamatans.² The membership was still that quoted in December 1955.

In the fifth BTI congress, from September 5 to 12, 1957, Sardjono, who is reportedly a close associate of Alimin, was removed from the position of chairman and given the honorary post of third vice-chairman. The new leadership consisted entirely of persons of proved loyalty

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Asmu, "Beladjar dari Sidang Pleno DPP-BTI ke-III untuk Mengatasi Kelemahan Pekerdjaan Partai dilapangan Perdjuaan Tani" (Learning from the Third Plenum of the BTI National Council in order to Overcome Weaknesses in the Party's Work in the Sphere of the Peasants' Struggle), BM, February-March 1955, p.61.

2

HR, July 23, 1956.

to the Aidit leadership.¹ It was claimed that BTI now had 201 branches, 1,323 ketjamatan-level organizations, 13,787 village-level sub-branches, and 3,390,286 members.² The heavy concentration in Java is revealed in the following figures:

<u>Province</u>	<u>Branches</u>	<u>Ketjamatan Organi- zations</u>	<u>Sub- branches</u>	<u>Members</u>
Djakarta Raja	3	9	76	20,358
West Java	19	257	1,744	657,134
Central Java	38	416	4,533	1,160,654 ³
East Java	<u>29</u>	<u>422</u>	<u>4,906</u>	<u>1,163,894</u>
Total:	89	1,104	11,259	3,002,040
Total outside Java:	112	219	2,528	388,246

¹ The list of leaders elected in the congress is given in ST, October 1957, p.3.

² ST, January 1959, pp.6-7.

³ BTI's membership claims have not been consistent. In April 1958, for example, BTI in Central Java claimed to have 37 branches and 600,000 members; TI, April 10, 1958. Sudisman, a member of the PKI politbureau, stated in December 1957 that:

BTI ... has 1.6 million members and is able to mobilize more than three million peasants in actions to demand that empty lands of the Dutch estates be distributed to the landless peasants;

Sudisman, "Semangat Bukit 1211 Membadjakan Rakjat Korea dalam Mengalahkan Agresi dan Membangun Sosialisme" (The Spirit of Hill 1211 Steels the Korean People in Defeating Aggression and Developing Socialism), BM, December 1957, p.511.

The only significant membership claims outside Java were for North Sumatra, 152,094, and South Sumatra, 108,210, but there were already two province-level organizations in Kalimantan, 'several' kabupaten-level branches in Sulawesi, and BTI organizations in many of the smaller islands of East Indonesia and Nusatenggara, from Bali to Halmahera and the Aru archipelago.¹

Among the proposals contained in the executive council's report to the congress were: the further expansion of membership and easier conditions for acceptance of members; an extensive anti-illiteracy drive among BTI activists and the peasant masses; increased distribution of "Suara Tani" as a propaganda tool and a means of raising the cadres' political awareness; and regional conferences to discuss common experiences and problems.²

In April 1959 BTI claimed 3½ million members, or 14 per cent of all adult peasants, branches in almost every kabupaten, organizations in 45 per cent of all ketjamatans,

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Hartojo, "Luaskan Aksi-Aksi kaum Tani untuk Mengembangkan Kekuatan Progresif" (Extend Peasant Actions in order to Develop the Progressive Force), ST, October 1957, p.11.

2

Loc.cit.

and sub-branches in 35 per cent of all villages.¹ Growth since the fifth congress had been largely effected outside Java, especially in Atjeh, Bali, Sumba, Flores and Timor. The national council which met in that month emphasized the need to adapt the form of organization at the village level to the local everyday needs of the peasants. Members should be organized not only in groups based on place of residence, but also in groups based on units of work, for example groups of renters of landlords' land. But, 'besides BTI and cooperatives are also needed arisan and sports groups and various mutual assistance groups ..., death associations, etc.'.²

Of the greatest long-term importance for BTI are its efforts to produce a large and capable cadre force. The generally poor quality of PKI's peasant cadres has already been referred to, but the cadre situation within BTI is far worse in terms of both numbers and quality. As late

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"Laporan Umum Sidang DPP Pleno II BTI" (General Report to the BTI Second National Council Plenum), supplement to ST, May-June 1959, pp.29-30.

2

Among the ethnic Javanese, a family in which a death has occurred is obliged to provide certain ritual feasts for kin and neighbours, and the proper fulfilment of this obligation is considered necessary for the welfare of the entire neighbourhood. Neighbourhood death associations are organized to assist poor families who could not otherwise fulfill this obligation. In an arisan group, all members contribute a certain sum each week, and each member in turn receives the whole sum.

as April 1959, many BTI branches and even some regional committees were without full-time officials,¹ and although many cadres of PKI and the other mass organizations double as BTI cadres this means that BTI work does not receive the attention it should. In May 1957, "Suara Tani" commented that there were still many illiterate activists in the sub-branches and ketjamatan committees, with some even holding the position of secretary-general at the latter level.² Work had already begun on the eradication of illiteracy among activists but had not advanced far. What PKI and BTI call the ideological shortcomings among their peasant cadres stem from the social origin of many of the cadres among the rich peasants and landlords.³ Although efforts had been made since 1955 to remove these shortcomings by purges or education, they were still being referred to as an obstacle to correct work in 1959.⁴ With the grave shortage of literate and capable cadres of

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"Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.144.

2

ST, May 1957, p.11.

3

Asmu, "Beladjar", BM, February-March 1955, p.61; Parto, "Memperbaiki Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan kaum Tani" (Improving Party Work among the Peasants), KP, October 1958, p.205; B.O. Hutapea, "Some Lessons", RI, August 1959, p.32.

4

B.O. Hutapea, loc.cit.; "Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.135.

reliable social origins, it has proved difficult to remove those with suspect backgrounds.

Before 1959 cadre education in BTI was unsystematic and on a small scale. Then the national council meeting of April 22 to 26, 1959, which met a few days after the PKI national peasants' conference, drew up a three-year plan of organization and education. The general outline of the plan was as follows:¹

Organization:

1. To increase membership by 50 per cent in the first year, 75 per cent in the first two years, and 100 per cent in the three years, that is, to 7 millions.

2. To provide each branch with a typewriter, each sub-branch with a name-board.

Education:

1. To extend the circulation of "Suara Tani". All BTI committees down to the ketjamatan level were required to subscribe to "Suara Tani", and activists were obliged to write up their experiences for it.

1

The plan was never published in full, but its general outline was obtained from several references in ST: "Laporan Umum", supplement to ST, May-June 1959, pp.31-3; July 1959, pp.1-2; November 1959, p.4; A. Rachman, "Arti Plan 3 Tahun BTI" (The Meaning of BTI's Three-Year Plan), June 1960, p.3; June 1960, p.7.

2. To encourage the lower BTI committees to issue their own periodicals, however simple and in long-hand if necessary, in the local languages.

3. To speedily eradicate illiteracy among activists at the ketjamatan level, and intensify anti-illiteracy courses for the peasant masses in seasons of least agricultural work.

4. To intensify cadre courses at the centre and in the regions, and unify their education under four basic headings: the peasants' social and economic problems, BTI and other people's organizations in the villages, the birth and growth of the national peasant movement and the experience of peasant movements abroad, and the development of the nationalist movement. Education in agriculture was also to be given.

Each committee was set a target after discussions from the level of members' meetings upwards. Some areas began work under the plan on November 25, 1959, the rest on May 1, 1960. In June 1960 the BTI leadership announced that in general the quotas had proved to be too low, and that some areas, such as Central Java, had already raised them.¹ An impression of what the plan meant for

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ST, June 1960, p.7.

each region is given by the example of East Java.¹ There the goals of the first year of the plan included: to buy a mimeograph machine, a new typewriter and bicycle for the provincial office; to increase the number of full-time officials in the provincial office, and to prepare two cadres of the branch level and four of a lower level for sending outside Java; to establish a system of cadre courses, and to hold two courses at the province level; to increase the distribution of "Suara Tani" and to hold monthly discussions on its contents; to publish a news letter; to hold a seminar on agriculture; to effect systematic control of the branch committees; to extend the organization into 'vacant' areas; and to lead specified campaigns in the peasants' interests.

On November 12, 1959, a peasants' education building association was established with BTI's chairman as its chairman, and including leaders from Pemuda Rakjat, Gerwani and SOBSI unions.² The declared aim of the association was to promote scientific knowledge among the peasants and to raise their spirit of patriotism 'in the widest meaning'. By July 1960 each BTI member was

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Mimeographed document seen at the BTI East Java office, Surabaya.

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HR, November 16, 1959.

obliged to pay half a rupiah, part of the money for the new association (which was intended at least for the training of cooperative cadres), and part for BTI's own central office.¹ At that time BTI was claiming 4 million members.

In short, BTI has built a mass membership and an extensive organizational network, especially in Java - and with even less competition from non-communist organizations than either PKI or SOBSI has faced in its own work. For the non-communist politicians, organizational work among the peasants is even less attractive than among the workers. But both BTI and PKI still experience a grave shortage of good peasant cadres. The great majority of peasants are poor, illiterate, parochial, unaware that their conditions could be changed by their own efforts, and they therefore constitute poor cadre material. The efforts of BTI itself and of PKI under their respective three-year plans have increased the number and quality of their peasant cadres, but both are still markedly deficient. BTI especially is faced with such grave and as yet unsolved financial difficulties,² that it is unable to appoint sufficient full-time cadres, whatever their quality.

¹ ST, July 1960, p.5.

² See above, pp.221, 227.

3. PPDI.¹ The Persatuan Pamong Desa Indonesia (Indonesian Village Officials' Association) was founded on September 26, 1946 by the fusion of seven village officials' associations. After the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia in December 1949, PPDI spread rapidly from the former areas of the Republic in Java, and by the time of its third congress in May 1951 had extended throughout Java and even into Sumatra. PKI control of the PPDI leadership by 1951 at the latest is indicated by the phraseology used in the statement made at that time of the basis and goals of PPDI's struggle.² The present leaders, all of whom are PKI members or sympathizers, were elected at the last congress in July 1955. Actual leadership is in the hands of Usman Muftiwidjaja who was elected on the PKI list to the Constituent Assembly and is now a member of the appointed parliament.

As of May 1960 the PPDI leaders claimed that there were 108 branches at the kabupaten level, and 350,000

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Much of the following information on PPDI was obtained from an interview with three of PPDI's central leaders.

2

The statement is given in Djaman Baru, March 30, 1953, p.20.

members, of whom two-thirds were in Java and Madura.¹ In South Sumatra PPDI was also evenly spread, but elsewhere it had few members. There is no competing village officials' association.

PPDI's struggle for the interests of the village officials has been centred around three main matters.² The first is the status of village officials. PPDI demands that village officials be given the status of either local or central government officials, which would mean that they would be free from arbitrary dismissal and would receive regular wages and pension rights. This is the chief long-term demand. The second concerns the officials' income. Since 1951 the central government has subsidized the poorer villages to enable them to pay their officials stipulated minimum wages. But these minimums are far below minimum living requirements and PPDI urges the government to provide larger subsidies.

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In February 1960, SOBSI reported PPDI's membership to be 200,000; ITUN, February 1960, p.2.

2

The long list of general and specific demands adopted by the May 1951 congress is given in Djaman Baru, March 30, 1953, pp.23-4; and Ichtisar Gerakan Tani, July-August 1951, pp.13-14. An account of PPDI work concerning the more important problems facing village officials is given in Sugijono, "Dengan tanpa pandang bulu P.P.D.I. selalu tampil kedepan untuk Bela Nasib para Pamong Desa" (Without any Discrimination Whatsoever, PPDI is always to the fore in Defending the Welfare of the Village Officials), Suara Pamong Desa, November 1958-January 1959, pp.89-98.

The third concerns the situation of village officials in the disturbed areas. Partly because of PPDI demands, the government pays compensation to the families of village officials killed at their posts, and allowances to officials forced from their villages by terrorist or rebel activities. PPDI demands that the allowances be considerably increased.

PPDI is clearly the poorest of PKI's mass organizations. The head office is a one-room affair up some very steep ladders in a small, run-down shop in Surakarta. At the centre, there are two full-timers, both members of PKI, plus part-time help from those with other employment, for example from Usman and from the secretary-general who is a village head. Almost all PPDI functionaries in the regions are part-timers. In Surabaya I visited the home of the full-time secretary for East Java and found it to be a pantry-size, dilapidated addition to the side of a kampong house. But it is doubtful if even the low expenses of PPDI are met by subscriptions, for when I asked the three members of the central secretariat about membership fees, they all agreed that it was more or less impossible to collect them, but disagreed on what the fee was and had to settle the resultant argument by reading the constitution.

Apart from being the poorest of the PKI mass organizations, PPDI is also the least effective politically and has failed to develop among more than a very small section of its membership a sympathetic attitude towards PKI and its policies. A well-produced monthly periodical appeared at the beginning of 1957, but within two years had disappeared because of financial difficulties. As yet no cadre schools or classes have been held, but written courses on a small scale are organized 'to give the cadres an understanding of the revolution'.

Communists control PPDI at the centre because no one else has cared to challenge them. But from information received from members of the central government's rural administrative service it would appear that PKI has little influence over the great majority of PPDI members. The members are, in general, more literate, wealthy and politically conscious than the ordinary villagers, they tend to be supporters of PNI or of one of the Moslem parties, and they are members of PPDI for the sole purpose of promoting their own specific interests.

As in the case of the other PKI-led mass organizations, the PPDI central leadership frequently issues statements, in the name of the whole organization, in support of PKI policies and demands, thus adding numerical weight, or apparent weight, to PKI's position.

(c) Work among the Peasants.

The following section contains three main divisions: communist work in the areas of easier access, namely, the estate, forestry, insecure, and transmigrant areas; work in the ordinary villages; and work designed to assist and appeal to the peasantry in general.

1. Work in the areas of easier access. PKI first entered the villages in the estate and forestry areas. During the Japanese occupation and the revolution, tens of thousands of land-hungry peasants moved into estate and forestry lands. Under the terms of the Round Table Conference agreement, the Indonesian government was obliged to restore estate lands to their former owners. At the same time the government's forestry service began evicting the squatters from its land. The result was a series of bitter clashes between the authorities and the peasants. In some areas peasants were shot, and in many more the squatters' homes were destroyed, their crops ploughed up.

PKI, the peasant organizations BTI, RTI and SAKTI, SOBSI unions such as the estate workers' and the forestry workers' union, and other mass organizations, including Pemuda Rakjat, fought alongside the peasants, often

successfully, to prevent eviction or to obtain compensation in the event of eviction. The climax to the attempts to dislodge the squatters from estate lands was reached on March 16, 1953 when five squatters were shot by police at Tandjung Morawa in North Sumatra. The FPT strongly denounced the shooting, and on May 2 a SAKTI member of parliament introduced a motion demanding an immediate halt to anti-squatter action in the area, and the creation of a committee, including peasant representatives, to settle the land problem there. This motion led to a division between PNI and Masjumi, and to the downfall of the Wilopo cabinet.

Sadjarwo, of BTI, sat as Minister of Agriculture in the next cabinet and was partly responsible for the emergency law of June 8, 1954 concerning the settlement of the question of the people's use of estate lands.¹ While PKI and its peasant organizations objected to some of the provisions of the new law, they welcomed its recognition of the squatters' right to appoint their representatives to negotiate with the estate owners, and its stipulation that any decision must consider the peasants' interests. In October 1956, the 1954 law was

¹ Kementerian Agraria (Ministry of Agrarian Affairs), Undang-Undang Darurat no.8 tahun 1954 (Emergency Law No.8, 1954), mimeographed, Djakarta, 1954, 8 p.

extended to include squatters on state forestry lands.¹ Despite the 1954 and 1956 laws, occasional violent disputes have continued between the squatters and the authorities, but BTI has usually succeeded in winning ultimate recognition of the peasants' interests in any land settlement.

The regions of sugar-cane have also provided a more easy point of entry into the rural areas for PKI and its peasant organizations. Since the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, the government has fixed, at a level it feels reasonable, the rent of the land leased by the peasants to the sugar-mills for cane growing. This system has been strongly opposed by the peasants and BTI who demand that leasing of land be completely voluntary, and that the rent be fixed in discussions between the peasants or their representatives and the factories.²

PKI and its peasant organizations have also found a ready problem to exploit in the areas threatened by bandits and rebels. Such areas where they have made progress are parts of West Java, and, since February 1958, the rebel areas of Sumatra and North Sulawesi. Since its

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Kementerian Agraria, Undang-Undang Darurat no.1 tahun 1956 (Emergency Law No.1, 1956), mimeographed, Djakarta, 1956, 4 p.

2

See, for example, HR, June 16, 1954; ST, February 1960, p.2.

November 1951 agrarian programme, PKI has called for the confiscation of the land of pro-rebel and pro-bandit landlords, and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants,¹ a demand strongly emphasized by PKI and BTI in West Java. PKI and its mass organizations have also been loud and persistent in their demand for government provision of weapons to enable the peasants to protect themselves. The communist solicitude for the victims of armed bands is illustrated by a mass meeting in Bogor in 1954 where PKI distributed clothes and rice to peasants who had been robbed or burned out by Darul Islam gangs.²

Only about 25,000 persons per year have left Java for the outer islands since 1949, but they comprise a considerable percentage of the population in South Sumatra where they also probably constitute a large proportion of BTI's September 1958 claim of 108,210 members in that region. Unhappily for the transmigrants, transport shortages cause bottlenecks at ports, thieves in the shape of shop-keepers, ticket sellers and robbers strip them of

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See, for example, "Program Perubahan Tanah", BM, December 1951, p.19; "Resolusi tentang Mengikutsertakan Rakjat dalam Membasmi Sisa-Sisa Gerombolan 'PRRI-Permesta' 'DI-TII'" (Resolution concerning the People's Participation in Eradicating the Remnants of the 'PRRI-Permesta' 'DI-TII' Gangs), BM, April-May 1959, p.206.

2

Compton, Indonesian Communism, p.9.

their little wealth, and the areas they go to are often ill-prepared. These conditions provide a source of discontent that PKI and BTI can exploit. Both PKI and BTI recognize the need for transmigration, but declare that it 'must not be of the nature of moving poverty from Java to the other islands'.¹ They demand adequate transportation, work tools, housing, medical facilities, and living expenses while the new land is being opened up.

2. Work in the ordinary villages. In the second half of 1953, PKI and its mass organizations began the immense task of organizing the great majority of Java's peasants who live in ordinary villages, villages where even PKI and BTI cadres often claimed that no peasant problems existed, that no landlords were to be found. The PKI leaders readily admit that:

The task of cultivating the peasants' trust in the Party and of convincing the peasants of their own strength is a difficult one, especially if we bear in mind their backwardness.²

Aidit recognized in July 1953, as the campaign to attract the peasant masses was begun :

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BTI, Konstitusi BTI (BTI's Constitution), Djakarta, 1954, pp.9-10.

2

"Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.139.

Only by practical work among the peasants, only by leading the peasants in the struggle for their everyday demands, demands that seem small, insignificant, unimportant, only in this way can Party cadres and members have close relations with the peasants and receive their trust. Only by actions to demand things that seem small, insignificant, unimportant, can the peasants' organization grow stronger, wider and more solid.

Only through the work of organizing and educating the peasants can the peasants' struggle be raised to a higher level. Only through this work can the peasants be educated and mobilized so that the time will be ripe to carry out the slogans 'land for the peasants', 'distribution of land to the peasants', and 'peasant private ownership of land'.¹

In order to strengthen the peasants' confidence in themselves and in PKI and BTI, the Aidit leadership has concentrated on 'small but successful' actions.

Passionate and 'leftist' measures, not based on the true consciousness of the peasants, must not be taken. Measures of that kind confuse the peasants and retard their consciousness.²

In each action, the peasants must be 'convinced of its justice, correctness and benefit', and 'the Party must always strive to be able to draw in and mobilize 90 per cent of the village inhabitants'.³

¹ Aidit, "Haridepan", BM, July 1953, pp.339-40.

² PKI, Tuntunan untuk Bekerja dikalangan kaum Tani (Guide for Working among the Peasants), Djakarta, 1955, p.47.

³ "Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.141; D.N. Aidit, Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution, Djakarta, 1958, p.61.

The list of 'small but successful' actions led by PKI and BTI among the peasants ranges from the most trifling to demands for rent reduction. In the words of a PKI guide for its peasant cadres:

After the peasant organization is formed, quickly undertake concrete activities in defence of the peasants' interests, such as the distribution of fertilizer, seedlings and tools at a cheap price, repairing the water channels, repairing the fish-ponds and distributing fish eggs, establishing cooperatives, sinking wells together, repairing the village bridges and roads, organizing a death association, general education and education of agrarian leaders, defence of people brought to court, eradication of illiteracy, organizing sports and cultural bodies, etc.¹

And each activity is used to raise the peasants' class consciousness and militancy. As a leader of PKI and BTI reminded the peasant cadres:

In organizing mutual assistance when members suffer illness or death, do not forget to connect this activity with propaganda to the effect that the landlord's exploitation and oppression have caused the health of the peasant labourers and poor peasants to be very bad, their life in general to be shorter, many of their children to die in the womb or before reaching the age of six, many of their wives to die in childbirth ... etc. In this way the peasants understand that the entire bad situation which befalls them is the result of the landlord's exploitation and oppression. In this way the peasants will gradually reach the conclusion that the landlord class is their

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PKI, Tuntunan, p.44.

first enemy, and by knowing the methods of exploitation used by the landlord the peasants will understand that the landlord's ownership of land is unjust and that the landlord must be opposed.¹

Actions that directly affect the interests of the landlords, such as demands for joint land rent agreements, and demands for lowered interest rates on loans, higher wages for labourers, and lowered land rents, were not undertaken on any scale until after 1955. They are still limited in scope for three main reasons: first, in the present stage of the revolution the Aidit leadership seeks the broadest alliance in order to combat imperialism, and therefore does not want to alienate political forces containing landlord elements;² second, in the relative social peace of the Javanese village, the peasants need much preparatory work before they will take direct action against the local landlords; and, third, PKI and BTI are only now producing sufficient well-trained cadres willing and capable of directing anti-landlord actions.

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Asmu, "Beladjar", BM, February-March 1955, pp.59-60.

2

For the Aidit leadership's tactical separation of the struggle against imperialism and that against feudalism, see above, pp.65-6. Aidit explained on July 8, 1956 that in the anti-imperialist struggle:

We also agree to cooperate with the anti-imperialist landlords, but at the same time we fight to reduce rents for rice lands, and to ensure that the landlords do not exploit the peasants too much.

HR, July 10, 1956.

The April 1959 PKI national peasants' conference formulated a new campaign slogan which could be the basis for arousing the poorer peasants against the landlords, and yet be sufficiently just to make opposition appear grossly unjust: the 6:4 slogan. That is, for the division of crops in the proportion of six parts for the share-cropper and four for the landlord, with the stipulation that if any landlords were already receiving less than four shares they should continue to do so, with a minimum of $2\frac{1}{2}$ shares.¹ Communist and affiliated members of parliament put forward a motion in parliament for the 6:4 division of crops.² The government stepped in quickly with its own bill which, after some amendments, was adopted unanimously on November 20, 1959, and provided for a 5:5 division, though retaining agreements already more favourable to the tenants.³

¹ B.O. Hutapea, "Some Lessons", RI, August 1959, pp.30-1.

² A leading PNI member of parliament told me in interview that this communist motion was designed to create unrest if passed and attractive propaganda if passed or not. He claimed that if the 6:4 motion had become law, the landlords and wealthy peasants who had formerly leased land would have then worked it themselves with labourers in order to receive a higher income than the 40 per cent of yields allowed in the bill proposed by PKI. This would have forced a large number of tenant farmers and share-croppers to become agricultural labourers.

³ PKI dan Perwakilan, fourth quarter 1959-first quarter 1960, pp.137-46.

Having won this parliamentary victory, PKI and BTI launched a campaign to acquaint the peasants with their rights under the new law. At the same time, the 6:4 demand has been extended gradually, but its implementation is slow and requires careful preparation because:

The 6:4 action and other actions against the landlords' exploitation are entirely new for the peasants and even for most BTI cadres. The existence of examples of successful action will facilitate our work to convince the peasants of the justice of the 6:4 demand and of the power of the peasants' unity. It also constitutes an important education for the local BTI cadres.¹

3. Work in all villages. In categorizing PKI and BTI work among the peasants, there is a broad category which concerns all types of villages, which has the purpose of attracting the peasant labourers, poor peasants and medium peasants in general. This work ranges widely from concrete actions to the easier task of drawing up written demands.

PKI and BTI cultural and sports activities in the rural areas are difficult to assess because little information has been issued.² Perhaps, in general, the

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ST, January 1960, p.3. The underlining is mine.

2

The only public mention by BTI of cultural activities was in April 1959 when it was announced that some groups were being organized to play traditional musical instru-

peasants are too old or too tired to participate in such activities which are a feature of Pemuda Rakjat's work. On the other hand, there are indications that PKI's anti-illiteracy work has been considerable among its members, and BTI too has at least announced the importance of eradicating illiteracy.

PKI long scorned the efforts of Vice-President Hatta to create a cooperative movement in Indonesia, and it was not until the Party's national peasants' conference in mid-April 1959 that a major revision was made in the attitude towards cooperatives. The conference decided to launch attempts to create three types of cooperatives: credit, production, and purchase and sale.¹ The PKI sixth congress in September 1959 repeated the call to establish cooperatives, and demanded government assistance for them.² As yet neither PKI nor BTI have published information on the implementation of the cooperative

ments, and others practising traditional forms of fighting and wrestling; "Laporan Umum", supplement to ST, May-June 1959, p.33.

1

D.N. Aidit, "Fly High the Banners of 'Land to the Peasants' and Fight for One Victory after Another", in supplement to RI, June-July 1959, pp.13-14.

2

Njoto, Tentang Program PKI (Concerning PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1959, p.58; PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum CC PKI, p.89.

campaign, although in mid-1960 BTI was collecting funds in order to train cadres for work in cooperatives.¹

Since the April 1959 conference, PKI and BTI also have begun to help the peasants to raise production. A campaign has been launched to popularize what are called the five principles of rice production: 'Plough deeply, plant closely, give more fertilizer, improve seedlings, and improve irrigation'.² Fantastic production claims have been made for the five principles, but however exaggerated the claims may be, the five principles do lead to some increase in production. Three persons associated with BTI claim to have developed strains of rice with high yields. In June 1960 it was reported that BTI in Central Java had established a committee to ensure the equitable distribution of one of the strains produced, and that peasant demand for the seed was high.³ If the seed is superior, then its distribution must also be an effective means of winning broad peasant support.

The written appeals to and defence of the peasants' interests also range widely in scope. Both PKI and BTI

¹ ST, July 1960, p.5.

² Aidit, "Fly High the Banners", in supplement to RI, June-July 1959, p.14.

³ ST, June 1960, p.4.

issue lengthy lists of demands at times of conferences and congresses, local and national elections, and cabinet changes. The lists include a variety of demands from agricultural tools, technical guidance, cheap credit, and the democratization of village government, to greatly increased health and educational facilities and reduced prices of essential commodities. But the impact of these demands on the illiterate, tradition-bound peasant can be exaggerated. Similarly the slogan 'land for the peasants' must have some effect, but if, as the BTI leaders declared, the peasants have still to be convinced of the justice of the 6:4 demand, its effect outside the estate, forestry and transmigrant areas may also be exaggerated by detraditionalized Indonesians and foreign observers. It appears that, in general, the support of the peasants can be won only by concrete and beneficial actions which are sufficiently simple so as not to go too far ahead of their 'consciousness'.

4. PKI exploitation of the santri-abangan schism in Java. Whereas the santri population of Java has been highly resistant to communist organizational efforts, PKI has been able to win the support of a broad cross-section of the abangan community by exploiting the abangans' conscious hostility towards the devout Moslems. During

the revolution, Pesindo (Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia), through which the communists did most of their work in the villages, sought the support of the abangans on the basis of a vigorous anti-santri position. Pesindo paved the way for later PKI work by successfully identifying itself with the 'original', that is abangan, people as against the alien-oriented, Arab-oriented santris, with the poorer abangans as against the generally wealthier santris.¹

Under the Aidit leadership, the communists:

In many villages ... have taken advantage of the traditional feud between the strongly-Muslim group and the nominal Muslims, offering to the latter an identity and an organization. In such villages the organizational line between Green (Muslim) and Red may have nothing at all to do with the economic position of the antagonistic groups.²

Special efforts have been made to win the support of persons of traditional status within the abangan community, and the communists have proclaimed themselves to be the true lovers and promoters of traditional elements in abangan culture, from mutual aid in road repair to music and dance-drama. Masjumi, which included the most

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Robert Ravenelle Jay, "Santri and Abangan: Religious Schism in Rural Central Java" (Harvard University, Ph.D. thesis, 1957), pp.238-40.

2

Compton, Indonesian Communism, p.9.

fanatical of the Moslem reformist opponents of syncretic beliefs and ritual, was attacked not only for its policies, but also for its foreignness, its fanaticism, and its alleged desire to force others into a pattern of life based on Islam. In many areas PKI has been successful in creating the image of itself as both the defender of traditional values and culture and, at the same time, the harbinger of progress - progress, of course, by traditional ways of doing things.

(d) The Political Usefulness of Communist Support in the Villages.

Massive peasant support was essential to the Aidit leadership in order to bring about a communist victory by either peaceful or forceful means.

With largescale peasant electoral support, PKI could increase its parliamentary representation. This in turn could increase the Party's bargaining position in national politics, and bring about if not a communist government or communist participation in a coalition government, at least the alliance of important political forces among the divided revolutionary political elite. It was also possible, though this advantage was realized probably in retrospect, that massive popular support would reduce the possibility of governmental repression of the Party for

two reasons. First, the government would be hesitant to repress a party with obvious popularity - especially PKI which, under the national united front policy, was careful to appear friendly to the nationalists and responsible in the exercise of its role as a non-government party. Second, the government might hesitate to attempt to repress a party with broad, organized support out of fear of the calamitous results such an attempt might bring.

The Aidit leadership may have hoped to win power by peaceful means, but it cannot have expected to. It needed to build organized mass support capable of neutralizing or defeating the forces which would be expected to oppose a communist bid for power. With the effort to organize mass support in the countryside, the Aidit leadership must have aimed to develop a force which, in the event of a political crisis, could be a major weapon for one of two purposes: to be displayed so as to intimidate opponents and convince wavering allies, that is, to win power by the mere display of apparent strength; or, if the opposition could not be intimidated, to be used along with the other communist organizations in order to destroy the Party's opponents.

Results have certainly been achieved towards what might be termed the peaceful purposes of peasant support. PKI's numerical size and apparent organizational ability

helped encourage first PNI and then Sukarno to seek the alliance of the communists - of course on mutually beneficial terms. It is also possible that the size of PKI's rural votes and therefore presumed rural strength and popularity has been a factor in deterring repressive measures against the communists.

Now that it appears highly unlikely that the other political forces will permit PKI to win governmental power by peaceful means, the question looms large as to whether the communists' rural organization could be used to achieve power by other means. The real power that the Aidit leadership wields through its support among the peasants is determined largely by three factors: the authority and influence exercised by other forces in the villages, the number of unorganized peasants, and the nature of the support given by the peasants to the communists.

The unanimous opinion of those non-communist politicians and government officials with whom I talked and who were concerned with the peasants was that as yet PKI had achieved little in building support that could openly oppose, let alone attack and destroy, 'the authorities' in the countryside. The authority of the central government's rural civil service and of the village officials has certainly declined, but it is still

sufficiently impressive to deter the great majority of peasants from open acts of defiance. Furthermore, while communist organization has grown, so too has the strength and authority of the army and the police in the rural areas. Only in the rarest cases would the peasants, conditioned to obey, stand against a combination of 'authorities'. PKI and BTI have admitted publicly the great difficulty in making the peasants aware of their exploited position, and in arousing them to even mild actions against Indonesian landlords. The present slogan is 'all roads lead to 6:4', but even these roads are long and difficult, and if successfully traversed lead only to the start of the fundamental task of building peasant support that can act in a disciplined and militant manner when called upon to do so.

As in their trade union work, the Indonesian communists have faced competition in their effort to win mass rural support. At the end of 1954, for example, there were 35 peasant organizations in Indonesia, 7 centralized and more or less nation-wide, and 28 locally based.¹ Within Java, it would seem that BTI membership is larger than that of all other peasant organizations combined.

¹ Susilo Prawiroatmodjo, Tinjauan Singkat Organisasi Tani di Indonesia (Brief Survey of Peasant Organizations in Indonesia), Djakarta, 1955, pp.50-4.

Despite this, the Moslem STII and PNI's Petani have greater influence than their membership would suggest mainly because they contain persons who retain influence and authority in the villages. The former includes many wealthier santris, and the latter many government and village officials.

The Indonesian peasants constitute some 55 to 65 million persons, in some 12 to 15 million families. As BTI and PKI include perhaps 2 million family heads, and other peasant organizations and political parties account for about 1 million family heads, then between 9 and 12 million peasant families are as yet unorganized.

Finally, but perhaps of most importance in considering communist strength in the villages, is the nature of communist support among the peasants. What might be termed the intellectual appeal of communism has had little if any effect among the Indonesian peasants. The communists have had to win sympathy by concrete work for the peasants' interests, and this has been done to a large extent in the non-santri areas of Java through PKI and a wide range of organizations from the mass organizations to cooperatives, savings associations and cultural and sports groups which may or may not be openly linked with the communist organizations. Some areas where traditional social patterns have been weakened have

proved more ready to accept the support of PKI and its organizations. In the majority of villages, however, the communists have had to tread warily, to conform to village modes of behaviour, to work wherever possible through traditionally influential persons. Step by step PKI has sought to give the peasants an awareness of their exploited position, to lead them to actions of an increasing scope to the point where they will oppose the local landowners. But the peasants and even many cadres are still unwilling to oppose the local persons of status, let alone the government authorities.

The Javanese peasantry is not militant or revolutionary; it is passive and basically conservative. It accepts help from PKI and the mass organizations, but it gives them little in return other than votes. The Aidit leadership is aware of this situation and expects to take years to create a militant and revolutionary force from the peasantry. This force has not yet been created, and it appears doubtful if it will appear in the foreseeable future. In short, the estimate of most non-communist political, governmental, police and army leaders that the peasants are really of minor importance in the extra-parliamentary struggle would appear to be valid as of the present and will probably remain so for the next few years.

3. The Petty Bourgeoisie

Doubts expressed above as to the validity of the Aidit leadership's concept of the petty bourgeoisie as a socio-political category in Indonesia,¹ are strengthened by an analysis of the efforts made by PKI to attract and organize the groups listed as comprising the petty bourgeoisie. The groups are of such diverse interests, social status and political awareness that the PKI leaders have been forced to use a wide variety of methods in order to seek their support - with a marked lack of success among several of the groups.

The Indonesian petty bourgeoisie, as defined by the Aidit leadership, is, in general (with the obvious exceptions of the urban poor and the fishermen), better educated than the workers and peasants, and better informed on the progress of other countries and therefore on the extent of the incapacity and corruption of the succeeding Indonesian governments. It also suffers, with the obvious exception of the doctors, the economic chaos, the inflation, and the shortage of consumer goods and raw materials. As a result, the petty bourgeoisie ought to be more sympathetic than most not only to PKI's vocal

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See above, pp.74-6.

struggle to alleviate the misery of the people, but also to PKI's promise of a people's democracy.

The short-term, frequently repeated demands of PKI that should appeal to the petty bourgeoisie in general include: reduced prices and increased distribution of essential commodities, increased educational and health facilities, eradication of corruption, better balance of Indonesia's foreign trade between capitalist and socialist countries so as to ensure high prices for Indonesia's exports and the import of adequate industrial raw materials and consumer goods, resistance to fascism and the guarantee of democratic rights, the rapid development of the national economy, and the eradication of imperialist power and influence. PKI's opposition to the 'fanatical' Moslems in Masjumi has also appealed to the largely unreligious or abangan petty bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the literate petty bourgeoisie should be able to grasp the significance of PKI's long-term goal, a people's democracy, which is promised to bring full national independence, full democratic rights for the people, the eradication of feudalism, and rapid economic development.

From the limited evidence I obtained, however, it appears that the political or intellectual appeal of PKI has met with little response, even among the intellectuals.

The members of the petty bourgeoisie have been attracted to the Party or one of its mass organizations by what the communists do or promise to do to promote the specific sectional interests of the population. The Party has sought to attract the urban poor by its work in the kampongs, as has been seen above;¹ the women's organization, Gerwani, has sought primarily to attract the poorer women, including those who constitute a high proportion of the petty traders;² communist-led student organizations have sought to attract students in high school and university;³ and the youth organization, Pemuda Rakjat, has attracted youths from the poorer sections of the petty bourgeoisie.⁴

The Aidit leadership has made special efforts to attract and organize two of the groups included in the petty bourgeoisie: the fishermen, and the intellectuals.

(a) The Fishermen.

In 1959 the Aidit leadership was increasingly aware that due to the atrophy of democracy and the increased power of the army, the Party would probably face an ultimate choice between suffering repressive measures

¹ See above, pp.325-32.

³ See below, pp.411-20.

² See below, pp.428-41.

⁴ See below, pp.393-411.

and making a bid for power. If faced with this choice, the support of Indonesia's fishermen would be a valuable asset: in the absence of more than a token navy, they could run personnel and equipment into or out of Indonesia in general and each island in particular.

Mention of the need to organize the 'millions' of fishermen was made by the BTI and PKI leaders in 1957 and 1958, but it was not until the PKI national peasants' conference of April 1959 that a detailed examination was made of the question of organizing fishermen.¹ An analysis was made of the social division among fishermen which closely paralleled the analysis of the peasantry, and which concluded that:

The fishermen-labourers and the poor fishermen together with the middle fishermen are moving forces of the revolution and must therefore be aroused, organized and mobilized in actions for improved conditions and democratic liberties, and in the struggle for complete national independence.

The conference called for the creation of fishermen's unions for the labourers, of cooperatives 'serving, in the first place, the interests of the poor and middle fishermen', and of 'other organizations serving general interests, such as cultural and sports clubs'. On August

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"Conclusions on the Question of Fishermen in Indonesia", in supplement to RI, June-July 1959, pp.9-10.

3, 1960, the PKI central committee issued a circular which admitted that 'until now the work of the Party among fishermen has not been developed and in some places has not begun at all'.¹ Section committees were ordered to appoint cadres to supervize the work among fishermen, and instructions were given for the creation of a multiplicity of organizations in the fishing villages.

(b) The Intellectuals.

The Aidit leadership has been perplexed by the intellectuals. In April 1951 the intellectuals were confidently classified among the driving forces of the revolution, and in 1957 Aidit included them within the supposedly revolutionary petty bourgeoisie.² But when they continued to withstand the attractions of the Party, the leadership was forced into qualifications. In November 1952, the Party leaders drew a distinction between 'the old-generation intellectuals, who in general can be at the most neutralized, especially in revolutionary times', and the younger intellectuals who could

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PKI, Development of Work among Fishermen, mimeographed document, Djakarta, 1960, p.1.

2

PKI, Konstitusi, 1951, p.11; Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.59.

be made a real and active force in the revolution.¹ This distinction according to age was replaced in 1957 when Aidit declared that:

The intellectuals and the student youth are not a class in society but their class position is determined by family origin, by their conditions of living and by their political outlook.²

The sixth Party congress in September 1959 acknowledged the intellectuals to be 'generally patriotic and strongly anti-imperialist', but explicitly divided them into two categories: those 'born and created of Indonesian labour who are striving for the traditions of our people and of our intellectuals', and those with an inconsistent attitude to the revolution, the ideological representatives of the economically and politically insecure bourgeoisie.³

What accounts for PKI's continued failure to attract more than a handful of intellectuals?⁴ A partial but

¹ "Bekerja dalam kalangan Intelektuil" (Work Among the Intellectuals), BM, October-November 1952, pp.120-3.

² Aidit, Indonesian Society, p.59.

³ PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum CC PKI, pp.92-3.

⁴ It is noteworthy that of the 46 full and candidate members of the PKI central committee elected in September 1959, I know of only two who have university degrees.

complex answer revolves around the social origins, social status, and occupations of the intellectuals. The older intellectuals tend to come from aristocratic or wealthy families because such families were the only ones which, under Dutch rule, were able to give their children higher education, and even today very few university students have their origins in the poor sections of society.¹

At the same time, achievement in formal education is an important determinant of social status so that, by and large, a high level of formal education brings with it a high social status. And high-status Indonesians have shown, in general, little concern for the plight of their poorer countrymen.

It has also been the case since independence that Indonesia, unlike some countries, has had no group of unemployed intellectuals to form a reservoir of revolutionaries. Anyone with a fairly high level of formal education has found ready and prestigious employment, especially in the growing bureaucracy and also in the expanding university system and the large, mostly foreign, private concerns. In order to obtain, retain or advance their positions, the educated Indonesians have tended

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For a discussion of the reasons, including social origin, that explain why the university students, the future intellectuals, are not attracted to PKI, see below, pp.418-20.

either to remain aloof from politics or to support the political parties of the persons in control of employment. And in no case, in government, university or private employment, have those in control been communists.

Although PKI has failed to attract many intellectuals, it has built LEKRA, the only large, nation-wide mass organization of cultural workers, including a few intellectuals.

LEKRA. LEKRA was founded on August 17, 1950 with Njoto as the Party's guiding hand in the central secretariat. Special sections were set up for literature, the plastic arts, voice, drama and film, philosophy, and sports. Within a year, 21 branches had been established, sixteen in Java, three in Sumatra, one in Kalimantan, and one in Sulawesi.¹

Major structural changes were made by the first LEKRA congress held in January 1959.² Before the congress the structure had been a simple one: at the

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LEKRA, Menjambut Kongres Kebudayaan (Welcoming the Cultural Congress), ?, 1951, p.1.

2

LEKRA, Laporan Umum Pengurus Pusat LEKRA kepada Kongres Nasional ke-I LEKRA (The General Report of the National Council to the First LEKRA Congress), mimeographed, ?, 1959, p.27; Keputusan-Keputusan Kongres Nasional ke-I LEKRA (Decisions of the First LEKRA Congress), mimeographed, ?, 1959, p.1.

centre, the national council and the secretariat with the six special sections; a LEKRA organization at the regional level; and the local branches. The congress created a system of institutes which runs parallel to the old structure: institutes of literature, plastic arts, music, dance, drama, film, and science, with their own organizations reaching down to the branch level, and actually embracing ordinary members in their own cultural field. The ordinary branches now look after 'general cultural matters'. Under the new system, individual members receive better guidance and assistance in their own field.

LEKRA has always kept the size of its membership a secret. The general report to the 1959 congress stated evasively that:

We do not know definitely how many members we have, but clearly the number now is not as in the saying 'it can be counted on the fingers of one hand'.¹

In an interview, the LEKRA secretary-general claimed that as of May 1960 there were about 200 branches, each with two or three institute sections.² The most important and largest branches were in Jogjakarta, Surakarta and

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LEKRA, Laporan Umum, p.2.

2

Interview with Joebaar Ajoeb, LEKRA secretary-general, and Basuki Resobowo, a member of the LEKRA secretariat.

Djakarta, while in Jogjakarta LEKRA was considerably strengthened by the de facto affiliation of a large group of young painters in the nominally independent People's Artists.¹ Non-communist estimates of LEKRA membership sometimes run into tens of thousands, but a figure far below 10,000 would probably include all who take part more or less regularly in LEKRA activities.

LEKRA, as the other mass organizations, has endeavoured to attract membership by appealing to the interests of a specific section of society. As the only national cultural organization to have survived the last ten years, LEKRA has provided not only a place for discussion of common interests, but also some training in the different cultural fields. In a country almost devoid of facilities for the exhibition of works of art, LEKRA has provided them for any artist, irrespective of style. As an outlet for the work of both artists and writers, LEKRA publishes a periodical, "Zaman Baru",² and since 1959 has begun to publish books and booklets.

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The chairman of the People's Artists (Pelukis-Pelukis Rakjat) ran as a 'non-party' candidate on PKI's list in the 1955 elections.

2

Zaman Baru is the continuation of the communist-controlled Surabaya political periodical of the same name which virtually disappeared in 1953, to be revived as a regularly-issued, well-produced LEKRA periodical in mid-1956.

LEKRA artists are employed to create the decorations and posters for PKI and its mass organizations at times of celebrations, congresses, conferences and elections,¹ and LEKRA members also provide the talent for the cultural performances that are a feature of the communist meetings and election campaigns.

LEKRA claims to have had success in bringing together and organizing the dalangs in West and Central Java, the ludruk groups of East Java, and gamelan players, and to have been instrumental in the formation of BAKOKSI, a separate organization of ketoprak artists.² That is, it has acted as a sort of trade union for the players in the traditional forms of Javanese entertainment.

LEKRA has been able to provide, thanks to its communist connections, the reward of trips to Soviet bloc countries for its most active members. The first LEKRA group to go abroad consisted of six persons who attended the 1951 Berlin youth festival. LEKRA members have attended all subsequent communist international youth

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This is not to imply that LEKRA members are paid for their work in aid of PKI and its mass organizations. I do not know if their labour is given free.

2

LEKRA, Laporan Umum, pp.15, 26. Dalangs are the story-tellers in the wajang dramas; ludruk and ketoprak are traditional forms of music-drama; gamelan is the name of the Javanese orchestra that accompanies the wajang and music dramas.

festivals, and have also participated in cultural delegations to Czechoslovakia, Korea and Tashkent.

Finally, in order to attract cultural workers by an appeal to their specific interests, LEKRA has formulated demands in their interest. For example, the second national conference, held from October 28 to 30, 1957, demanded tax relief for artists, bigger subsidies for cultural organizations, lighter entertainment tax, protection and assistance for the national film industry, and the creation of a Ministry of Culture.¹ The national congress in January 1960 demanded reduced prices for cultural tools such as books, paints, canvas, and musical instruments.²

The political usefulness of LEKRA for PKI has been varied. Apart from adding its voice to those of the other mass organizations in support of PKI's position on particular issues, LEKRA has enhanced the attractiveness of PKI and the other mass organizations by making them more colourful with posters, banners and cultural entertainment. By organizing the artists in the traditional forms of entertainment, it has succeeded in infusing a pro-PKI political content into these tremendously popular

¹ RI, December 1957, p.24.

² LEKRA, Keputusan-Keputusan, p.2.

art forms. And LEKRA has been the spearhead for the attack on Western 'rock'n'roll culture', with its 'immoral', 'sadistic', 'war-thirsty' books, films and music. This attack may have played a part in persuading the government to ban the 'immorality' of Western music, Western dancing, and the hula-hoop.

LEKRA has tried to teach its members to portray the sufferings of the people in a realistic manner. But LEKRA is in no position to exact artistic discipline from its members who are in the organization for what it gives them and who still largely follow their own individualistic progress.¹ What LEKRA has done, as the only significant nation-wide cultural organization in Indonesia, is to bring a wide range of cultural workers, from film actors and peasant entertainers to sophisticated poets and artists, into contact with PKI and into work of benefit of the Party.

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LEKRA's failure to persuade its members to adopt socialist realism is illustrated by Sukarno's reaction to the LEKRA art exhibition held at the time of the 1959 congress:

My friends, I have seen an exhibition of paintings by members of LEKRA; I must say that you are very liberal minded. I found so many styles and schools of painting - naturalism, realism, surrealism, impressionism, cubism, futurism, etc. When I asked the artists why there are so many styles, their answers revolved around the individuality of the artist, freedom of the artist, etc.

Mimeographed manuscript of the speech, Djakarta, 1959.

4. Youth

The adult workers and peasants in Indonesia have been slow to discard the tradition of open obedience and to regard inequality as an injustice which they themselves can remove. As a result, they have not provided a satisfactory source of cadre material for PKI and its mass organizations. The Aidit leadership has spent, therefore, much effort in order to attract and organize the youth, to mould them politically before the dead weight of traditional values and behaviour is placed upon them.

As youth is differentiated according to age and education, several mass organizations have been established for it. The largest and most important is Pemuda Rakjat, the continuation under a new name of Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia of the revolution. Pemuda Rakjat is the only mass organization which has formal ties with the Party, and which receives open assistance from the Party. It is aimed primarily at the urban and rural poor with little or no education. For high school students there is IPPI, and for students of institutes of higher education, including universities, there is CGMI. Youngsters below high school age have been provided with a communist-led scout association and, the most recent addition to PKI's mass organizations, a young pioneer movement.

(a) Pemuda Rakjat.

1. The growth of the organization. During the revolution the Socialist Party included many shades of leftists from the Sjahrir socialists to covert communists. Its youth organization, Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia, played an important role in mobilizing youth to the defence of the Republic, and organized its own armed groups. The highest membership reached was about 50, to 100,000.¹ At the beginning of 1948 the Sjahrir socialists broke away from the Socialist Party to form the PSI, but they did not establish their own youth organization until the end of 1954. Many of the leaders and members of Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia were involved in the Madiun rebellion, and the organization later claimed that one thousand of its leaders were killed.²

The rebellion did not result in the proscription of the organization, and its third congress was held in Djakarta from November 4 to 12, 1950. Total membership had fallen to 30,000, and the number of branches to 149.³

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Interview with Moh. Fatchan and Anwar Nasution, then respectively first and second deputy secretary-general of Pemuda Rakjat, and with Qodar, a member of the Pemuda Rakjat executive council.

2

Sin Po, March 22, 1951.

3

Sin Po, November 8, 1950; interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

Perhaps indicative of an attempt to re-establish the organization's good character was the large photograph of President Sukarno which, side-by-side with one of Mao Tse-tung, watched over the congress. The congress was a victory for the Aidit group which was then struggling to capture complete control of PKI. In line with the thinking of the Aidit group, the old name of the organization was discarded as one which would turn away prospective members. It was replaced by Pemuda Rakjat. The declared objective of the organization was altered from a socialist state to a people's democracy. Wikana, an opponent of the Aidit group, was removed from the leadership. And at a time when the Aidit group was struggling against Tan Ling Djie's concept of more than one Marxist-Leninist party, the congress promised to assist in the creation of a single Marxist-Leninist party, PKI, as the leader of the revolution. During 1950 Pemuda Rakjat joined the World Federation of Democratic Youth, and since then one or other leader of Pemuda Rakjat has been a vice-president of the WFDY.

During the first two years or so after the December 1950 congress, Pemuda Rakjat, like the other PKI-led mass organizations, continued to show a 'sectarian' character despite its verbal rejection of sectarianism. From the little information that remains of its activities prior

to about 1954, it would appear that they were mainly complementary to PKI's political agitation for a people's democracy, against colonialism, against the Round Table Conference agreement, against the August 1951 mass arrests, against the state of war and siege regulations, and against PKI's political opponents. The first signs that sectarianism was being abandoned appeared only when the Aidit leadership was formulating its concept of a broad national united front.¹

The fourth Pemuda Rakjat congress was held in November 1952, attended by about 300 delegates representing the 118 branches and 46,598 members.² The general report to the congress noted that 129 leaders had been imprisoned during the August 1951 arrests,³ and contained a further strong attack on sectarianism. The constitution adopted by the congress opened Pemuda Rakjat

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In October 1951, for example, the Pemuda Rakjat leadership ordered all branches to cooperate with other youth organizations in establishing joint committees to celebrate Heroes' Day; HR, October 15, 1951. In February 1952, Pemuda Rakjat joined with several other youth organizations, including PNI's Pemuda Demokrat, in the celebration held in Bandung of the International Day of Youth Solidarity against Colonialism; HR, February 22, 1952.

2

HR, November 13, 15 and 17, 1952; also interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

3

A report in HR, January 2, 1952, stated that 150 Pemuda Rakjat members arrested in August 1951 were still in prison.

to all boys and girls, aged 14 to 30, who were Indonesian citizens and who agreed to the organization's constitution. Both entrance and membership fees were set so low that even if collected they would not exclude any potential member, however poor.¹

Following the congress, membership began to rise slowly, and in June 1953 the national council issued the first plan for expansion of membership.² The goal was an increase from 70,319 to 150,000 by the end of 1953. By the time of the first national conference in July 1954, Pemuda Rakjat claimed 281 branches and 202,605 members, of which 180 branches and 166,631 members were in Java, and 81 branches and 29,974 members in Sumatra.³ The conference launched an ambitious plan to raise membership to 500,000 by the end of the year, with the emphasis on moving out of the towns into the rural areas. This goal was not reached, but in June 1955 Pemuda Rakjat

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Pemuda Rakjat, Peraturan Dasar Pemuda Rakjat (Pemuda Rakjat's Constitution), (third edition), Djakarta, 1954, pp.14, 41.

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Pemuda Rakjat, Peran Pemuda dalam Perjuangan untuk Kemerdekaan Nasional dan Perdamaian Dunia (The Role of Youth in the Struggle for National Independence and World Peace), Djakarta, 1955, p.37.

3

Ibid., pp.37-8. The figure for Java included the insignificant membership in Nusatenggara because at that time Nusatenggara was included in the area of the East Java regional committee.

claimed 458 branches and 450,000 members, and 601 branches and 616,605 members at the end of 1955.¹ Apparently the movement into the villages was successful, for it was claimed that about 75 per cent of the members in June 1955 were poor peasants.² By the end of 1955, 80 per cent of members were peasants, 15 per cent workers and office workers, 5 per cent students of high school and university, and 1 per cent 'others', including small tradesmen and fishermen.³ The secretary-general even complained that the number of young workers was now too low. Only about 5 per cent of members were girls.

The problem of cadre education was raised in the fifth Pemuda Rakjat congress held in July 1956. Some attempt at publication in order to provide material of use for cadres had already been made, but with indifferent success.⁴ During the election campaign for the

¹ Asmudji, "Meluaskan Penerbitan Organisasi" (To Extend Publishing by the Organization), Buletin Pemuda Rakjat, no.1, 1955, p.5; HR, July 26, 1956.

² Asmudji, "Meluaskan", Buletin Pemuda Rakjat, no.1, 1955, p.6.

³ Pemuda Rakjat, Menudju Persatuan Pemuda Indonesia jang Luas (Towards Broad Unity of Indonesian Youth), Djakarta, 1956, p.45.

⁴ In January 1954 a twice-monthly Pemuda Baru (New Youth) was to begin, but was not heard of subsequently; towards the end of 1955 a monthly Generasi Baru (New Generation) was appearing, although the circulation of it and all

Constituent Assembly, the Pemuda Rakjat executive committee had instructed members to study Aidit's "For the Victory of the National United Front in the General Elections" as well as the committee's report to the fourth national council plenum.¹ The congress was told that in future education would be concentrated at the centre and provincial and kabupaten levels for cadres, with collective discussions in all leadership bodies and members' groups.² In order to implement Marxist-Leninist education proper relations had to be organized with PKI and the Party's directives carried out. Visits to the Soviet bloc have been of importance as political education as well as rewards. It was not divulged what percentage of youth delegations abroad have been Pemuda Rakjat members, but large delegations have attended, for example, the communist international youth festivals: 63 Indonesians went to Berlin in 1951, about 100 went to Bucharest in 1953 (61 spending an extra three months in Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China), 37 to Warsaw in

Pemuda Rakjat brochures and pamphlets was less than 2,250; and from the end of 1955 the monthly Buletin Pemuda Rakjat appeared, though by July 1956 it had been combined with Generasi Baru. HR, December 30, 1953; Asmudji, "Meluaskan", Buletin Pemuda Rakjat, no.1, 1955, p.5; Pemuda Rakjat, Menudju, p.53.

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Pemuda Rakjat, Menudju, pp.51-2.

2

Ibid., p.52.

1955, and about 200 to Moscow in 1957 (of whom some also visited China and North Korea).¹

During 1958 Pemuda Rakjat formulated a plan of organization and education to be completed before the sixth congress scheduled for the beginning of 1960.² The important goals for the plan were four:

1. To increase membership to one million.
2. To extend organization into new areas, especially outside Java.
3. With regard to cadres: (a) to arrange the movement of cadres from the better-established to the newer areas; (b) to arrange for every province or province-level region³ in Java and Sumatra (except Djambi and Riau) to have two full-timers, and each similar area outside Java and Sumatra one each; (c) to arrange for every commissariat in Java and Sumatra (except Djambi and Riau) to

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HR, July 10 and October 23, 1953; July 28, 1955; July 3, and September 10, 1957.

2

Pemuda Rakjat, Diktat (Outline for Cadre Courses), mimeographed, Djakarta, no date, pp.33-7.

3

Under the Pemuda Rakjat constitution, there is a committee for each province or province-level area, a commissariat to coordinate the branches in each kabupaten and large town, then a branch which coordinates the work of several sub-branches in which ordinary members participate. Groups further divide ordinary members as a means of implementing the work of the sub-branch; Pemuda Rakjat, Peraturan Dasar Pemuda Rakjat (Pemuda Rakjat's Constitution), (fifth edition), Djakarta, 1958, pp.31-43.

have at least one full-timer, and outside Java and Sumatra one half-timer; and (d) to arrange for every branch to have at least one mobile activist readily available for work.

4. To implement the following education programme:

- (a) at the centre, 'shifts' of one month each in a central school to teach the history of social development, the basic problems of the revolution, the Indonesian youth movement, and problems of Pemuda Rakjat organization;
- (b) at the province level, 'shifts' of half a month to teach "How Society Develops", the "ABC of the Indonesian Revolution" (both of which are study guides issued by PKI for use in its section and subsection schools), the Indonesian and international youth movements, and problems of Pemuda Rakjat organization;
- (c) at the commissariat level, schools and courses to study the Indonesian and international youth movements, to give an understanding of the role of Pemuda Rakjat, and to give general knowledge;
- (d) in the branches, discussions on theory, using material from "Harian Rakjat" as well as the Pemuda Rakjat constitution; and
- (e) in the sub-branches, political lectures given by leaders of the branch and by members of the local PKI subsection. Students in the schools were to live in hostels, and to work similarly to students in PKI schools. The general plan was that the

schools at each level would educate cadres and activists from the immediately lower level, while the political lectures in the sub-branches would be for both members and non-members.

At the end of 1957 there had been 802 branches and a claimed membership of 800,000.¹ In July 1958, the national council raised the membership goal to 1,200,000, and asked the urban sections of the organization to give attention not only to workers and girls, but also to high school and university students.² The executive committee's report to the council indicated, however, that in fields other than membership expansion difficulties were being faced.³ The periodical "Generasi Baru" could not be published due to a shortage of funds; the education system was not yet in operation;⁴ and the losses suffered by Pemuda Rakjat at the hands of PRRI-Permesta rebels

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Pemuda Rakjat, Pemuda Pengawal Kemerdekaan Nasional Indonesia (Youth, the Guardian of Indonesian National Independence), Djakarta, 1957, p.6.

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Pemuda Rakjat, Laporan Umum pada Sidang Dewan Nasional ke-III (General Report to the Third Meeting of the National Council), mimeographed, Djakarta, 1958, p.13.

3

Ibid., pp.13-19.

4

The report did comment that the national council was still running a school for preparing cadres from Java for work in the outer islands, and that some commissariats and branches had, on their own initiative, organized schools and courses on politics and theory.

forced the organization to give the areas outside Java a prior claim on cadres.¹

By the end of 1959 claimed membership had reached about one million.² The social composition had remained fairly stable since 1955, and in April 1960 the Pemuda Rakjat leaders estimated that about 70 per cent of members were peasants, 25 per cent workers of all descriptions from labourers to office workers, and 4 per cent high school and university students.³ Girls still comprised about 5 per cent. The geographical spread of Pemuda Rakjat was indicated by the endorsement in July 1958 of province-level committees for Atjeh, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, and Nusatenggara.⁴ Despite this, membership remained concentrated in Java (about 70 per cent) and Sumatra (about 30 per cent), with little outside these two islands.⁵ In April 1958, for example, the

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There were two reasons for this priority: first, many cadres of PKI and its mass organizations were killed by the rebels; and, second, the central government placed a ban on all political activity in the war zones, so that PKI used its mass organizations to fill the political gap left by the withdrawal of the rebels and the ban on party activities.

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Audit, Untuk Demokrasi, p.171.

3

Interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

4

Pemuda Rakjat, Laporan Umum, p.14.

5

Interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

membership in Nusatenggara, including Bali, was only 6,296¹ in a population of about 5,800,000.

In 1959 'cadre education was begun on a nation-wide scale and in a carefully organized fashion'.² The central school began its first 'shift' in January 1959,³ and was soon followed by schools and courses at the lower levels as laid down in the 1958 plan. The central school held two shifts each year, each shift lasting one and a half months and taking 30 to 40 cadres. In the provincial and commissariat schools the courses lasted from one to three weeks depending partly on how often the students could meet.⁴ Subjects taught were in line with the plan. Publishing efforts were not so successful, but in 1960 the small news-sheet "Buletin Pemuda Rakjat" was still being published, at a rate of 10,000 copies per month, and was being distributed to each sub-branch where it served as material for discussions, lectures and for improving the organization.

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HR, April 28, 1958.

2

Interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

3

HR, January 12, 1959.

4

Interview with Pemuda Rakjat leaders in East Java and Jogjakarta.

It is impossible for an outsider to estimate whether the 1958 plan has been fulfilled with respect to the number of full-time cadres. The number of cadres is kept secret, and the problem of estimating it is made more difficult partly because cadres often double as cadres for PKI and for one or more of the other mass organizations, and partly because the number varies widely from area to area. According to information I received from Pemuda Rakjat cadres in the first months of 1960, there were five full-timers in the central headquarters, and six cadres who also had other jobs; in East Java there were four full-timers at the province level, while an estimated 5 per cent of the committee members at the commissariat level were full-timers; and in the Jogjakarta Special District there were five full-timers in the Jogjakarta city commissariat, and between three and five in each of the four kabupaten committees. From these figures it would appear that Pemuda Rakjat probably has at its disposal a few hundred full-timers or part-timers, which is incomparably more than any other youth organization. Furthermore, Pemuda Rakjat receives constant assistance from PKI and the other communist-led mass organizations.

2. The activities of Pemuda Rakjat. As has been seen, Pemuda Rakjat in the first two years or so after the December 1950 congress concentrated largely on political action. Since 1952 or 1953 political action has not been abandoned, but it has been concerned largely with building the image of the communist group as the militant defender of Indonesian sovereignty, the patriotic bearer of the sacred flame of the 1945 revolution. Vociferous denunciation has been made of colonialism and imperialism, of any real or imaginary interference in Indonesia's internal affairs, of 'Western culture' (including the 'immoral' films and dances which offend a large number of Indonesians, especially the less educated and the more tradition-bound), and of 'subversion', ranging from Dutch assistance to the Darul Islam rebels to Kuomintang and Western assistance to the PRRI-Permesta rebels.¹ The demand for the return of West Irian has been brought up regularly, and when PKI after 1955 began to move closer to Sukarno, Pemuda Rakjat organized campaigns in support of his concept of guided democracy. More recently, it drew attention to those contents of his

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Pemuda Rakjat leaders claim that when the PRRI-Permesta rebellion broke out in 1958, Pemuda Rakjat cadres and activists played an active and at times heroic part in opposing and even openly fighting the rebels.

political manifesto of August 17, 1959 which were of benefit to PKI. In a different vein, Pemuda Rakjat instructed its members to vote communist in the 1955 and 1957 elections, and also organized brigades to campaign for PKI.

Pemuda Rakjat's political activities have been of considerable assistance to PKI. They also have attracted a few members and they have served to raise the political consciousness of cadres and activists. They have not been, however, a chief means by which Pemuda Rakjat has attracted over one million members. Sukatno, the secretary-general, wrote in 1955 that the way to attract mass membership was for Pemuda Rakjat to truly know the hopes of youth, for Pemuda Rakjat as a whole to fight for youth's 'everyday interests', and for the sub-branches to answer 'the everyday needs of every section of youth, in workshops, factories, offices, harbours, urban kampongs, villages, estates, schools, etc.'¹ Work towards this end has been twofold: the formulation of programmes of demands aimed at each major section of youth, and the social and economic activities of the sub-branches and groups.

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Sukatno, "Untuk Memperluas Diskusi-Diskusi dikalangan Anggota!" (To Extend Discussions Among Members!), Buletin Pemuda Rakjat, no.1, 1955, p.3.

An example of the comprehensive programmes of demands drawn up by Pemuda Rakjat is that put forward by the fifth congress in July 1956.¹ It contained twenty general demands, seven demands specifically for young workers, eleven for young peasants, and fifteen for high school and university students. The scope of the demands ranged widely: in the case of young workers, for example, from improved wages, social security, and work conditions, to the abolition of wage differences because of sex or age, the distribution of essential commodities at low prices, and technical education with scholarships from the employers and the government.

Political action and published programmes of demands have meant little to the ordinary young worker or peasant. The great appeal of Pemuda Rakjat lies in its social and economic activities, and Pemuda Rakjat did not achieve mass membership until these were given priority.

The organization secretary told the first national conference in July 1954:

In seeking for the object of activity of the organization to defend the rights of the various groups of youth in the various fields, urgent demands should be chosen which can be felt every day and can be carried out successfully, for example: abolition of pologoro, reduction of land rent, village democratization, higher wages, lower book

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Pemuda Rakjat, Menudju, pp.63-7.

prices, and so on ... In order to carry out demands as well as possible, we must cooperate with youth organizations, other mass organizations concerned, and with the mass of youth that is not yet organized ... what is especially important is to carry out concrete and continuous activity until the demands are successful. Once a demand is successful, then another object of activity must be sought with the goal of further raising the political and organizational consciousness as well as the militancy of the mass of youth, of the members and functionaries of Pemuda Rakjat.¹

Urgent economic demands have sometimes been pressed by Pemuda Rakjat alone,² but usually Pemuda Rakjat has worked in conjunction with PKI and/or one or more of the other communist-led mass organizations.

Like PKI and the other mass organizations, Pemuda Rakjat has also organized mutual aid activities. They are of two kinds. The first is the organization of teams to build and repair roads and paths, bridges, houses, irrigation ditches, and gutters. The second is giving assistance to members in times of need or illness, which, among youth who are poor and without social services, is a valuable way of winning support. A member

¹ Pemuda Rakjat, Rol Pemuda, pp.50-1.

² Sukatno told the fifth congress in July 1956, for example, that in the Tjirebon area of West Java Pemuda Rakjat had taken the initiative in demanding that the division of the rice harvest between the landowner and sharecropper be made in the fields, and in refusing to carry the landlords' share free of charge to the rice barns; Pemuda Rakjat, Menudju, p.21.

would be reluctant to leave Pemuda Rakjat and thereby forfeit the minimum security it affords him.¹ Pemuda Rakjat also helps its members by the provision of anti-illiteracy and general knowledge courses.

Professor A.G. Pringgodigdo, president of Airlangga University in Surabaya, told me that when he returned to Java after a visit to the United States he was greatly impressed by the silence and darkness of the villages and urban kampongs once the sun had set, which at that latitude is always about 6 p.m. Few villagers or kampong dwellers can afford any but the weakest kerosene or candle light, and the atmosphere, in the absence of organized entertainment at a low price, is usually one of deep boredom. This is a clue to the main reason for Pemuda Rakjat's success in attracting over one million members.

Pemuda Rakjat provides the young members and peasants with something to do, something to relieve the darkness and boredom. The value of sports and cultural activities was recognized by Sukatno in November 1959 when he called for Pemuda Rakjat cadres to attract even greater numbers of workers and peasants by organizing all kinds of sports and cultural groups.² Volley-ball, badminton, football,

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Interview with Fatchan, Nasution and Qodar.

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HR, November 6, 1959.

table-tennis and even chess clubs are organized under the leadership of the commissariats.¹ Physical training groups have been established. The extent of the work in the sports field was indicated by its organization in November 1958 of a national sports festival, the first to be held by a youth organization in Indonesia.² Cultural activities vary widely, often in accord with the traditional forms of entertainment in the different regions, and include mixed choirs, many types of musical groups, and drama and music-drama groups.

An obvious failure in Pemuda Rakjat's work has been its attempt to attract girls into the organization. The leaders feel that the causes of this failure cannot be easily overcome: first, girls usually marry between the ages of 15 and 16 in the villages and by 20 at the latest in the towns, and once they are married they should enter the women's mass organization, not Pemuda Rakjat; and second, there is a strongly ingrained tradition that girls should not mix in public with young men. An effort has been made to overcome this second difficulty by creating special all-girl groups and by experimenting with

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The 1958 plan of organization and education called on each commissariat to provide uniforms for at least one hundred team members.

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HR, November 12 and 13, 1958.

all-girl sub-branches. Activities specifically for girls include classes in handicrafts, such as raffia work, in how to raise fish, and in household skills such as sewing and cooking, but they are not yet widely developed.

Since the December 1950 congress, Pemuda Rakjat has proved a valuable assistant to PKI. It has attracted over one million young workers, peasants and students into an organization controlled by PKI; it has used them to add weight to the struggle of PKI and the other mass organizations; it has drawn from them cadres and activists who pass on to become cadres and activists of PKI and the other mass organizations; and it has endeavoured to arouse in its ordinary members a sympathy for PKI and its general objectives. Through Pemuda Rakjat young people may acquire social, political and educational values which will predispose them as adults to vote for PKI and to enter PKI and/or one of the other mass organizations.

(b) Student Organizations: IPPI and CGMI.

1. IPPI.¹ The Ikatan Peladjar Indonesia (League of Indonesian High School Students) was formed in Jogjakarta in September 1945 and included high school students and a

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Much of the information on IPPI was received in conversations with Maruli Silitonga, a non-communist leader of IPPI for many years.

few university students. In February 1948 it merged with the Sarekat Mahasiswa Indonesia (Indonesian University Student Association) to form IPPI. During the revolution IPPI and its predecessors were active chiefly in mobilizing students for the struggle against the Dutch. The leadership consisted of socialists and communists, with no friction between the two. At the time of the Madiun rebellion many of the communist-inclined leaders in Java went into hiding, but those in Sumatra remained in their posts. After the second Dutch attack in December 1948 IPPI activists passed into Dutch-occupied areas and helped establish a high school student association which joined IPPI in 1950.

A covert communist, Sujono Atmo, was elected to the IPPI leadership at the 1950 and 1951 congresses, and in the early 1950's the communists won control of most branches in Central and East Java. The non-communists became aware of the attempt to capture IPPI and united in 1954 to elect a central board free from communists. Soon afterwards a split occurred in the Djakarta IPPI, rival communist and non-communist sections competing. In 1957, because the central board would not call a new congress, presumably because it was afraid of losing control to the communists, the communist-led Bandung regional committee took the initiative of inviting the other communist-led

sections to hold a congress. The congress was held, a new central board elected, and two IPPI's existed, each claiming to be the only legitimate one.

Since 1950 IPPI has declined in relative strength. Its membership then was about 300,000. In 1960 it was still 300,000, despite a tremendous increase in the number of high school students, and its organization was split in two. At the time of the split in 1957, the communists controlled branches, mainly in Java, containing a majority of the membership. The decline in relative strength has been due to the struggle between the communists and non-communists, to the decreasing attraction for university students who formed their own organizations and so removed what had been IPPI's source of leaders, to the age (mostly over 30) of the present IPPI leaders, which increases the high school students apathy towards the organization, and to the refusal of many private schools, religious and secular, to permit their students to join IPPI because the organization includes many communists.

The communist-led IPPI concentrates its activities mainly on sports, social and cultural activities in which it receives support from Pemuda Rakjat. Under its constitution IPPI is non-political, and the communists do not openly attempt to indoctrinate its members. IPPI is used politically, in the short-run, to mobilize students

to support PKI-led rallies, demonstrations and protests, and in the long-run to plant the seeds of pro-PKI sympathies and to find a few promising students who can be trained to become communist cadres and activists.

2. CGMI.¹ PKI has had indifferent success among the intellectuals as a whole, and very few university students have been won over. As an article in "Bintang Merah" of February 1958² declared:

up till now, bourgeois ideology and ways, that is, idealism and individualism, are still dominant in our universities. We see that the youths who graduate from high school with pure spirits and who form progressive elements, fall prey to bourgeois ideology and ways after entering university.

The article said that a Party seminar on work among students, had just concluded that the Party must give:

leadership and assistance to the students, both in fighting for economic and cultural improvements, especially improvements in their studies, and in raising their still far from adequate political consciousness;

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Much of the information on CGMI was obtained from interviews with national leaders of CGMI, the PNI student organization GMNI, the Moslem student organization HMI, and the socialist student organization GMS; also from local leaders of these organizations in Jogjakarta and, to a lesser extent, in Surabaya.

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Banggas, "Memperbaiki Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan Mahasiswa" (To Improve Party Work among the Students), BM, February 1958, pp.57-65.

and that the communist-led student organizations must be broadly based on patriotism and unity.

Communist-led local university student associations were established in about 1950 in Bandung, Bogor and Jogjakarta. They fused in November 1956 to form CGMI which initially claimed about 1,180 members. By early 1960 CGMI claimed 7,000 members in sixteen towns with institutions of higher learning,¹ the largest branches being Bandung and Jogjakarta with 1,750 members each, Surabaja with 500 members, Malang with 400, and the University of Indonesia in Djakarta with 300. These figures were hotly denied by the leaders of the other student organizations who estimated that CGMI had perhaps 4,000 members - compared with over 10,000 in the Masjumi-oriented HMI, about 10,000 in the PNI-oriented GMNI, and about 6,000 evenly divided between the Protestant and Roman Catholic student associations.

CGMI claims to be non-political and non-religious, and seeks to attract new members by a variety of activities such as:

1. strong opposition to the often sadistic initiation rites inflicted on new students;

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The term 'mahasiswa' as used in the titles of the student organizations is roughly translated as university student, but it also applies to students in post-high school academies and teachers' colleges.

2. waging a struggle for students' interests, for example organizing a delegation to the Minister of Education in January 1960 to demand reduced prices for books, increased budgets for the Ministry of Education, and increased students' allowances;

3. social events, such as excursions, badminton and table-tennis;

4. active propaganda in support of President Sukarno's political lines, and opposition to the PRRI-Permesta rebellion, and to all imperialist (Dutch, American and SEATO) real and imaginary infringements of Indonesian sovereignty; and

5. opposition to 'rock'n'roll culture', and appeals for a culture based on 'the Indonesian personality'.
CGMI had in early 1960 recently begun to organize study groups for its own members, with the more advanced students helping the newer ones.

Apart from its own activities, CGMI attracts many new students because of its unique character. All other national student organizations are either openly tied to a political party or to a religion. For young students without political affiliation or strong religious feelings but who wish to join a national student organization, CGMI is the only one open to them.

As one CGMI leader complained to me, Indonesian students are not politically conscious, and CGMI must work to arouse political consciousness 'not openly or directly but by stealth'. Members are brought into such activities as protests against the visit of a Dutch aircraft carrier to West Irian in May 1960, peace weeks and peace campaigns made more attractive by lectures and films, and demands for the expulsion of Dutch university lecturers who oppose the Indonesian claim to West Irian. Some few students have been won to communist sympathies through CGMI, but the sparseness of their ranks is shown by the difficulties experienced, for example in Gadjah Mada University in Jogjakarta, in finding younger students to take over the leadership from those who should have left university years ago. In general, whenever members find that CGMI is communist-led, most of them leave. Non-communist student leaders generally estimated that no more than 5 or 10 per cent of CGMI members realized that it was controlled by PKI.

Over the past few years the importance of all student organizations has declined due to a decrease in student interest in politics, the growth in importance and social activity of elected student councils in each university,¹

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Early in 1960, the only universities or colleges where a CGMI member was president of the student council were

and an increasing concern with study. As study groups gained in importance for the student organizations, CGMI suffered a decrease in its attractiveness partly because it did not realize until after the other organizations the keen interest in such groups, and partly because there were very few communist university teachers, and so few who could assist the students in CGMI's groups.

The question still remains: why have PKI and CGMI failed to attract more than a handful of Indonesian students to the communist cause? A partial answer might be found in the social origins of the students, and in the general political situation since especially 1956. The great majority of Indonesian university students still come from the social levels above the workers and poor and medium peasants.¹ They come from families which normally would support PNI, Masjumi or the Socialist Party. Many came from families of government officials with a tradition of non-participation in political affairs as a

Padang and Malang. CGMI members had held that position in the large Gadjah Mada University in Jogjakarta from 1956 to 1958, but in the latter year the non-communists had exposed CGMI's communist orientation, with the result that by the academic year 1959/1960 CGMI held only one of the 27 occupied seats on the student council.

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For some statistical evidence to support this statement, see Leslie H. Palmier, "Occupational Distribution of Parents of Pupils in Certain Indonesian Educational Institutions", Indonesie, 1957, vol.X, pp.320-76, especially p.369.

safeguard for future positions and promotion. That some of the children of the middle class and aristocracy have not become communists is surprising, but the Indonesian middle class and aristocracy have been remarkably free from the occasional reformist or radical devoted to the welfare of the 'lower orders' and willing to risk their own future welfare and status for that cause.

The second factor, the general political situation since about 1956, was commented upon by all leaders of student organizations who were interviewed in 1959 and 1960. All claimed that during the past four years or so a decline had occurred in the originally low political interest of students. This can partly be explained by the fact that the generation which fought in the revolution, and which would be expected to show a greater interest in politics, had largely passed through the universities by 1956 and had been replaced by young students concerned primarily with their studies - and with the jobs and status those studies would provide. The general discrediting of political parties by 1957 has also tended to reduce the students' interest in party politics. Furthermore, very few job opportunities for graduates are to be found outside the government - ministries, services, armed forces, nationalized enterprises, and so on. Because Sukarno and the army, which

have become the dominant political forces since 1956, look with a jaundiced eye on the political parties, and because the political future of Indonesia is so uncertain, students have been discouraged from openly engaging in political activity because it could jeopardize their future careers.

(c) Communist Scouts and Young Pioneers.

For the age group below high school age, PKI has established both scout and young pioneer organizations. A communist-led scout association was already active in 1954. It remained small, its membership was not published, and early in 1961 it was absorbed, by presidential order, in a single, nation-wide scout association under Sukarno as chief scout. Perhaps because of the lack of success of the scout association, Aidit in 1959 suggested the formation of a young pioneer organization which took the name Fadjar Harapan (Dawn of Hope).¹

Despite its clear PKI origin, the Fadjar Harapan constitution declared that the organization was open to all children aged six to thirteen, and was 'not associated

¹

"Experimen jang Berhasil" (Successful Experiment), BM, September-October 1959, pp.409-10.

with any political party'.¹ Activities were to include sports and play, training in farming and handicrafts, study groups to assist with homework, visits to museums and historical sites, and encouragement to read 'about the people's heroes and about the creative mind of the people'. Party and Pemuda Rakjat cadres were instructed to study the experiences of pioneer organizations abroad and to adapt them to local conditions.

In the initial stages Fadjar Harapan was to be organized on a local basis with no central leadership. By May 1960 there were 1,000 members in Djakarta and groups were already being formed in the other large towns.² Through Fadjar Harapan the Aidit leadership presumably hoped to build a mass organization that would not only attract parents whose children could use the organization's facilities, but also prepare children for entry into first Pemuda Rakjat and IPPI, and then into PKI and its adult mass organizations. It is still too early to ascertain the success of this new PKI venture, but as there is a great need in both towns and villages for an organization to provide something to do for the

¹

Fadjar Harapan, Constitution of Fadjar Harapan, mimeographed translation, Djakarta, 1960, pp.2-3.

²

HR, May 17, 1960.

teeming millions of Indonesian children, there is every likelihood that, barring external factors,¹ it will achieve mass membership.

5. Women

The attempt to organize women and to produce women cadres and activists has required patience and special methods. The poorer Indonesian women have even less experience than their menfolk in organizations, they are generally illiterate, and they are traditionally meek, especially in mixed company. But the Aidit leadership has considered the work of attracting and organizing women to be important because not only do women comprise half the electorate, they also play an important role in the economy. A high percentage of workers in industry are women, and women participate in agricultural work as peasants and as labourers on estates. In order to attract and organize women, especially those of the poorer classes, the Indonesian communists have used the Party itself, the women's mass organization, Gerwani, the SOBSI unions, and BTI. Considerable success has been achieved

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These external factors could include a total ban on the activities of PKI and its mass organizations, or, as happened to the scout movement on March 9, 1961, the enforced consolidation of all children's organizations into one government-led body.

in drawing women into the Party and the mass organizations, and in the last few years women have begun to occupy cadre and activist positions.

(a) The Work of the Party.

Mention has already been made of the instruction issued by the central leadership in January 1955 to increase the number of women members and to organize their activities in special women's groups, of the attention paid to the creation of women cadres, and of the increase in female membership of PKI to 100,000 in September 1957 and 258,000 in September 1959. But what has PKI offered women? What has it done to attract them directly?

The PKI election manifesto, endorsed in March 1954, claimed that 'for women, to vote PKI means emancipation and the guarantee of equal rights'.¹ An article in "Harian Rakjat" just before the Constituent Assembly elections of December 1955, explained at some length what was meant by equal rights.² PKI would guarantee equal rights in four fields: in marriage there would be equal freedom for both sexes in choosing a partner, equal rights

¹ PKI, Manifes Pemilihan Umum PKI, p.19.

² HR, December 14, 1955.

in divorce and inheritance, joint discussion by mother and father about matters affecting their children, and joint ownership of the children; in the economic sphere, women would participate in the productive process as equals of men; in labour there would be no discrimination against women, and equal pay for equal work would be enforced; and in agriculture, women would have the same share as men when the land was divided. Also appealing particularly to the interests of women have been the frequently repeated communist demands for the distribution of food and textiles at low prices, the provision of adequate educational facilities for all children, and so on.

The methods used by PKI actually to attract women differ according to the social position of the women. An article by one of the leading women communists, Setiati Surasto, described the methods used among the three broad social groups: the working class and peasant women, the middle group, and the higher group.¹ Party membership can most easily be extended, she wrote, among working class and peasant women. They face many difficulties in their life and can feel personally the leadership and

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Setiati Surasto, "Memperluas Keanggotaan Partai dikalangan Wanita" (Extending Party Membership among Women), KP, February 1957, pp.19-21.

support of the Party in overcoming them. But because in general they are illiterate, have many children, and face an insecure life in terms of both income and marriage, it is difficult to get the poorer women together for meetings, especially meetings that are not very close to their homes. Therefore they are approached by assistance in times of need, and by small meetings of women who live close together. Later, this can be followed by efforts to press their everyday demands and to draw political conclusions from them. And so, gradually, they are prepared for participation in ordinary Party meetings and courses.

The middle group includes traders, middle peasants, middle government employees, students, and their wives - 'longer time will be needed in order to attract them'. They fear to be connected with the Party, Setiati wrote, because they might thereby lose their social position, or because they have been subjected to reactionary propaganda. PKI assists them in facing their everyday problems, for example by giving explanations of their rights and of such as tax and pension regulations.

Few women in Indonesia are prominent intellectuals or high government officials, but in its dealings with the higher groups of women, PKI attempts to win indirect influence over their husbands. Women in this group,

Setiati warned, 'require special attention'. She recognized that they cannot easily be drawn into the Party, and that to try to do so openly would produce the reverse result. 'They are afraid of the word communist' and afraid to lose their own and their husband's positions. The most the Party can do is to invite them at every opportunity to functions as honoured guests, and to explain the Party's position scientifically and openly. In this way PKI hopes to win their sympathy.

If they are already convinced [that the PKI position is correct] they will assist and support us. And if they are already convinced, then they can give moral and material support to our struggle, although in general they will not wish to give it openly. We must understand this and not hope for more than they can give.

Setiati emphasized that the middle and higher groups could give financial assistance to the Party, and she called for the regular collection of subscriptions and 'support' which would cement their relations with the Party as well as give them a feeling of participation in the Party's struggle.

PKI held its first national women's conference from May 26 to 30, 1958. The problems of increasing the number of women members were discussed.¹ Aidit pointed

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The major documents of the conference are given in BM, June 1958, pp.241-85.

out that:

The greatest hinderance to Party work among the working women is the still dominant belief that the present bad conditions are predestined and cannot be changed.

Therefore, he said, the Party must work ceaselessly to convince them that the bad situation is man-made, and that through organization a better situation can be created. Sudisman called on the Party to give greater attention to the basic economic problems faced by women.² And Suharti listed some of the methods that had proved successful in attracting new women members: talks, preferably given by women cadres, on the rights of women and children and on the Party's stand for equality in marriage; andjangsono groups;³ assistance to households in times of misfortune (death or sickness) or when busy (births, etc.); explaining the Party's stern attitude towards members who break the communist moral code; and actions to defend the everyday interests of the women

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D.N. Aidit, "Wanita Komunis Pedjuang untuk Masjarakat Baru" (Communist Women, Fighters for a New Society), BM, June 1958, p.247.

2

Sudisman, "Dengan Ketabahan jang Besar Mendidik dan Mempromosi Kader-Kader Wanita" (With Great Resolution Educate and Promote Women Cadres), BM, June 1958, p.250.

3

Andjangsono groups are small groups of organization members that call on neighbours for friendly visits and chats. They were used by PKI and its mass organizations especially around the times of general elections.

masses.¹ An obvious way of increasing women membership has been to persuade male members to bring their wives to meetings, and so gradually raise their political consciousness to the level at which they ask to join the Party.

By its own direct efforts PKI has brought many women into its ranks - but it is impossible to estimate what proportion has been attracted directly, and what through the activities of the mass organizations.

(b) Gerwani.

The communist-led mass organization for women made its humble entry on June 4, 1950 when Gerwis (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia Sedar, Movement of Enlightened Indonesian Women) was founded as the merger of six local women's organizations scattered across Java. Total membership was only 500.²

In the first eighteen months of its existence Gerwis made little progress because membership was restricted to

¹ Suharti, "Menghidupkan Grup Wanita dan Meluaskan Keanggotaan Partai dikalangan Wanita" (Activating Women's Groups and Extending Party Membership among Women), BM, June 1958, p.256.

² Gerwani, Peraturan Dasar Gerwani (Gerwani's Constitution), Djakarta, 1954, p.7; Suharti Suwanto, "Indonesian Women Struggle for Peace and their Rights", FALP, March 9, 1956, p.4.

'fully politically conscious women'.¹ The leadership, which was derived 99 per cent from the bourgeoisie,² issued pious demands for improved conditions for poor women,³ but despite plans for work among the masses⁴ made no real efforts to go down and organize the masses. Activities were concentrated on supporting PKI's political struggle. The result was that several Gerwis leaders were among those imprisoned in the August 1951 mass

1

Interview with Mrs Umi Sardjono, chairman of Gerwani since March 1954.

2

Umi Sardjono, "Praeadvies tentang Organisasi" (Report on Organization), Wanita Sedar (Enlightened Woman), February 15, 1951, p.33. In this report, Umi Sardjono declared that although the workers and peasants, the oppressed, should lead the organization,

facts as they are in Indonesia show that their awareness is still very low. The oppressed workers and peasants are not yet aware that they should take the leadership of the revolution.

In such a situation, 99 per cent of the Gerwis leadership were bourgeois, 'because they can most quickly accept our theories and teachings for leading the struggle to victory'.

3

See, for example, the demands for working women drawn up by the first Gerwis conference in February 1951; Wanita Sedar, March 15, 1951, p.15. The first Gerwis congress in December 1951 formulated a plan for a democratic marriage law which would ensure equal rights and obligations for both sexes, protect wives and children in cases of divorce or separation, establish a minimum age for marriage of 17 for women and 20 for men, and 'in principle' guarantee monogamy; Wanita Sedar, January 1952, p.6.

4

The first Gerwis conference in February 1951, for example, drew up a detailed programme for work in the villages; Wanita Sedar, March 15, 1951, p.16.

arrests, and that by December 1951, when the first national congress was held, membership had risen only to 6,000.¹

The first congress concluded, 'after criticism and self-criticism', that in the past too much attention had been given to outside actions and not enough to strengthening Gerwis, to internal actions 'that directly concern the interests of women in their everyday life'.² Some leaders and cadres were criticized for their 'sectarian manner' or work, others for creating hostility to Gerwis by their unsubtle methods of work, especially in facing non-Gerwis people. The congress also, however, still concerned itself with political matters of little interest to the mass of women, such as West Irian, the cancellation of the Round Table Conference agreement, and a free foreign policy. It was decided, too, to join the International Federation of Democratic Women.

Despite the criticism and self-criticism indulged in at the December 1951 congress, the Gerwis leaders were slow to direct their attention to winning mass support by the study and exploitation of the everyday problems and interests of the women masses. The root of their

¹ HR, June 5, 1957.

² Wanita Sedar, January 1952, p.3.

unwillingness is probably found in their social origins. The Gerwis leaders were almost entirely middle class, and the Indonesian middle class in general has shown itself loath to go among the 'lower orders' and organize them. In June 1953 claimed membership was only 40,000,¹ but the beginnings of work among the masses were indicated by a report in February 1953 on the work of Gerwis in East Java.² Among the 7,016 members in East Java at that time, Gerwis was running 8 kindergartens, 52 anti-illiteracy courses, 29 courses in handicrafts, mutual assistance in 54 places, and cadre courses in 17.

The second Gerwis congress was held in March 1954. Membership had reached 80,000, the number of branches 203.³ Three foreign delegates attended, including Monica Felton from the International Federation of Democratic Women, and they sat as honorary members of the congress presidium. Umi Sardjono, the new chairman, announced at the close of the congress that Gerwis had thrown away its 'sectarian characteristics', and to symbolize the end of sectarianism the name Gerwis was replaced by Gerwani. Consequently a new constitution was drawn up which opened

¹ HR, June 9, 1953.

² Djaman Baru, February 28, 1953, p.29.

³ HR, March 26, 1954.

Gerwani to all Indonesian women, aged 16 and over, 'irrespective of political, religious and ethnic affiliation', who accepted the Gerwani constitution and programme.¹

The second congress decided to increase membership to two and one-half millions by the time of the next congress, but although this target was later criticized as 'not objective',² a rapid increase in membership was achieved. Membership was claimed to be 400,000 just before the September 1955 general elections, and 500,000 at the time of the Constituent Assembly elections in December 1955.³ In June 1956, when membership was reported to be 565,147, Gerwani had, in Java, branches in all kabupatens and large towns, an organization at the ketjamatan level in 40 per cent of the ketjamatans, and

¹ Gerwani, Peraturan Dasar, p.11.

² The Gerwani leaders claimed in December 1957 that the target was unrealistic because for over a year after the second congress the whole organization was busy changing its structure in line with the new constitution; because Gerwani did not have the number of cadres required to achieve the target in a society where women are unaccustomed to taking part in organization; and because in deciding on the target figure no attention had been given to the problems posed by 'difficult regions', such as insecure, mountainous and isolated areas, especially outside Java. Gerwani, Lebih Giat Meluaskan Gerakan untuk Terlaksananya Piagam Hak-Hak Wanita Indonesia (More Active in Extending the Movement for the Implementation of the Charter of Indonesian Women's Rights), Djakarta, 1958, p.69.

³ HR, June 13, 1955; January 21, 1956.

about 5,000 sub-branches at the urban neighbourhood and village level; outside Java there were branches or preparations for them in all of Sumatra, in West and South Kalimantan, and in North and South Sulawesi, while lower levels of the organization were already established in West Nusatenggara and Maluku.¹ At the time of the third Gerwani congress in December 1957, there were 671,342 members.²

In the period between the second and third congresses, Gerwani engaged in political as well as social and economic activities. During the 1955 general elections, 23,000 Gerwani members in Java alone worked in the election committees formed by the government to ensure the smooth execution of the elections; and 23 members ran on the PKI list, and 1 for the small nationalist party PRI. Five members were elected to parliament on the PKI ticket, four as Party members, and one, chairman Umi Sardjono, as 'non-party'. Six were elected on the PKI ticket to the Constituent Assembly. In the 1957 local elections, 59 members were elected to local councils,³

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Gerwani, Meluaskan Aksi-Aksi untuk Memperkuat Tuntutan Hak-Hak Wanita-Anak-Anak dan Perdamaian (Extending Actions to Strengthen the Demand for the Rights of Women and Children and for Peace), Djakarta, 1956, pp.26-7.

2

Gerwani, Lebih Giat, p.68.

3

RI, January 1958, pp.27-8.

almost all from the PKI lists. Strong support was given to the peace movement, especially in collecting signatures for the Vienna Peace Appeal, and Gerwani's support was given to whatever PKI's political stand happened to be at the moment.¹

Education on an appreciable scale was begun within Gerwani after the second congress. For ordinary members, an anti-illiteracy campaign was started in 1955 and within a year it was claimed that 30 per cent of members could read, though not all of them could yet write.² Courses for cadres concentrated on problems of organization and administration, but towards the end of 1957 an attempt was made to systematize cadre education with schools and courses at all levels of the organization and with uniform mimeographed guides for four basic subjects: the history of the national movement, the history of the national and international women's movement, problems of Gerwani organization and development, and instruction on the International Federation of Democratic Women, on the

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For example, Gerwani expressed support for the first Ali Sastroamidjojo government, opposition to the Burhanudin Harahap government, support for Sukarno's concept of an all-party government, and support for the president in his efforts as cabinet formateur in April 1957.

2

Gerwani, Lebih Giat, p.73.

rights of women and children, and on peace.¹ From October 1950 until late 1952 Gerwis had published its own periodical. At the beginning of 1955, Gerwani started a new periodical "Wanita Indonesia" (Indonesian Woman), but after irregular appearances it ceased publication in the middle of 1956. To replace it, "Berita Gerwani" (Gerwani News) was published, a single sheet devoted exclusively to news of the organization and designed to assist cadres in their work. Early in 1960 it had a circulation of only 2,000.²

Between the second and third congresses:

Gerwani, from the centre to the regions, has taken an active part in actions to defend the rights of women and children, which is the fundamental task of a women's organization.³

In this field Gerwani launched a campaign during the 1955 elections to press its demand for a democratic marriage law, urged through members of parliament that the legal cost of re-union of separated partners should be removed while that of separation should be made greater, participated in committees set up experimentally in some areas by the Ministry of Religious Affairs to solve marriage disputes, demanded heavy penalties in cases of rape and

¹ Ibid., pp.74-6.

² Interview with Umi Sardjono.

³ Gerwani, Lebih Giat, p.51.

abduction, and, in the sub-branches, carried out many small actions of benefit to its members.¹ In defence of the interests of peasant and working class women, Gerwani assisted BTI and the SOBSI trade unions. Other social-economic activities included the creation of some training courses for midwives, and the establishment of 179 kindergartens and 3 elementary schools.

By the time of the third congress, held from December 22 to 27, 1957, Gerwani claimed 671,342 members, distributed geographically as follows: 613,262 in Java, of whom 253,750 were in East Java, 219,414 in Central Java, 132,220 in West Java, and 7,878 in Djakarta; 59,740 in Sumatra; 2,680 in Sulawesi; 2,260 in Nusatenggara; 1,900 in Maluku; and 1,500 in Kalimantan.² Within Java there were branches in every kabupaten and city, an organization at the ketjamatan level in 75 per cent of all ketjamatans, and sub-branches in approximately 40 per cent of all

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In general the Indonesian woman is very insecure in her marriage because her husband may easily repudiate the marriage. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in the years 1954 through 1958 the number of marriage repudiations within the Moslem community was from 50 to 52 per cent of the total number of new marriages plus reconciliations between separated partners; Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Pocketbook of Indonesia 1960, Djakarta, 1960, p.18. This insecurity greatly enhances the appeal of an organization that demands a democratic marriage law, and that aids the wife in her efforts to prevent repudiation by the husband.

2

Gerwani, Lebih Giat, pp.68, 71.

villages. Some sub-branches had been organized in places of work, but they were disbanded when the SOBSI unions established special women's departments.

From December 1957 to December 1960 Gerwani put into operation a three-year plan by which it was hoped finally to create a system of cadre education. Many cadre courses were held at the various levels, but their number and extent have not been divulged. At the beginning of 1960 the number of full-time cadres were still very low: three at the centre, and an average of below one for each of the branches (in December 1957 there were 183 branches). A considerable amount of part-time labour was available, however, from the women cadres in PKI and other communist-led mass organizations, and from Gerwani members of parliament and the local representative councils.

The national council's report to the third congress in December 1957 criticized what it considered to be a continued over-emphasis on political matters which were of little or no interest to the mass of Indonesian women:

Experience until now proves that actions concerning political questions are not balanced by social-economic actions, so that their importance is less directly felt by the women masses.

... this means not that political action is unimportant, but that we must further increase the number of actions concerning the rights of women and children as well as social-economic actions, actions that directly

concern the life of the women masses, for example the question of kampong improvements, the problem of water, the problem of rice, etc.¹

The national council's report to the congress declared that:

in order to extend membership, every action must be based on the direct interests of the mass of women, discussed with the women themselves, and carried out as well as supported by them.

A double guiding principle was laid down for any action: that its purpose should be reasonable so that it received wide sympathy and support from the community, and that it should be made at the right time and with realized limits.

The third congress endorsed a comprehensive 27-point programme of demands which embraced problems ranging from marriage laws, work laws, and equal rights, to compulsory education, adequate medical provisions, and price controls on essential commodities.² With this programme Gerwani hoped to appeal to all sections of Indonesian women from working class and peasant women to the literate middle classes.

At the beginning of 1960, when Gerwani membership was claimed to be about 700,000, which indicated a considerable

1

Ibid., p.70.

2

The programme of demands is given in full, ibid., pp.125-7.

slowing down in the rate of growth after December 1957, Gerwani was engaged in the following practical work designed to attract and hold its mass membership:¹

1. A popular activity was the arisan whereby all members of a group contributed a certain sum each week and each member in turn received the whole sum.

2. Mutual assistance was organized at times of need, such as death, birth, marriage, illness and pregnancy.

3. Small-scale credit groups were organized.

4. There were 326 kindergartens and 3 elementary schools. Training courses were being held for kindergarten teachers. A few of the kindergartens were well-equipped and had trained teachers, but the majority were still make-shift.

5. In the middle of 1959 the national council decided that each branch should have at least five or six persons competent to manage a cooperative. Courses for cooperative cadres were begun in which officials of the government's Cooperative Service were asked to teach. By early 1960 a few consumer cooperatives had already been created.

6. Anti-illiteracy courses were still the main activity in Central and East Java. Some branches held

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The following information was obtained in conversations with Umi Sardjono and with Gerwani leaders in East Java and Jogjakarta.

courses for the general public, sometimes alone and sometimes in cooperation with government agencies.

7. Women were assisted in their marriage problems. Gerwani cadres participated in the semi-official bodies for the solution of marital disputes, and even occasionally defended members in court in divorce cases.

8. Handicrafts were taught: in the villages, the making of baskets and mats, in the towns, cushions and clothes, and everywhere cooking.

9. Gerwani led popular campaigns to demand such as a decrease in the price of essential commodities, rice, textiles, sugar and cooking oil.

10. Some cultural activities were organized, including choirs and drama groups, but these were not yet widespread.

11. Gerwani gave assistance to the other communist-led mass organizations and to PKI in their efforts to obtain improvements for the different sections of society.

12. Gerwani joined with other women's organizations in celebrating Kartini¹ Day (April 21) and Mother's Day (December 22), and in the larger cities held its own celebrations for International Women's Day.

¹

Kartini is a national heroine; she was one of the first to attempt to give education to girls.

The basic members' groups met at least once a month and sometimes as often as once a week.

It seems that the main attraction of Gerwani for the mass of urban and rural members is Gerwani's social work, the organization of arisan groups, small credit groups, mutual assistance, literacy courses, kindergartens, and assistance in the solution of marriage problems. Little direct political education is given to the ordinary members, but Gerwani endeavours to teach them that bad conditions can be changed by organization, and that PKI is the only political party which truly defends their interests. Gerwani's political importance to PKI lies in its ability to awaken the mass of women to political problems, to mobilize voters, to add support to PKI's political line, to aid the other mass organizations, and to provide a source and training ground for female Party members and cadres.

(c) The Work of SOBSI and its Trade Unions.

The following section deals not with the work of the communist-led trade unions for their members in general, but with the special attention given to women members.

Although the number of women workers is high in Indonesia,¹ SOBSI and its member unions did not give special attention to them until the beginning of 1956, just one year after PKI began to examine the means of attracting and organizing a far greater number of women. On February 25, 1956 the national council of SOBSI passed a resolution concerning women workers and including the following decisions:

1. to demand equal rights for men and women in the same work, including payment of allowances and of the minimum wage;
2. to demand the intensive implementation of work law number 1, 1951, with special attention to the rights of women workers;

1

A survey of medium and large manufacturing enterprises in 1955 found that about 35 per cent of the 450,000 workers reported were women; International Labour Office, Report to the Government of Indonesia on Social Security, Geneva, 1958, pp.17-18. Of 1,452,000 workers employed by over 25,000 officially registered enterprises in 1956, 416,784 were women workers; Njono, "Women Workers of Indonesia", World Trade Union Movement, March 1956, p.9. According to a PKI estimate given in May 1958, women comprised 45 per cent of workers in estates, 65 per cent in textile enterprises, 60 per cent in light industry, and 65 per cent in cigarette enterprises, with a large number also in the government ministries and services; Sundari, "Memperbesar Aktivitet Gerakan Wanita untuk Memenangkan Partai dalam Pemilihan Umum Parlemen ke-II" (Increasing the Activity of the Women's Movement in order to Bring Victory to the Party in the Second Parliamentary General Elections), BM, June 1958, p.263.

3. to oppose discrimination against women effected by some reactionary officials in government offices, enterprises and services;

4. to fight for special rights for women with regard to pregnancy, confinement and work conditions.¹

The resolution also decided on the formation within the trade unions of special women's groups which could discuss the special demands of women workers and organize an effective fight for their implementation under the leadership of the respective trade unions.

To indicate its willingness to have women share in the work of the organization, the national council in February 1956 increased the number of its women members from one to five. By September 1957, there were 49 women cadres in the central and regional leadership committees of SOBSI and its member unions, and 'The number of women cadres who lead or participate in leading the basic organizations has greatly increased'.² In that month the SOBSI national conference decided that trade unions with many women members should form women's departments, that the work of forming special women's groups in work places should be completed by the end of

¹

BB, March 17, 1956, p.3.

²

SOBSI, Dokumen-Dokumen, p.94.

1958, that cadres should be appointed within SOBSI regional and branch committees to take care of women's affairs, and that women workers should be promoted within the leadership bodies.¹

During 1956 and 1957 some of the member unions held special conferences devoted to the problems of women workers; in 1957 some SOBSI branches were already organizing special cadre courses for women; and in February 1958 SOBSI held a national seminar on women workers, the agenda dealing with methods of organizing women workers, the special socio-economic problems facing women workers, and women's rights.² The national council secretariat in March 1958 reversed its decision to organize special women's groups, but the special interests of women workers were promoted by the trade unions' special departments and cadres for women's affairs, and by occasional all-female meetings.³

By the end of 1958 few women had yet entered the central leadership of the SOBSI unions: there were four women out of 39 members of the central council of the estate workers' union whose membership was 45 per cent

¹ SOBSI, Plan Organisasi 1958, pp.5-6.

² BB, October 15, 1957, p.6; January 30, 1958, pp.1,3.

³ Munir, Pedoman, pp.15-16.

female, 9 out of 29 in the cigarette workers' union whose membership was 65 per cent female and 3 out of 21 in the textile workers' union whose membership was also 65 per cent female.¹ But women were 'rapidly' occupying places in the leadership of the basic organizations. Few statistics have been made available since then of the increase in women cadres within SOBSI and its member unions;² but although they and the figures for the end of 1958 show a low proportion of women cadres compared with women members, they also indicate considerable success for SOBSI and its unions in developing organizational interest and ability among the women members in a country where, at least among the poorer classes, women have no experience of how to run organizations, especially mixed organizations.

In short, because women workers constitute a considerable percentage of workers in certain fields of labour, large numbers have been attracted into the SOBSI

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Ibid., p.17.

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In August 1959, the estate workers' union, Sarbupri, claimed that it had 681 women activists in a membership of perhaps 350,000 to 400,000; BB, August 25, 1959, p.3. In May 1960 the East Java SOBSI leaders told me that women constituted about five per cent of the cadres, but 30 per cent of total membership, in the province.

unions on the basis of their general interests as workers. From February 1956, however, the SOBSI leaders made efforts specifically to attract women workers and to strengthen their ties with the unions through appeals to their specific interests as women workers and through the creation of women activists and cadres. The slow but noteworthy increase in women trade union cadres gives some indication of the success of these efforts.

(d) The Work of BTI.

An article entitled "Extending Membership Among Peasant Women", published in "Harian Rakjat" on June 15, 1955, showed how the PKI-led peasant organization BTI has worked to make the peasant women politically aware and then to recruit them as members of BTI or Gerwani.¹ The author, Kartinah, acknowledged that peasant women were backward, shy and humble, and that they could not be attracted into an organization by merely inviting them to join. Patience was required if they were to be attracted, and, wherever possible, the help of a husband, father or neighbour was enlisted. The men were expected to explain the purpose of BTI, to take their womenfolk to meetings,

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Kartinah, "Memperluas Keanggotaan dikalangan Wanita Tani" (Extending Membership among Peasant Women), HR, June 15, 1955.

and to ensure that they were present at discussions of the situation in their own village.

In this way, Kartinah claimed, the women learned that other women faced the same problems, 'and that their suffering is not different'. Soon they reached the point of wanting to join with their menfolk in the peasants' struggle, and they learned the importance of organization in solving their problems. Then BTI or Gerwani draw them into its organization. Special care was taken to give them a sense of responsibility and participation by at first asking them to perform easy tasks, such as preparing food for meetings, rendering assistance to others in times of need, and other social work. Lessons were also given to eradicate illiteracy and to teach health matters, sewing, and so on. In short, Kartinah wrote, the peasant women:

must be given a little responsibility in the organization because by being given responsibility, even though a little, they feel proud that they can assist the work of the organization and they feel that their energy is not wasted.

Kartinah's article illustrates three characteristics of PKI's work to organize the masses: first, the care and patience employed in raising the consciousness of the masses and in bringing them into an organization; second, the way in which one communist organization assists the

work of the others - in this case BTI helps in the establishment or growth of Gerwani, and Gerwani then assists BTI in the struggle to improve the peasants' conditions -; and, third, the article, appearing as it did in the PKI newspaper, clearly envisages the work of the mass organizations as leading eventually to membership in the Party.

6. Ethnic Groups and Minorities

The Indonesian people is composed of many ethnic groups. More than 35 discrete groups each contain more than 100,000 members, and there are large numbers of smaller groups.¹ So far the smaller ethnic groups have not reacted to any significant extent against the real or supposed domination of the Javanese, the largest group. The national language, Indonesian, is closely related to Malay but not to the languages of Java. Nor can the non-Javanese point to Javanese monopoly of power: the President-Prime Minister-Supreme Commander, Sukarno, is part Balinese as well as part Javanese; the First Deputy Prime Minister, Djuanda, is Sundanese; the army chief, Nasution, is a Moslem Batak; the air force chief is

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G. William Skinner, "The Nature of Loyalties in Rural Indonesia" in Skinner (ed.), Local, Ethnic, and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia: a Symposium, New Haven, Connecticut, 1959, p.5.

reportedly a Eurasian raised by a Sundanese family; and the navy chief is Sundanese. The leaders of the main political parties are also drawn from a wide range of ethnic groups.

The non-Javanese do complain, however, about 'Djakarta', meaning the central government. They complain of the waste and corruption, the endless red tape, the lack of interest in the affairs of the regions, and the appropriation of funds obtained from their exports in order to subsidize Java. This discontent with 'Djakarta' has been a prime cause of the acts of insubordination that have occurred in the outer islands, from merely ignoring central government instructions, to smuggling, to setting up local councils in defiance of the central government's apparatus, to open rebellion and the formation of separate but not separatist states. A solution to the anti-Djakarta grievances has been looked for in a considerable increase of regional autonomy - to which the central government has paid lip service.

The ethnic minorities, or, in Indonesian official terminology 'the non-native Indonesian citizens', consist of Chinese, Arabs, and Eurasians. Arabs and Eurasians are relatively few in number, but the racial Chinese of Indonesian citizenship amount to about 1 or 1½ million. The ethnic minorities, and especially the Chinese, have

suffered considerable discrimination, particularly in the economic sphere where the government has legislated and officials have acted against them.¹

(a) PKI and the Ethnic Groups.

None of the ethnic groups in Indonesia has developed a militant ethnic consciousness. The communist leaders dared not try to develop and exploit such a consciousness because in Indonesia, unlike in India, the growth and existence of the Party has been at least partly dependent upon an alliance with political forces within the central government. Among some of the non-Javanese ethnic groups there has arisen, however, a demand for greater regional autonomy, for a 'fairer share for the provinces' in the distribution of the government's income. During the first years after January 1951, the Aidit leadership was too engrossed in re-establishing and strengthening the Party and its mass organizations in Java to devote more than passing attention to the non-Javanese areas. Interest in the outer regions was first aroused by the 1955 elections, in which PKI sought to gather the highest

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For a description of discrimination against the Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent, see Donald E. Willmott, The National Status of the Chinese in Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1956, especially pp.51-7, 60-2.

possible number of votes, and was then increased after 1956 when the Party leaders were forced to consider seriously the non-parliamentary means that would be necessary in order to win power. A communist victory even in Java would be difficult without broad support among the Sundanese in West Java, while a victory in Java might be reversed if the outer islands remained in the hands of non-communists.

In their efforts to attract and organize the members of the various ethnic groups, the PKI leaders have not created specific ethnic group organizations, but have used the ordinary machinery of the Party and its mass organizations. At the same time, the leaders have taken pains to declare their support for the interests of the regions, for the broadest autonomy for the ethnic groups. The PKI central committee admitted in October 1953 that the Party 'has not yet given much attention to the problem of the ethnic groups in our country'.¹ The remedy for this deficiency was begun in March 1954 when the fifth national congress endorsed a programme calling for the election of democratic regional governments with wide autonomy, and

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PKI, Putusan-Putusan Sidang Pleno Central Comite Partai Komunis Indonesia (Decisions of the PKI Central Committee Plenum Meeting), Djakarta, 1953, p.57.

for the right of each ethnic group to use its own language in schools and in court.¹ During the 1955 election campaign, PKI declared:

The Indonesian Republic is a unitary state with many ethnic groups. This means that Indonesia must have a central government that is obeyed by all regions and ethnic groups, but at the same time there must be the broadest autonomy for every ethnic group (provisionally this is possible along the ordinary administrative divisions) for organizing finances, economy, communications, culture and policy special to its area. All ethnic groups, whether large or small, are equal, fraternal, and of mutual assistance, and therefore they may not oppress one another and none may receive special treatment.²

It is noteworthy that of the 39 persons elected to parliament on the PKI ticket in September 1955, at least 15 were not ethnic Javanese despite the heavy concentration of PKI votes in the Javanese areas.

In 1956, 1957 and 1958 the problem of the ethnic groups was thrown into prominence by the formation of regional councils in protest against the central government in North, Central and South Sumatra, and in East Indonesia, and by the formation of the PRRI-Permesta rebel government in February 1958. Both the councils and the rebel government appealed to regional and ethnic loyalties,

¹ PKI, Program PKI, pp.13-14.

² HR, November 18, 1955.

stressing the alleged unconcern of the government in Djakarta for the problems of the regions and peoples outside Java.

The PKI leaders were strongly opposed to the anti-communist dissident leaders but were concerned not to appear opposed to the interests of the regions. They were quick to point out that despite the slogans of 'broad autonomy for the regions' and 'development of the regions', the councils by their illegal seizure of power hindered the development of democratic regional government, and by their corruption and smuggling accelerated the bankruptcy of the state and hampered efforts to improve the economy of the regions.¹ In order to re-state its own concern for broad, democratic regional autonomy, PKI issued three booklets in April 1958, two months after the outbreak of the rebellion, which declared the Party's support for the formation of seventeen first-level autonomous regions outside Java, and elaborated on its 1955 statement of PKI's goal of regional and ethnic group autonomy.²

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See, for example, M.H. Lukman, "Kesetiaan PKI pada Politik Front Persatuan dan Pembelaan Kepentingan Rakjat" (PKI's Loyalty to the United Front Policy and to the Defence of the People's Interests), in Audit, Lukman and Njoto, 37 Tahun Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI 37 Years), Djakarta, 1957, pp.14-17.

2

The three booklets were issued under the title Menudju Otonomi Daerah Seluas-luasanja (Towards the Broadest

That PKI successfully avoided being characterized as 'Djakartan' or Javanese or opposed to regional interests, was indicated by the communist and other reports of rapid Party expansion in the outer islands since 1956.¹ Both Lukman and Aidit told the delegates to the PKI sixth congress in September 1959 of the great importance of work among the ethnic groups. Aidit called on the Party to improve this work by promoting the culture of the different groups by promoting and defending broad, democratic regional autonomy as a step toward ethnic group autonomy, and especially by developing work among the peasants who constituted a majority within the ethnic groups.²

(b) PKI and the Ethnic Minorities.

The PKI programme for the ethnic minorities has been simple: equal rights for all citizens, and the prevention of narrow nationalism among the 'native' Indonesians at

Regional Autonomy), I-III; Djakarta, 1958. A.R. Nungtjik was the author of the first on "Autonomy and its Sphere of Authority"; Peris Pardede wrote the second on "Abolition of the Pamong Pradja System"; and Hutomo Supardan, Harjowisastro and J. Piry wrote the third, which consisted of essays on "The Budget", "Determining the Boundaries of Autonomous Regions", and "Level-III Autonomy".

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See above, pp.161-2.

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Aidit, Untuk Demokrasi, pp.175-6; Lukman, Tentang Konstitusi PKI, pp.25-6.

the same time as preventing a feeling of superiority among the minorities.¹

PKI's earnestness in defence of the ethnic minorities was shown by the Party's campaign in late 1959 and early 1960 against the government's action to evict aliens trading in the rural areas. Because of the muddle of Indonesia's citizenship regulations, many Chinese and some of the few Arabs are no longer sure which nationality they hold. Therefore the eviction of alien rural traders affected many of confused nationality as well as some of clearly Indonesian nationality, and profoundly disturbed all members of the ethnic minorities as a possible step towards further discrimination against themselves. Whatever PKI's motives in opposing the eviction measure and thereby arousing the wrath of many political and army leaders, its opposition appeared laudable in the eyes of the minorities, especially the Chinese.

Because the Chinese are viewed with envy and suspicion by many Indonesians, it would be undiplomatic for PKI itself to organize them. Therefore, although a

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See, for example, D.N. Aidit, "Bersatu untuk Menjelesaikan Tuntutan Revolusi Agustus 1945" (Unite to Complete the Demands of the August 1945 Revolution), HR, August 1, 1956.

few Chinese are in PKI, a separate and officially sovereign party has been formed for them: Baperki.¹

Baperki (Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia, Indonesian Citizenship Consultative Council) was founded on March 13, 1954 by Siauw Giok Tjhan, a close associate of PKI,² purportedly to unify the different peoples of Indonesia into one people, and to undertake social and educational work especially among the minorities. In fact, Baperki has been an organization of Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent, with a small number of native Indonesians, mostly communists, also as members.

Baperki's activities have included the building and maintenance of schools, but they have been concerned primarily with assisting the Chinese minority to circumvent and combat all official and unofficial discrimination. Membership is not large, perhaps forty or sixty thousand in the whole country. In the September 1955 parliamentary elections, Baperki won 178,887 votes.

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Much of the information on Baperki was obtained in interview from a Baperki leader in Surabaya.

2

Siauw Giok Tjhan in January 1951 had founded the twice-weekly newspaper Suara Rakjat which in July 1951 became the daily Harian Rakjat, the official mouthpiece of PKI. He was director and then co-director of Harian Rakjat until October 31, 1953.

If rumour has any basis in truth, Baperki is most useful to PKI as an agent for collecting from the wealthy Chinese businessmen large sums that are channelled into PKI's needy coffers. There would be infinitely greater risk of public detection of this source of communist funds if it was tapped directly by PKI, rather than by a Chinese organization for ostensibly social purposes.

7. Veterans of the Revolution

Although relatively little actual fighting took place during the revolution against the Dutch, there are approximately 800,000 Indonesian 'veterans', that is, persons who in the period from August 17, 1945 to December 27, 1949 joined an official army unit or a recognized armed group in defence of the Republic.¹ The veterans were a major target for PKI organization because they had a higher level of political consciousness than most of the population, because they were, in general, dissatisfied with the fruits of victory, and because they knew how to use weapons. After the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, hundreds of national and local veterans' organizations were formed, of which the communist-led Perbepsi became the largest.

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Moh. Munasir, "Veterans' Problem", Veteran, August 1959, p.16; also pp.41-2.

Perbepsi was formed on December 30, 1951 by the fusion of 149 national and local groups.¹ In October 1954 it claimed 194 branches and 205,740 members,² and in December 1957 300,000 members (at which time PKI claimed it had 265,000).³ The chairman, Supardi, was elected to parliament in 1955 as a 'non-party' member of the PKI ticket.

Perbepsi's three chief social and economic demands were:

1. government acceptance of the principle of preference for veterans;
2. a government policy of settling veterans on land made available by the redistribution of foreign estate holdings and the non-extension of large land leases;
3. provision of training courses for veterans, and the rehabilitation and employment of those disabled.

The greatest value of Perbepsi for PKI was that it constituted a para-military organization that would be available in the event of a major political crisis.

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D.N. Aidit, "Ubah Imbangan Kekuatan untuk Melaksanakan Konsepsi Presiden 100%" (Change the Balance of Power in order to Carry Out the President's Concept 100%), HR, July 5, 1957.

2

TI, October 21, 1954.

3

HR, December 20, 1957; Sudisman, "Semangat Bukit 1211", BM, December 1957, p.512.

Training courses in military matters were given to members, and Perbepsi formations could be seen 'marching and drilling to the beat of drums'.¹ During the second half of 1953 and during 1954, Perbepsi attempted to persuade and manoeuvre the government into arming its members as part of its proposed people's militia to fight the Darul Islam rebels, and, when this was rejected, to maintain security during the elections. The government was unmoved.

At the beginning of July 1957 the PKI central committee heard a report on Party work among veterans² which stated that if the veterans 'are well organized and well led this will greatly assist in changing the balance of power so that the situation moves to the left'. But the end of Perbepsi was already at hand. From December 26, 1956 to January 2, 1957 an all-Indonesia veterans' congress had been held on the initiative of Nasution, the army chief of staff. The 2,300 delegates had agreed 'by acclamation' to form the Indonesian Veterans' Legion which would absorb all existing veterans' organizations.³ The

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Compton, Indonesian Communism, p.11.

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"Laporan Tambahan Mengenai Pengalaman Bekerja dikalangan Bekas Pedjuang (Veteran)" (Additional Report on Experience in Working among the Veterans), BM, May-July 1957, pp.264-7.

3

Munasir, "Veterans' Problem", Veteran, August 1959, p.16.

individual organizations successfully dug their heels in for a while, but by August 1959 army pressure had forced their dissolution and the merger of their membership into the army-controlled Veterans' Legion.

That PKI considers the fusion of all veterans' organizations to be harmful was indicated by the ardent opposition of the Party, Pemuda Rakjat and SOBSI to later attempts by the army and certain government ministers to form all-embracing youth and trade union organizations.

III. MOBILIZING ELECTORAL SUPPORT

1. PKI's Election Campaigns

Once they had decided, within the framework of the national united front policy, to exploit the possibilities for political action offered by the parliamentary regime, the PKI leaders were committed to take part in elections. All-Indonesia elections were held in September 1955 for parliament, and in December 1955 for the Constituent Assembly. Local elections for the provincial, kabupaten, and city councils were held throughout Java from June to November 1957, and later in South Sumatra, Riau, and Kalimantan. In both the national and the local elections, PKI applied its organizational and propaganda resources

with great effect, especially in Java but also in the outer islands.

It is possible to envisage PKI's tremendous activity in the election campaigns as having reference to three interdependent factors: the general power situation, the extension of communist support and organization, and the improvement of the Party organization.

The more votes PKI obtained in 1955, the more seats it would procure in parliament and the Constituent Assembly. Politics were still revolving largely around parliament, and an increase in Party representation there could be expected to increase the Party's bargaining position in national politics. Increased parliamentary strength also could be expected to increase the Party's chance of gaining entry into a coalition cabinet. Because the Constituent Assembly was to draw up the future constitution of the country, it was also important for the Party to have major representation there as well. By 1957 the power and authority of the parties in general had declined, but it was possibly even more important for PKI to demonstrate its own broad support. The two major power centres in the country were now Sukarno and the army. Sukarno needed PKI in order to help maintain his primary political position, just as PKI needed him in order to keep the army leaders, who included many anti-communists,

from that position. The stronger the support PKI could demonstrate, the surer the Party was of maintaining the alliance with Sukarno and of strengthening his hand vis-a-vis the army. And if Sukarno had declared after the 1955 elections that a party with six million voters (that is, PKI) should not be excluded from the government, would not his case be strengthened by a large increase in communist votes in 1957?

The election campaigns provided the Party with a government-sanctioned opportunity to intensify and extend propaganda and organizational activity, especially in new areas. During the period of the campaigns, local traditional and conservative authorities could not criticize political activity as divisive, and Party work was extended into areas hitherto closed to it. Furthermore, popular interest in politics was heightened during the campaigns - not only because of the work of the political parties, but also because the Ministry of Information made a great effort to inform the electorate of the reasons for and the methods of voting. The PKI leaders took advantage of this increased interest to present a basic outline of the commendable goals of the Party. Once interest in and sympathy for PKI had been aroused, the communists moved quickly to recruit the new sympathizers for either the Party or the mass organizations. That is, the electoral

support gained during the election campaigns was envisaged as the basis for a rapid expansion of the communist organizations.

The elections were used to strengthen the Party organization in three ways. First, the campaigns were used to train Party cadres, activists and members. The Party's election materials were studied intensively at all levels of the organization, and the entire membership received training in the dissemination of Party propaganda and the mobilization of people outside the Party. Second, it is possible that the Aidit leadership, anticipating communist control of the government in the foreseeable future, was eager to have the largest possible number of ranking cadres enter parliament and the local councils in order to overcome the Party's deficiency in experienced administrators, in persons familiar with matters of government. Third, the election results provided the Party leaders with an objective basis on which to assess the efficiency of the Party organization, the social and geographic areas of Party support, and, from these, the essential fields of future Party work. Previously, the leaders had to rely for such assessments on the subjective reports of local cadres.

Both in 1955 and 1957 PKI was competing mainly for the votes of the non-santris.¹ Within the non-santri electorate, PKI began the election campaigns with a large nucleus of potential voters formed by the membership of the mass organizations, while its efforts to rally electoral support beyond the frontiers of the Party and mass organizations were facilitated by the popular image of the Party that had been built so carefully since 1951, by the politically unsophisticated and uncommitted nature of most of the abangan electorate, and by the current political situation.

If PKI had been heard of previously by the mass of the abangans, it was most probably as a responsible party, opposed to terrorism, and eager to defend and promote the interests of the people. In their efforts to attract voters, the Party leaders usually did not have to first break down existing political loyalties, while their attempt to make the Party appear attractive was not constantly sabotaged by attacks from other political forces. At the times of the campaigns for both the 1955 and the 1957 elections, PKI was in alliance with PNI, the only other major party active among the abangans, and

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The santris in general were expected to vote for, and apparently did vote for, the specifically Moslem parties.

neither party attacked the other.¹ That is, the abangan electorate was presented with little anti-communist propaganda. The attacks made on PKI by one wing of Masjumi in fact only served to increase abangan sympathy for the communists.

The Aidit leadership early oriented its organization to act as an election machine. For the 1955 elections, Party election committees were formed by mid-May 1954 at every level of the organization down to the ketjamatan while at that time committees were already being formed in the villages.² PKI's campaign for the 1957 elections was under way by February 1957.³ Large numbers of full-time election workers were employed by the Party, and the mass organizations were also drawn on extensively for assistance. At least SOBSI, BTI, Pemuda Rakjat and Gerwani assisted in propaganda work and mobilized people to attend Party meetings and to vote. LEKRA artists designed banners and posters, and helped to provide the popular entertainment that served to attract large crowds to election meetings.

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At the local level some PNI leaders did attack PKI, but their attacks were inhibited further by the widespread belief that to be anti-communist was to be pro-imperialist.

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HR, May 19, 1954.

3

RI, February 1957, p.6.

The large funds available to PKI were used not only to gear the organization for election work but also to exploit a wide variety of techniques for winning the attention and support of the populace.¹

Endorsed by the fifth national congress in March 1954, the PKI election manifesto for the September 1955 parliamentary elections was designed to indicate the Party's concern for the welfare of the nation as a whole and of the different sections of 'the people'. By November 1954, already over one quarter of a million copies of the manifesto had been printed in Indonesian, Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, and Indonesian in the Arabic script.² For the local elections, the central committee ordered the Party organization in each electoral district to prepare its own election programme.³ Thus the

¹ An account of the campaigns for the 1955 elections is given in Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, p.9 et seq.

² HR, November 4, 1954.

³ Examples of province-level programmes may be found in HR: for East Java on June 13, 1957; for Central Java on June 20, 1957; for West Java on July 1, 1957; and for West Kalimantan on April 29, 1958. As examples of programmes for autonomous towns, see Program Secom PKI Kota Pradja Surabaya untuk Pemilihan DPRD Kota Pradja Surabaya, 19 p.; and Manifes Pemilihan Umum PKI untuk DPRD Kotapradja Jogjakarta (PKI General Election Manifesto for the Jogjakarta City Representative Council), Jogjakarta, 1957, 48 p. As an example of a programme for a kabupaten, see Program Seksi Comite PKI Sleman untuk Pemilihan Umum DPRD

electors were presented with programmes designed specifically for their own local situation, programmes that analyzed the problems facing each locality and that presented plans for their solution.

As the election campaigns were developed, urban and rural areas were plastered with the hammer-and-sickle, posters were displayed with popular slogans of political and economic content, mass meetings were organized, pamphlets and brochures printed for mass sale and distribution, slogan banners were hung across roads and alleys, kites were flown painted with the Party symbol, and huge billboards were raised in prominent locations.

An important feature of PKI's election campaigns was the use of popular traditional forms of entertainment to attract crowds and put across political propaganda.¹

'People's festivals' were organized in towns and villages,

Sleman (The Programme of the Sleman PKI Section Committee for the Elections for the Sleman Representative Council), typed manuscript, 1957, 6 p.

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In April 1955 the secretary of PKI's Central Java province committee reported that 'people's artists' not only had created many kinds of songs and dances propagandizing PKI, but they also had given political content to old songs and dances. The Central Java committee was at that time holding a course for two persons from each of the sixteen section committees to train them as dancing, singing, percussion and gamelan cadres. Siswojo, "Seni untuk Menang dalam Pemilihan Umum" (Art for Bringing Victory in the General Elections), KP, April 1, 1955, p.57.

and occasionally lasted several nights.¹ The festivals consisted of songs, Indonesian boxing, folk opera, and dancing, but they began with a short political speech, while the actual entertainment was given a political slant. Another method of election campaigning that PKI used far more than any other party was social welfare work: cleaning kampongs, the construction and repair of bridges, public lavatories, public bathing places and irrigation channels, and assistance at such times as births, marriages and funerals.

PKI also endeavoured to canvass every potential communist voter during the election campaigns. An article in "Boletin PKI Djawa Timur" (East Java PKI Bulletin) showed how and why canvassing was done.² In order to attract and 'control' voters, the article explained, the Party first visited every voter to remind them to register and to tell them how. In this way, 'they know and feel for themselves that there is somebody assisting them'.

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For accounts of people's festivals, see Boyd R. Compton, The Silent Election, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1955, p.4; also Selosoemardjan, "Social Changes in Jogjakarta" (Cornell University, Ph.D. thesis, 1959), p.216. I also received information from members of the Indonesian rural administrative service.

2

Typed translation of Soekarman, "How to Win the General Elections for PKI", which had appeared in Boletin PKI Djawa Timur, September 1958.

Once registration was completed, the Party kept close contact with the voters in order to answer any queries that might arise. By this close personal contact the 'voters concerned remain nurtured and controlled properly'. Because the PKI machine was much more extensive and efficient than those of other parties, PKI was far more thorough in personal canvassing than its competitors. The effect of personal contacts on the underprivileged Indonesian masses with no traditional political orientation, must have been much greater than the effect of canvassing among the majority of voters in Western countries who are politically committed and who are used to being wooed by different political parties.

2. The Election Results

PKI won fifth place in the September 1955 elections, receiving 6,176,914 (or 16.4 per cent) of the total votes.¹

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The results of the Constituent Assembly elections of December 1955 are largely ignored in the following paragraphs because they showed only minor changes compared with the September 1955 elections. For discussions of the results of the September 1955 elections, see Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, p.57 et seq.; Justus Maria van der Kroef, "Indonesia's First National Election: a Sociological Analysis", The American Journal of Economics and Sociology, vol.XVI, part I, no.3 (April 1957), pp.237-49; part II, no.4 (July 1957), pp.407-20; and A. van Marle, "The First Indonesian Parliamentary Elections", Indonesie, 1956, vol.IX, pp.257-64.

Ahead of PKI were PNI with 8,434,653 votes, Masjumi with 7,903,886 votes, and Nahdatul Ulama with 6,955,141. The fifth largest party, PSII, trailed far behind the big four, receiving 1,091,160 votes.

5,477,707 (or 88.7 per cent) of PKI's votes were received in Java, 435,775 (or 7.05 per cent) in North and South Sumatra (the former an area of estate agriculture and Javanese immigration, the latter an area of oil extraction and Javanese immigration), and only 263,432 in the rest of Indonesia. PKI received less than 10 per cent of the votes cast in each of nine of the fifteen electoral districts: Central Sumatra, the three districts of Kalimantan, the two districts of Sulawesi, the two districts of Nusatenggara, and Maluku.

Within Java, communist support was most heavily concentrated in a rough quadrilateral within the line Gunung Kidul-Semarang-Madiun-Patjitan. Within this quadrilateral, PKI received over 50 per cent of the total votes in the towns of Semarang and Surakarta, and in four kabupatens. In eight of the other eleven kabupatens and autonomous towns within the quadrilateral, PKI received between 40 and 50 per cent of the total votes. Outside this area, PKI received between 40 and 50 per cent of the total votes only in the city of Surabaya and in the kabupatens of Blitar and Tjilatjap. Communist support

was particularly weak in the whole of West Java, in a belt of Central Java running south from Tegal and Pekalongan, and in the eastern part of East Java, including Madura. PKI received less than 10 per cent of the total votes in 28 of the 80 kabupatens in Java: 13 in West Java, 7 in Central Java, and 8 in East Java.

A notable feature of the election results in Java was the similar intensity of communist support in the urban and rural areas. With two exceptions, communist support was only fractionally higher in the autonomous towns than in the surrounding or adjacent rural areas. The two exceptions were Surabaya, where PKI received 41.8 per cent of the votes in the town compared with only 29.6 per cent in the kabupaten; and Pekalongan, where PKI received a lower percentage of the votes in the town than in the kabupaten.

In the 1957 local elections in Java, PKI received 7,514,197 votes. This represented an increase of 2,036,490, or 37.2 per cent, compared with the September 1955 elections. The increase took place in all of the one hundred autonomous towns and kabupatens. Regionally, the comparison between the 1955 and 1957 votes was as follows:

PKI VOTES

	<u>1955</u>		<u>1957/8</u>	
	<u>a. votes</u>	<u>b.% of total</u>	<u>a. votes</u>	<u>b.% of total</u>
Djakarta Raja	96,363	12.6	137,305	19.4
West Java	755,634	10.8	1,297,889	18.2
Central Java [⊠]	2,326,108	25.8	3,126,448	32.8
East Java	2,299,602	23.3	2,952,555	29.3
<u>Total Java</u>	<u>5,477,707</u>	<u>20.6</u>	<u>7,514,197</u>	<u>27.4</u>
South Sumatra	176,900	12.1	228,965	15.7
Kalimantan	42,543	3.0	71,076	5.1

[⊠] Central Java includes the Special Territory of Jogjakarta.

Four reasons would seem to explain this rapid and comprehensive increase. First, the Party and its mass organizations had expanded between 1955 and the middle of 1957. Second, the leaders of the other political parties did not consider the local elections to be worthy of the intensive effort made for the 1955 elections, and the campaign work of the other parties declined relative to PKI's. Third, the PKI leaders endeavoured to exploit the increasing public sympathy of President Sukarno for the Party, to portray the Party and Sukarno as a radical nationalist team in order to attract the support of the broad masses who still considered him to be the living symbol of active Indonesian nationalism. Fourth, PNI had not followed up its electoral success of 1955 with organizational work, while by the time of the 1957 elections both the prestige and the morale of the party had declined appreciably.

A comparison of the voting patterns of 1957 and 1955 indicates that the socio-cultural division between santris and abangans is important in explaining the political behaviour of the Javanese. It appears that the santri electorate of the Moslem parties proved remarkably resistant to communist advances, in marked contrast to the ready disintegration of PNI's abangan electorate:

COMPARISON OF 1957 VOTES WITH 1955 VOTES

	<u>PKI</u>	<u>PNI</u>	<u>Moslem</u> [*]	<u>Total votes</u>
Djakarta Raja	+ 40,942	- 27,076	- 62,131	- 58,417
West Java	+ 542,255	-134,528	+ 22,678	+155,453
Central Java	+ 800,340	-335,944	+108,022	+524,650
East Java	+ 652,953	-191,128	-156,490	+202,646
<u>Total Java</u>	<u>+2,036,490</u>	<u>-688,676</u>	<u>- 87,921</u>	<u>+824,332</u>

* This comprises the votes received by Masjumi, NU and PSII.

The above table indicates that, in general, the PNI vote declined sharply, the Moslem vote remained stable, while the PKI vote increased rapidly. If the 1957 votes are compared with the votes in the December 1955 Constituent Assembly elections, the contrast is even more marked: a PKI increase in Java of 2,024,894 votes, a PNI decrease of 985,747, and a Moslem increase of 51,296. In short, it appears that PKI increased its votes among the non-santri population, and that because PNI was the only other large party with support among the non-santris, a large PKI increase involved a sharp fall in PNI's electoral support.

An analysis of the 1955 and 1957 election results in the hundred autonomous towns and kabupatens seems to confirm this conclusion.

When the 1957 elections were held, PKI was able to capture a large segment of the former PNI electoral support. Whereas the communist leaders had followed up electoral successes in 1955 with organizational work to convert electoral support into organized support (in the Party or in the mass organizations), the PNI leaders did not do so. That is, PNI had done little to shape its 1955 electoral support into a conscious and organized body, and many of its former supporters readily transferred their votes to PKI, whose organized presence was felt, and whose organizations were usually the only ones to defend the interests of the different sections of the community. PKI's gains at the expense of PNI were facilitated also by the belief among the leaders of PNI, as among the leaders of all parties except PKI, that the local elections were unworthy of the effort made for the 1955 elections to parliament and the Constituent Assembly. But perhaps of greater importance in explaining the large decrease in PNI votes was the demoralization taking place within PNI's ranks. In 1955, according to the claim of PNI leaders, government officials and schoolteachers had been instrumental in mobilizing the large PNI vote. By

the middle of 1957, the future of parliamentary democracy was in grave doubt, the prestige of the political parties had fallen sharply, PNI no longer seemed able to maintain its former leading role in the government, and as PNI's hold on the government declined, so did its ability to dispense patronage. The result was that many of those who had worked hard to mobilize votes for PNI in 1955 either worked less hard or not at all in 1957.

The only communist gains that seemed to have been made at the expense of the Moslem parties were small, except in a few of the heavily Moslem areas.¹ The details of the 1955 and 1957 election results indicate that both PKI and PNI were able to make a little headway at the expense of the Moslem parties in a small number of the heavily Moslem areas. In other Moslem areas, in contrast, the Moslem vote increased more than PKI's - as in the kabupatens of Pekalongan and Demak. In short, there are indications that where the santris are in an overwhelming majority the non-santri parties can gain a few votes from the Moslem parties, but where the santris

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In three electoral districts, Djakarta Raja, Djember (East Java) and Sumenep (Madura), the total Moslem (that is Masjumi, NU and PSII) vote fell by 161,782, while the PKI vote increased by 74,869. This is not proof, however, that many former Moslem voters switched to PKI, because in the three same districts the PNI vote fell by 35,974, and the total vote fell by 111,891.

are faced with a significant number of non-santris, their cohesiveness is such that the non-santri parties can make few gains among them.

The increase in communist votes in Java occurred at a fairly similar rate in urban and rural areas. In terms of regions, the most rapid increase was in West Java (71.8 per cent), followed by Djakarta Raja (42.5 per cent), Central Java (34.4 per cent), and East Java (28.4 per cent). The numerical increase was greatest, however, in Central Java. PKI received over 50 per cent of the votes cast in eleven of the eighty kabupatens,¹ and in six of the twenty autonomous towns. Between 40 and 50 per cent of the total votes was received in eight kabupatens and in four towns. Not only did PKI emerge as the largest party in Java as a whole, but it was the largest party in 44 of the one hundred local council districts in Java, and the second largest in 17 of them:

PKI'S ELECTORAL POSITION BY ELECTORAL DISTRICTS : 1957

	<u>PKI 1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>less than fourth</u>	<u>Total</u>
Djakarta Raja		1				1
West Java	5	5	7	4	2	23
Central Java	20	5	12	2		39
East Java	19	6	7	1	4	37
<u>Total Java</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>100</u>

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In the kabupaten of Magetan (East Java), PKI received 49.99 per cent of the votes, but was given a majority of the council seats because it had formed an electoral alliance with Permai, which received 0.72 per cent of the votes.

The maps showing the geographical distribution of PKI, PNI and the Moslem parties' electoral support in 1957¹ indicate the limits of communist electoral support at that time and suggest the possibilities for later communist advance. If the abangan-santri thesis does hold in terms of political behaviour, as is indicated by the comparison of the 1957 and the 1955 election results, the santri population could be expected to form an effective block to large communist gains in the near future in areas of West Java, along the north coast of Central Java, and in parts of East Java, especially in Madura and adjacent parts of the mainland.² That is, PKI could not expect to make a rapid advance among the 38.0 per cent of the Javanese electorate that voted Moslem in 1957. On the other hand, PKI could expect to make considerable inroads among the 6,275,919 PNI voters - who were fairly evenly distributed throughout Java, and who were in higher proportions in the rural areas. Since the 1957 elections, PNI has not increased significantly its

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For the distribution of PKI, PNI and Moslem (that is, Masjumi, NU, PSII, Perti and AKUI combined) votes, see the maps at the end of the thesis.

2

It is as yet too soon to know what the former supporters of Masjumi will do now that the party is banned. It is not to be expected, however, that many of them will turn to PKI.

organizational activity among the mass of either the urban or the rural population, so that it can be assumed that the network of the Party and its mass organizations, which continued to expand after 1957, has already drawn in many of those who voted for PNI in 1957. That the communist gains are not limited to Java is shown by the rapid increase in communist votes in South Sumatra and the four provinces of Kalimantan.

PART FOUR:

THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT AND THE OTHER POLITICAL FORCES

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THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT AND THE OTHER POLITICAL FORCES

The general outline and goals of the Aidit leadership's national united front policy as applied to the Party's relations with the other political forces have already been given.¹ The following chapter seeks to show how the political situation in which the policy was formulated guided the Party leaders in their choice of foes, friends and potential friends. It then describes the style of political behaviour that the policy has entailed for PKI, and, finally, discusses the implementation of the policy.

I. THE SEARCH FOR THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT

1. The Experiences of 1950

In the year between the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia on December 20, 1949 and the assumption of complete control over PKI by the Aidit leadership in the first week of January 1951, three major political develop-

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See above, p.93 et seq.

ments of importance to PKI took place: a split appeared between the two largest parties, the secular nationalist PNI and the Moslem Masjumi; some political parties showed a willingness to cooperate with PKI; and other political forces demonstrated their strong antagonism to the Communist Party.

When the federal state was dissolved and a unitary state inaugurated on August 17, 1950, discussions were held between PNI and Masjumi for the formation of a new cabinet. A dispute arose not over the cabinet's programme but its composition. When Natsir, of Masjumi, finally formed a cabinet which included members from Masjumi and four minor parties, PNI was excluded from cabinet office for the first time since 1946.¹ This was the beginning of the division between PNI and Masjumi that was to increase during the succeeding years. PNI, bitter at its exclusion from office, declared that Western capitalists had exerted some influence in the formation of the cabinet,² and began to work with the other opposition parties, including PKI, towards the downfall of the government.

1

Herbert Feith, "Indonesian Politics, 1949-1957: the Decline of Representative Government" (Cornell University, Ph.D. thesis, 1961), p.227.

2

Sin Po, September 12, 1950.

In the period of the federal republic, from December 27, 1949 to August 17, 1950, PKI had cooperated, both inside and outside parliament, with PNI and many of the lesser parties on a variety of matters. After the formation of the Natsir cabinet, PNI was much more willing to cooperate with the communists.

The first opportunity PKI had after the creation of the unitary state to demonstrate its usefulness to the non-communist parties came on August 19 and 21, 1950 when the new parliament met to elect its speakers. Due to PKI votes, Sartono of PNI was able to defeat the Masjumi candidate for the post of first speaker, and Arudji Kartawinata of PSII was elected second deputy speaker. The new Natsir government won a vote of confidence on October 25 by 118 votes to 73, but, by coincidence or not, the general alignment of parties in the vote has continued down to the present: Masjumi, the Sjahrir socialist party PSI, and the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties on the one hand, and PNI, PKI, and the minor Moslem parties PSII and Perti on the other. Cooperation between PNI and PKI in the formulation of motions to embarrass and harass the government continued until January 1951 when the Aidit leadership gained full control of PKI.

The third major political development of importance to PKI that had occurred by the beginning of 1951 was the display of antagonism towards PKI by Vice-President Hatta, Masjumi, and many army officers.

Hatta (unlike Sukarno) and Masjumi (unlike PNI) had no inhibitions against attacking PKI and its associated organizations, and indeed led an outright attack on them. Hatta, for example, on October 25, 1950 declared PKI to be a Russian tool.¹ Natsir's cabinet demonstrated its strong hostility to PKI in a series of actions. In November 1950, for example, a ban was placed on a proposed SOBSI demonstration to mark the reburial of a communist leader shot during the Madiun rebellion; then PKI was forbidden to hold mass meetings to celebrate the anniversary of the 1926 communist rebellion; and on November 19, the Djakarta military command twice raided the PKI and SOBSI headquarters. Towards the end of the year, after a SOBSI-directed wave of strikes, many regional army commanders prohibited strikes in 'vital' enterprises and offices - a ban which the central military authority made nation-wide on February 13, 1951.

¹

Sin Po, October 27, 1950.

2. The Aidit Leadership Takes Over

During their first few months in full control of PKI, the new Party leaders did no more than watch political developments in order to sense more clearly the demarcation between foe and friend or potential friend. As yet they had no new approach to the other political forces, continuing ad hoc cooperation wherever possible.

Towards the end of 1950 and the beginning of 1951 a division became visible between PNI and Masjumi on matters of policy. The division stemmed, basically, from their attitudes to the revolution and, from this, to the Western powers. For Masjumi, the transfer of sovereignty marked the end of the revolution and the beginning of what should have been a period of construction; for PNI and other nationalists, including Sukarno, the transfer of sovereignty was merely a stage in the revolution because the revolution would be completed only when all forms of 'imperialist' political, economic and cultural power in Indonesia had been eradicated.¹ For Masjumi, once sovereignty had been transferred the Dutch and the West in general were looked upon as friends or potential

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This sentence is, of course, a broad generalization and ignores the many differences of opinion in all parties. It does, however, hold for the attitudes of the dominant groups in Masjumi and PNI.

friends, while for PNI and Sukarno they remained imperialist opponents. From this major difference in concepts of the revolution arose major differences in question of policy - economic policy, foreign policy, and the means of liberating West Irian. The transfer of sovereignty meant that the Indonesian government and parliament had to formulate a wider range of internal and international policies than they had during the revolutionary war. It was inevitable that the different attitudes of PNI and Masjumi to the revolution and to the Western powers would result in disagreement over many concrete issues which emerged and that, as a result, the gap between the two parties would be widened further.

PKI naturally lent its support to PNI in its dispute with Masjumi because PNI was evidently more anti-Dutch, anti-imperialist, and, unlike Masjumi, was willing to cooperate with PKI when convenient and was circumspect in references to the Madiun rebellion.

In January 1951 PKI was presented with the opportunity to lend its support to PNI on two important parliamentary motions. The first, jointly sponsored by PNI and PSII, called for the immediate entry of West Irian into Indonesia with the same status as the other regions, the immediate abolition of the Indonesian-Dutch Union, and the cancellation of the Round Table Conference

agreement within three months. This motion was narrowly defeated on January 10, 1951 by 66 votes to 33. PNI had initially accepted the Round Table Conference agreement, but soon changed its mind. Even as early as January 1951 cooperation between PNI and PKI for the cancellation of the agreement was not confined to parliament, for in that month a 40,000-person demonstration was organized by 49 parties and organizations in Surabaja to demand cancellation.¹

On January 19, 1951 discussions began in parliament on a joint motion of PNI, PKI, PSII and three lesser parties which led eventually to the downfall of the government. The motion called for the cancellation of a government regulation which had become law on August 14, 1950 and which permitted the government to appoint local representative councils. The motion was passed on January 22, 1951 by 76 votes to 48. PNI, PKI, PSII, the nationalist communist Murba, the Labour Party and a number of non-party members boycotted the session of March 20 which was called to discuss the government's statement on the motion. A quorum could not be found.

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Editorial, "Seluruh Rakjat Anti-KMB" (The Whole People Against the RTC), BM, February 1, 1951, p.56.

On the same day the minor nationalist party PIR withdrew its support from the government, and the cabinet thereupon resigned.¹

The PKI parliamentary group immediately announced that the Party would support the next cabinet if the cabinet would cancel the Round Table Conference agreement and would pursue an independent, anti-imperialist foreign policy.² On March 21, the PKI central committee proposed a 'provisional national government of a coalition nature' consisting of 'democratic parties, groups and people', that would first cancel the agreement as major step towards creating a 'truly free national, political, economic, cultural and defence system.'³ The central committee proposed, too, that the cabinet's programme be jointly formulated by the democratic parties and groups. "Sin Po", the pro-communist newspaper, reported that:

we have the impression that PKI is prepared to sit in the cabinet provided that the programme it proposes is accepted as the cabinet's programme.⁴

¹ For an outline of events leading to the fall of the Natsir cabinet, see "The Resignation of the Natsir Cabinet", Indonesian Affairs, March 1951, pp.1-4.

² Sin Po, March 21, 1951. ³ Sin Po, March 22, 1951.

⁴ Loc.cit.

PKI thus offered its support for a cabinet with a basic programme acceptable to PNI. Apparently the Aidit leadership also hoped that its cooperation with PNI during the Natsir cabinet would be sufficient to restore PKI to its pre-Madiun place in Indonesian politics, that is, to participation as any other party in the process of cabinet formation and in the cabinet itself. The PKI leaders were eventually to realize the futility of this hope, and this realization, combined with other factors, was to stimulate a profound re-thinking on the tactics and purpose of the national united front policy. For a while, however, it appeared possible that PKI might gain admittance to the government in the not too distant future.

On March 30, 1951, due to PSII initiative, a Political Parties' Consultative Council was formed to seek a way out of the cabinet crisis.¹ PNI, after some hesitation, had withdrawn from the negotiations leading to the formation of the council, but the council did include, besides PKI, the Moslem parties PSII and Perti, Murba, the Labour Party, and three small nationalist parties. PKI was pleased with the new council, and the council's ad hoc committee, which included Aidit, was

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See above, pp.87-9.

persuaded to issue a statement showing that sufficient votes could be mustered to exclude Masjumi from the next cabinet.¹ PKI's jubilation quickly disappeared when Sukarno appointed PNI and Masjumi cabinet formateurs, and when it became clear that the only purpose of the council for the non-communist parties was to increase their bargaining power for cabinet seats.

Sartono of PNI was the first formateur, but he failed to reach agreement with Masjumi not only on the composition of the cabinet but also on policy matters, primarily the question of Indonesian-Dutch relations and the implementation of the motion halting the appointment of representative councils. "Sin Po" also reported that PNI objected to Masjumi's insistence on giving the pro-Western PSI control of foreign policy.² On April 18, 1951, PNI and Masjumi joint formateurs were appointed, and on April 26 the new Sukiman cabinet was announced. Of the twenty cabinet members, five were PNI, five Masjumi, and the rest were either non-party or from minor parties.

PKI at first abused the new cabinet which disappointed its hopes. On May 31 and during the first two weeks of June, communist members of parliament roundly

¹ Sin Po, April 13, 1951.

² Sin Po, April 11, 1951.

rejected the cabinet's composition and programme.¹ They expressed disgust at PNI's participation and hinted that PNI was interested only in obtaining posts, attacked Sukarno for 'undemocratic' practices in choosing the cabinet formateurs, and strongly intimated that the United States and Britain had exerted great pressure, particularly on Sukarno, to have this cabinet formed. But even during the period of greatest disappointment, the PKI leaders declared that they were not being negatively oppositionist. Aidit, for example, stated on May 23 that PKI was always ready to cease its opposition the moment the government stopped implementing the Round Table Conference agreement.²

By the formation of the Sukiman cabinet the Aidit leadership was posed the question: did the new cabinet mean that the national bourgeoisie, represented by PNI and Sukarno, had once more allied itself with the anti-communists, and would it again be part to an anti-communist drive as in 1948? The young leaders could not yet see the fundamental division within the other

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See the speeches made in parliament by Sakirman on May 31, June 11 and June 15, 1951, given in Risalah Perundingan 1951 (Indonesian Parliamentary Debates), vol.X, pp.4242-54; vol.XI, pp.4760-72, and pp.5116-17.

2

Sin Po, May 24, 1951.

political forces, and overestimated the anti-communist forces. For example, Sukarno was believed to be among the Party's enemies. Throughout 1951, and particularly in the first three quarters of that year, he was attacked for his part in choosing the cabinet formateurs, for being a false and demagogic Marxist,¹ for playing a primary role in the Madiun affair,² and for selling out his country in the Round Table Conference agreement. He was always identified in Party speeches and documents with first the Natsir and then the Sukiman cabinet.

Fears of a second Madiun provocation became intense at the beginning of July 1951. On July 3 the politbureau protested the searches made of the homes of many prominent progressives, and also some arrests that had taken place.³ It called to all democrats 'to cooperate as closely as possible in order to defend democratic rights, to prevent Indonesia's becoming a military or police state.' Then,

¹ D.N. Aidit, Perjuangan dan Adjaran-Adjaran Karl Marx (The Struggle and Teachings of Karl Marx), Djakarta, 1950, p.5; Njoto, "Pemalsuan Marxisme" (Falsification of Marxism), BM, January 1-15, 1951, p.17.

² "Keterangan CC PKI tentang Peristiwa Madiun" (PKI Central Committee Statement on the Madiun Affair), Sin Po, February 10, 1951; Mirajadi, "Tiga Tahun Provokasi Madiun" (Three Years since the Madiun Provocation), BM, August-September 1951, pp.40, 45-6, 48.

³ Sin Po, July 7, 1951.

on August 6, an armed attack was reported to have been made on a police station in Tandjung Priok, the port of Djakarta, by persons using the hammer-and-sickle as a symbol.

The PKI central committee secretariat at once denied PKI participation in the attack and warned Party members to be on the alert against possible provocation.¹ On August 11 many leading PKI cadres in Medan were arrested, on the 15th arrests and searches began in Djakarta, and the arrests then spread throughout Indonesia until, according to PKI information, about 2,000 'communists and other progressives' were imprisoned.² It is significant that although the government justified the arrests on the grounds that a coup was being prepared, none of the arrested was brought to trial and no evidence in support of the allegation was ever presented.

Aidit, Lukman and Njoto evaded arrest and went into hiding. Their reaction to the arrests was very different from that taken by Musso in 1948. In the words of a central committee statement of August 24, 1951, PKI had 'already begun to be adult and knows how to face the

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HR, August 7, 1951.

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PKI, 40 Tahun PKI (PKI 40 Years), Djakarta, 1960, p.69. See above, p.122, footnote 1.

imperialists' criminal provocations', and therefore could not be dragged into a second Madiun affair.¹ The leaders in hiding declared that PKI would not attempt a coup, and ordered the Party to continue above-ground activity.²

The blame for the 'fascist coup d'etat' attempt was not fixed on the government as a whole, but only on 'a small group in the government that wishes to castrate democracy.'³ The group was named as 'the Sukiman-Wibisono-Suprpto clique'⁴ - Sukiman and Wibisono being members of Masjumi, Suprpto of the Labour Party. No PNI cabinet ministers were implicated.

In their search for allies to demand justice for the arrested, the PKI leaders met a mixed response which provided political lessons that were a stimulus to the formulation of a new concept of the national united front.

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HR, August 25, 1951; Alamputra, "Mengatasi Kelemahan-Kelemahan" (Overcoming Weaknesses), BM, August-September 1951, p.22.

2

Sobromalisi, "Tentang Perebutan Kekuasaan" (Concerning Seizure of Power), BM, August-September 1951, pp.12-15; Alamputra, "Mengatasi", BM, August-September 1951, pp.20-1.

3

Imam, "Razzia Agustus: Satu Bagian dari Rentjana Pengeluaran Perang Amerika" (The August Arrests: a Part of the American Warmongering Plan), BM, August-September 1951, p.9.

4

HR, August 24, 1951.

Prominent members of PNI, PSI, PSII, Perti and the Protestant Party 'with sincerity and courage stood on the side of democracy in face of the danger of fascism.'¹ But PNI as a party refused to vote against the government on a parliamentary motion of November 1, 1951 expressing dissatisfaction with the government's explanation of the arrests.² On the other hand, PSI, although an 'agent of imperialism', was the staunchest non-communist opponent of the arrests. These various reactions and also the experience of preceding months were used by the Aidit leadership in reaching the conclusions that it was possible for the Party to win sympathy and cooperation extending far across the political spectrum, though not including Masjumi, but that not enough work had been done to win and consolidate such sympathy and cooperation; that the government parties were not closely united; and that it was possible to exploit divisions even among the imperialist agents.

In the months following the August 1951 arrests, the new concept of the national united front was formulated.³

¹ HR, December 19, 1951.

² Risalah Perundangan 1951, vol.XIV, p.7415

³ See above, pp.89-97.

II. THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT POLICY IMPLEMENTED

1. PKI's Political Behaviour under the National United Front

The Aidit leadership concluded that without the tolerance and alliance of the non-communists it would be impossible to gain time for the growth of the Party and its mass organizations, to isolate and destroy the anti-communist forces, and eventually to win power. Mention has already been made of how, in order to win mass support as well as the tolerance and sympathy of the non-communist political forces, the Party built an image of itself as patriotic, sympathetic to religion, militantly democratic, strongly opposed to the use of force in the pursuit of political objectives, and self-effacing and responsible in seeking the national good.¹ But PKI had also to alter its behaviour towards the non-communist political forces.

The PKI leaders have frequently repeated sentiments around the theme expressed by Aidit at the end of 1954:

PKI's political attitude towards a person or a party at a given time depends on the political attitude of the person or party at that time. In determining its policy, PKI is not motivated by feelings of grievance or revenge.²

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See above, pp.240-56.

2

D.N. Aidit, Tiga Interviu (Three Interviews), Djakarta, 1954, pp.13-14.

In other words, PKI would treat as enemies only those who were openly anti-communist.

Aidit took every occasion to stress that care should be taken not to antagonize unnecessarily what he called the middle force, those elements which were ostensibly non-communist and anti-imperialist. In 1956 he admitted that contradictions, that is, differences of interest, existed and would arise between the progressive and the middle forces, especially between the workers and the national capitalists and between PKI and the parties of the national bourgeoisie.¹ 'But it would be wrong for these contradictions to be sharpened.' He said they:

must and can be solved by means of discussion, by means of mutual concessions, and in a mutually beneficial manner. In this way the contradictions between the progressive force and the middle force can be prevented from harming national unity, and from benefiting the reactionary force.

Aidit promised that PKI would not take steps which could harm other democratic parties - provided those parties did not attempt to harm national unity. Furthermore, PKI would always show restraint towards the other parties:

The communists must be skilled at restraining themselves in criticising the statements and actions of people from democratic parties. Statements or actions that may hurt our

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D.N. Aidit, "Bersatu untuk Menjelesaikan Tuntutan Revolusi Agustus 1945" (Unite to Realize the Demands of the August 1945 Revolution), HR, August 1, 1956.

feelings but are not important need not be criticized. The communists only criticize statements or actions that promote disunity, divide the strength of the masses and show vacillation in carrying out the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal policy. It is also important that the manner of criticism must truly concern the problem and not give vent to passions and feelings.

The PKI leaders have also recognized that under the national united front policy PKI and its mass organizations must support the 'reasonable interests' of the national bourgeoisie.¹ PKI and SOBSI, for example, have been loud in their demands for government protection of national industrialists and businessmen in their struggle against foreign competition.² Aidit's concern to help the non-communists led him to tell the PKI central committee in December 1960 that 'It is also our duty to look after non-Party cadres and cadres of the other democratic parties ..., to assist them with complete sincerity.'³

Having established the importance of restrained and friendly behaviour towards the non-communist political

¹ M.H. Lukman, Tentang Front Persatuan Nasional (Concerning the National United Front), Djakarta, 1960, p.39.

² See above, p.291 et seq.

³ D.N. Aidit, "Madju Terus Menggempur Imperialisme dan Feodalisme!" (Continue to Advance to Destroy Imperialism and Feudalism!), HR, January 2, 1961.

forces, the Aidit leadership was faced with the problem of how to avoid 'tailism', avoid merely following the non-communists. How could PKI be restrained and friendly and yet at the same time foster the growth among the non-communists of those leftwing elements and sentiments most sympathetic to PKI and most eager to eradicate the remnants of imperialism and crush the internal reactionaries? The answer was given by Lukman in a course guide for use in the Party central school and province-level schools.¹

Lukman pointed out that in view of the 'vacillating and two-faced' nature of the national bourgeoisie with respect to the revolution (that is, it wished to oppose imperialism but at the same time feared the continuation of the revolution because it would bring victory to the working class), PKI must avoid two major errors in its dealing with the national bourgeoisie. The Party must avoid right opportunism, that is, concentrating on the need for unity without waging a struggle against the undesirable characteristics of the middle group; and left opportunism, that is, concentrating on fighting such undesirable characteristics without giving sufficient attention to the question of unity. Lukman reminded

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Lukman, Tentang Front, pp.36-9.

Party cadres that incorrect criticism, as in the first seven months of 1948, could alienate the national bourgeoisie and even drive it to act against the Party.

He then showed how the correct implementation of the principle 'unite and fight', encourage and criticize, could foster, or help foster, the desirable elements in the national bourgeoisie, in the non-communist political forces:

Besides being skilled at correctly criticizing the vacillations and errors of the policies of the national bourgeoisie, we must also be able correctly to encourage and popularize the progressive attitudes and measures of the national bourgeoisie. By correct criticism of the vacillations and errors of the national bourgeoisie, and by encouragement and praise of what is good of that class, every statement of the working class and its party will have a convincing force; in other words, the working class and its party will hold the initiative. In implementing this method, a problem that is always important to remember is the changing situation: when, and about what, must criticism be emphasized and when, and about what, must encouragement be emphasized.¹

This was the way, he concluded, to foster the progressive group within the national bourgeoisie, to encourage those in the centre to move left, and to isolate the stubborn. In other words, this was the way in which PKI could avoid 'tailism' and could draw the national bourgeoisie leftwards while at the same time being moderate and friendly.

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Ibid., p.38.

2. The Approach to PNI

At the end of June 1951 there had been reports of Masjumi dissatisfaction with the new regional governors appointed by the PNI Minister of Internal Affairs,¹ but the first serious difference between the two main parties did not arise until a decision had to be made whether to sign the Japanese Peace Treaty drawn up in San Francisco. On September 8, 1951 Foreign Minister Subardjo signed the treaty, but the cabinet was divided, with Masjumi for, and PNI against.² Signing the treaty was widely considered to be an abandonment of Indonesia's independent foreign policy in favour of alignment with the United States. The government did not fall immediately because a compromise was reached between PNI and Masjumi: the government did not seek ratification of the treaty, and PNI did not demand the resignation of the government.

The Sukiman cabinet finally fell over a new foreign policy matter: the signature by Foreign Minister Subardjo, but without the cabinet's knowledge, of a Mutual Security

¹ Sin Po, June 30, 1951.

² Even the Masjumi executive committee decided to sign the treaty by a vote of only 17 to 14, with two abstentions and 27 absentees; George McTurnan Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism", in William L. Holland (ed.), Asian Nationalism and the West, New York, 1953, pp.191-2.

Aid agreement with the United States on February 2, 1952. All major parties condemned the agreement not only because of its contents but also because it had been negotiated secretly. On February 23 the cabinet resigned. So far PKI had done no more than play the role of a vocal bystander, condemning those who were ready to betray the principles of Indonesia's foreign policy, and cheering on the true patriots, the opponents of the Japanese Peace Treaty and the MSA agreement. But as soon as the cabinet had fallen, PKI made an active bid to win the confidence of PNI and to draw that party away from Masjumi.

On February 25, 1952 the PKI central committee called for a 'progressive and anti-fascist cabinet' that would include PNI, PSI, members of the Political Parties' Consultative Council, and 'other groups who agree with the programme of the progressive, anti-fascist cabinet.'¹ Acceptable to all but Masjumi, the proposed cabinet programme envisaged rejection of MSA aid, the return of West Irian, the release of all arrested in August 1951, the guarantee of full freedoms, direct and free general elections, and the eradication of the Darul Islam Moslem rebels. Furthermore, PKI called for the rejection of Masjumi participation in the next cabinet because of

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HR, February 25 and 26, 1952.

Masjumi's close connections with the Darul Islam, and because one of its ministers had signed the MSA agreement. In short, PKI offered PNI the possibility of forming a cabinet without Masjumi.

On March 1, 1952 Sukarno appointed Prawoto Mangkusasmito of Masjumi and Sidik Djojokusarto of PNI as formateurs. PKI, alarmed lest another Masjumi-PNI coalition government would be formed with Masjumi predominance, expressed its disquiet at the 'lack of resolution' being shown by 'several nationalist leaders' in defence of PNI's stand for the cancellation of the Japanese Peace Treaty, the MSA agreement and the Round Table Conference agreement, for the eradication of the Darul Islam rebels, and for strong measures to effect the return of West Irian.¹

When Prawoto and Sidik failed to reach agreement, Sukarno appointed PNI's Wilopo as formateur. PKI gave him a guarded welcome and offered support if he chose a truly progressive and anti-fascist cabinet.² Once Wilopo's cabinet was installed, the Aidit leadership expressed its disappointment at the inclusion of Masjumi, but, in line with the new and evolving concept of the national united front, for the first time declared the

¹ HR, March 10, 1952.

² HR, March 24, 1952.

Party's willingness to support a cabinet that did not include 'progressive' ministers:

apart from the question of whether or not PKI sits in the cabinet, PKI is ready, with honesty, to give its support to the Wilopo cabinet provided that the cabinet follows an entirely new political course. PKI will support the Wilopo cabinet provided that the government has courage and acts to abandon the old political course, that is, the war policy and the anti-national, fascist policy, and follows a new political course, a national policy founded on democracy and peace ...

PKI wishes that the Wilopo cabinet, following a new political course, will have a long life.¹

For the first time PKI offered support to other political parties without asking the price of participation in government. In other words, PKI offered its cooperation and alliance to those parties and groups which were not anti-communist and which were most opposed to 'imperialism'. In return it asked only that they should implement part of their anti-imperialist policy, and that they should permit PKI and its mass organizations freedom from repression. Such easy terms for communist support strongly attracted many nationalists who themselves wished 'to complete the revolution' by eliminating imperialist power, who were becoming increasingly antagonistic towards and fearful of Masjumi, and who placed a high premium on 'office'.

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HR, April 23, 1952.

During the period of the Wilopo cabinet, which was installed on April 3, 1952 and which resigned on June 3, 1953, four major political developments occurred that were of significance to PKI:¹ the further widening of the breach between Masjumi and the nationalists; an increasing willingness on the part of a growing number of nationalists to cooperate with PKI; increased antagonism between Hatta, Masjumi and PSI on the one hand and PKI on the other; and the breakaway from Masjumi of the Nahdatul Ulama.

It became evident to PNI that its cooperation with Masjumi and PSI was often injurious to its own interests.² For example, changes in the structure and size of the army which were envisaged by the pro-PSI Minister of Defence would have reduced the influence of the PNI supporters in both the officer corps and the ranks. The cabinet also moved towards the organization of early general elections which PNI feared because it was generally believed that as Masjumi had the best grass-roots organization the Moslem party would win a majority

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The political developments during the period of the Wilopo cabinet are covered by Herbert Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-1953; a Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia, Ithaca, New York, 1958, 212 p.

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Ibid., pp.94-6.

of votes. Furthermore, due to an adverse balance of trade, the cabinet, which included a PSI member as Minister of Finance, initiated budget, credit and import policies which burdened primarily the social groups most closely associated with PNI, that is, the civil servants and the new group of Indonesian importers and exporters.

Thus a large and increasing number of nationalists came to view cooperation with Masjumi as harmful to their own and their party's interests. At the same time, the religious issue was of great importance in generating antagonism towards and fear of Masjumi. In general the nationalist leaders were oriented towards traditional Javanese culture and disliked and feared the militant Islam of many Masjumi leaders. For many nationalist leaders, an Islamic state was the greatest threat to what they liked of Indonesia, to what they wanted for Indonesia, and to their own positions. In the first four months of 1953 a bitter feud broke out between some of the more radical Masjumi members and nationalist leaders over the issue of an Islamic state. Hypocritical Moslems were roundly denounced, and hot rejoinders flew back and forth. Feith concludes that the radicalism exhibited by some of the Masjumi leaders 'heightened the fears of the P.N.I. - and of President Soekarno - of

Masjumi strength.¹ This fear made PKI's task of winning the nationalists' friendship much easier.

As the general elections drew nearer, the nationalists looked for allies who could help them to postpone the elections as long as possible and to consolidate PNI's hold on government officials, whose influence in the elections could be, and eventually was, decisive. PKI's offer of support with minimal conditions gained in attractiveness. Feith considers that in 1952 the Sidik group in PNI decided on a more thorough exploration of the possibilities of cooperation with PKI, and that some of the chief PNI leaders were perhaps already working towards a PNI-led cabinet excluding Masjumi² - a development PKI had propounded since the fall of the Natsir cabinet. In Feith's opinion:

it is clear that a section of the P.N.I. leadership was henceforth prepared to assist in a strengthening of the P.K.I.'s position, and in particular to help the party regain nationalist respectability.

For such nationalists, PKI's low-price offer seemed to show that PKI was weak and of no immediate threat, whereas Masjumi was a direct and powerful threat. 'To strengthen the P.K.I. and weaken the Masjumi was demanded by the very mechanics of the P.N.I.'s power position.'

¹ Ibid., p.161.

² Ibid., p.97.

Sukarno's support of PNI also gave the nationalists confidence that they could hold their own against even a considerably stronger PKI. As a result, many nationalists increased their cooperation with PKI until towards the end of the Wilopo cabinet a major section of PNI was working in close alliance with PKI in order to bring down the government.

During the period of the Wilopo cabinet hostility increased between PKI and Hatta and Masjumi, and strong antipathy developed between PKI and PSI. Hatta and Masjumi attacked PKI as the tool of the new imperialism. The closer PKI moved to PNI, the more virulent became the exchange of abuse, with Hatta and Masjumi anxious to warn the nationalists of the dangers inherent in any alliance with the communists, and PKI endeavouring to denigrate the anti-communists on its own account and in order to please its new-found nationalist friends. In March 1953, Masjumi-leader Sukiman issued a much-publicized appeal that Indonesia, like India, should adopt a firmly anti-communist policy in internal affairs.

PKI's attitude to PSI varied before the formation of the Wilopo cabinet. The PSI leaders were not liked because they had, early in 1948, split away from the Socialist Party which later fused with PKI; and because they were aware of PKI's tactics and not hesitant to

explain them to other non-communists. On the other hand, during the Sukiman cabinet PSI had been a staunch opponent of the August 1951 arrests, and had opposed signing the Japanese Peace Treaty. As late as February 1952, PKI sent warm greetings to the PSI congress.¹ Then, on May 25, 1952, Aidit attacked PSI for creating its own trade unions, for ridiculing the peace movement, and for refusing to join PKI-led national unity actions.² This was the end of PKI's vacillations, and the Party later explained PSI's policy during the Sukiman cabinet in terms of a conflict within the imperialist camp: PSI being a tool of the British, whereas Sukiman was a tool of Washington.³

The violence of PKI's attacks on PSI by the end of 1952 are partly explained by three factors. First, the period of the Wilopo cabinet witnessed the growth of ties between Masjumi and PSI. Second, PSI had much support in the army and connived on October 17, 1952 in an attempted coup d'etat that would have led to some form of dictatorship, and probably an anti-communist dictator-

¹ PKI-B, February 15, 1952, p.2.

² HR, May 27, 1952.

³ Sakirman, "Beberapa Pengalaman Fraksi PKI dalam DPRS RI ..." (Some Experiences of the PKI Parliamentary Group ...), BM, January 1956, p.12.

ship because many of the higher and pro-PSI army officers had become strongly anti-communist as a result of the Madiun rebellion. Third, as PNI and Sukarno considered PSI an enemy, PKI attempted to curry more favour with them by attacking PSI.

A major political development during the Wilopo cabinet was the breakaway of Nahdatul Ulama from Masjumi.¹ In one blow Masjumi lost almost fifty per cent of its popular support, and a new, large Moslem party was established that did not adhere to Masjumi's political line. The NU leaders consisted mostly of politically inexperienced religious leaders, and as the party's prospects brightened came to include a smattering of opportunists who joined for personal profit. Unlike Masjumi, NU was to show itself ready to cooperate with the nationalists and communists when cooperation could serve personal or party interests. In fact, NU has shown itself more ready to work with the nationalists and communists than with the Masjumi leaders towards whom the break left much bitterness.

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The reasons for the breakaway are outlined in Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, pp.44-5; and Munawir Sjadzali, "Indonesia's Muslim Parties and their Political Concepts" (Georgetown University, Master's thesis, 1959), pp.29-30.

The appearance of NU altered considerably the political picture. Not only was Masjumi weakened, but the nationalists were encouraged to form a government without Masjumi. Neither PNI nor Sukarno dared form a government that completely excluded the Moslems, but now the amenable NU could be brought into the cabinet and Masjumi could be excluded. Such an arrangement could not be labelled anti-Islam.

On June 19, 1952, Sakirman told parliament that PKI would support the new Wilopo cabinet while retaining the right to criticize sharply any measures 'conflicting with democratic rights, national interests, and the interests of the people.'¹ Some Party members were bewildered by the new tactic of conditional support for a government without communist representatives, but as early as mid-July the central committee explained that the advantages of the tactic were already being felt: 'a rather broad opportunity' had been opened to PKI and 'other people's organizations' to work openly, not in semi-secrecy as formerly, and the leadership of PKI

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HR, June 20, 1952.

and its mass organizations had been able to emerge from hiding.¹

At the same time as they gave the government their support, the PKI leaders sought to bring together PKI and PNI. At first collaboration was on small matters. For example, PKI and PNI were among the 62 parties and organizations which formed a joint committee to celebrate National Awakening Day on May 20, 1952. The committee issued a statement containing a condemnation of colonialism, an agreement on the need for democracy in all fields, and demands for security (meaning the eradication of the Darul Islam rebels), the return of West Irian, and the cancellation of 'all agreements with other states that harm the people and the state.'² It was significant that neither Masjumi nor PSI signed the statement. Other early forms of PKI-PNI collaboration included parallel statements by leaders of both parties urging strong action against the Darul Islam rebels, vigilance in face of foreign subversive activities, and determined retaliation against Dutch insults.³

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"Apa Sebab PKI Memberi Kesempatan Bekerdja pada Kabinet Wilopo" (Why PKI Gives the Wilopo Cabinet the Opportunity to Work), HR, July 14, 1952.

2

HR, May 21, 1952.

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Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, p.94.

On July 28, 1952 a debate began in parliament that was to lead to an attempted coup, and to much closer relations between PKI and PNI. The immediate reasons for the debate were the suspension by Colonel Nasution, the army chief of staff, of an insubordinate officer, and the plans drawn up by the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces' leadership for the demobilization of 80,000 troops. The demobilization would have reduced especially those groups with little or no formal education, which by and large consisted of those with the closest personal and political ties with Sukarno and PNI. The nationalists and communists quickly turned the debate into an attempt to remove from the Ministry of Defence and armed forces those persons who were pro-PSI or were believed to be so.

PKI's participation in the debate had two purposes: to stay close to PNI; and to weaken PSI's position in the Ministry of Defence and the army - but without causing a cabinet crisis. The balance of forces was still such that a crisis might have resulted in a new Sukiman-type government. The communists first attempted to bring together the major government parties behind proposals that would have opened the possibility of personnel changes in the Ministry of Defence and the

armed forces.¹ But after Sukarno intervened to pressure hesitant PNI leaders to be more resolute against PSI, PKI swung fully behind the nationalists. PNI, NU and PSII representatives sponsored a motion calling for a commission to report on the possibility of improving the defence leadership. This was passed on October 16 by 91 votes to 54, PNI, PKI, NU and PSII voting for, Masjumi, PSI and the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties voting against. For the moment it appeared that PNI and PKI had succeeded in their objective. And then, on October 17, a section of the army attempted a coup.

The coup failed partly because the army was divided and partly because Sukarno refused to be intimidated. When the coup had failed, lower officers removed pro-coup commanders in East Java, East Indonesia and North Sumatra. PNI and PKI worked closely in demanding the removal of all who had been implicated in the coup attempt, and subsequently many persons were removed. Colonel Nasution was removed as army chief of staff on December 5, 1952, the pro-PSI Minister of Defence

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T. Mangunsumbogo, Fakta dan Dokumen-Dokumen untuk Menjusun Buku "Indonesia Memasuki Gelanggang Internasional": Periode V: 1950-1954 (Facts and Documents for Making a Book "Indonesia Enters the International Arena"; Period V: 1950-1954), mimeographed, vol.VIB, Djakarta, 1959, pp.164-5.

resigned on January 1, 1953, the PSI secretary-general of the Ministry of Defence was replaced on March 31, 1952, and, finally, the pro-PSI armed forces chief of staff was eliminated when his post was abolished on November 4, 1953. The advantage PNI and pro-PNI officers gained by the removal of those implicated in the coup further estranged Masjumi from the nationalists.

One of the principal demands of the October 17 group had been the dissolution of the appointed parliament and the holding of general elections. PKI strenuously opposed the dissolution of parliament because action at the parliamentary level was providing it with the opportunity to establish cooperation with the nationalists and certain Moslem groups, and because the Party feared that the dissolution of parliament at that time could lead to a dictatorship. The nationalists feared a dictatorship and also elections in the near future - and PKI was quite willing to help stave off elections in order to win PNI's favour.

Hundreds of petitions poured in, mainly from joint local action committees, evidently sponsored by PNI and PKI, calling for parliament to continue.¹ The electoral

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Herbert Feith, "Towards Elections in Indonesia", Pacific Affairs, September 1954, vol. XXVII, no. 3, pp. 243-4.

bill was presented to parliament in February 1953. By the 27th some two hundred amendments had been proposed, and the debate showed signs of dragging on indefinitely. PKI also seemed to be employing delaying tactics for PNI's advantage and proposed, for example, that a census be held before the elections, which would have delayed them for at least two years. Due to strong public pressure against further delays and due to the taunts of Masjumi leaders that the nationalists were afraid of elections, PNI, and therefore PKI, changed tactics. The bill was rushed through by April 1, 1953. The nationalists presumed that if the government was weak and a cabinet crisis possible, then the bill could be passed but its implementation delayed by other means.

In the first part of April 1953 a motion was introduced in parliament, with PNI support, calling for the opening of an embassy in Moscow before the end of the year. Masjumi was strongly opposed to the motion, but when it was passed by 82 votes to 43 on April 9, Masjumi declared that it would resign from the cabinet only when the embassy was established. The main forces in PNI were now eager to bring down the government and they used a communist motion as the means.

On March 16, 1953, five peasant squatters were shot and killed by police in Tandjung Morawa, near Medan,

while resisting eviction from estate lands. The PNI in North Sumatra was eager to exploit the shooting in order to embarrass and, if possible, remove the Masjumi governor of the province. In mid-May the pro-communist leader of the peasant organization SAKTI introduced a motion of no confidence in the Minister of the Interior, Masjumi's Mohamad Rum who was blamed for the shooting. This was soon modified, probably to win support from PNI, but Rum declared that he still considered the motion to be one of confidence. As late as May 23 PNI's official attitude to the motion was still unknown, but the North Sumatran section of the party threatened to secede unless the motion was supported. PNI then made a last offer to abstain from voting in return for Masjumi approval of PNI's candidate for Minister of Information - an offer that was rejected. Finally, the Wilopo cabinet resigned on June 3, before a vote could be taken on the motion.

A majority of the PNI leaders had at last decided that the cabinet could be replaced by one more advantageous to themselves. That they were prepared to seek PKI's cooperation in the subsequent cabinet crisis was shown by the statements in March and April by the PNI second deputy chairman and chairman that the party was non-communist, not anti-communist, and that it was

prepared to cooperate 'with all political tendencies in the community.'¹ PKI was willing to bring down the cabinet because it was fairly certain that the balance of power in Indonesia was far more in the progressives' favour than when the cabinet was formed, so that there was little fear that a more rightwing government would be formed.

PKI's first proposal after the fall of the cabinet was that a PNI member be made the formateur and that both Masjumi and PSI be excluded from the next cabinet.² At the same time, PKI called for a united front cabinet, including PKI.³ From June 15 to June 21, formateurs from PNI and Masjumi unsuccessfully tried to reach agreement on a new coalition cabinet. When they failed, PKI at once repeated its demand that a PNI member be made the sole formateur, but, significantly, PKI now dropped its request for communist representation in the future cabinet.⁴ On June 23, after the appointment on the previous day of PNI's Mukarto Notowidigdo as formateur, PKI called for PNI to resist courageously any attempted

¹ TI, March 13, 1953; Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, p.190, note 51.

² HR, June 8, 1953.

³ HR, June 5 and 16, 1953.

⁴ HR, June 22, 1953.

intimidation by Masjumi and PSI, repeated its demand for a government without Masjumi and PSI, and charged that the United States has already earmarked four hundred million rupiahs for use by Masjumi and the other reactionary parties in the forthcoming elections.¹

A week later, Aidit wrote an almost hysterical article describing the horrors a Masjumi government would unleash.²

When Mukarto failed to form a cabinet, PKI declared that it was now proved that any attempt to establish a PNI-Masjumi coalition would fail. Again PKI proposed a PNI member as formateur, but Sukarno appointed to this role Burhanudin Harahap of Masjumi. This led PKI to new heights in its attacks on Masjumi and PSI. While Mukarto had been formateur, 26 parties and organizations, including PKI, PNI, PSII and the communist mass organizations, had established in Jogjakarta an action committee to fight for a cabinet excluding Masjumi and PSI. When the Masjumi formateur was appointed, PNI moved much closer to PKI and joint demonstrations were held through-

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PKI-B, July 1, 1953, pp.100-4.

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D.N. Aidit, "Histeria dikalangan Reaksi" (Hysteria among the Reactionaries), in his Pilihan Tulisan (Selected Works), vol.I, Djakarta, 1959, pp.147-9.

out the country to demand a PNI-led cabinet and the eradication of the Darul Islam rebels.

The increase in the strength of PNI and its allies compared with Masjumi that had occurred during the Wilopo cabinet, and PNI's ability to use PKI support without giving any obvious concessions, emboldened PNI to demand of Masjumi a distribution of cabinet seats that the latter found unacceptable. On July 18 Harahap returned his mandate, and on the 20th Sukarno appointed as formateur Wongsonegoro of the minor nationalist party PIR. Joint demonstrations and delegations continued, PKI expressed its support for Wongsonegoro in his efforts to form a new cabinet, negotiations lengthened, and it became clear that PNI was prepared to take the major role in a coalition cabinet that would exclude Masjumi and PSI. The PNI leaders at last risked a complete break with Masjumi and a leftwards shift of alliances. But the risk seemed slight and the gain immense. No one really believed that PKI would be able, in the foreseeable future, to challenge the government, while PNI control of the government apparatus would bring personal and party enrichment as well as the means to face general elections with some confidence.

On July 30, 1953 the new cabinet was announced. The Prime Minister was Ali Sastroamidjojo, of PNI, and the

other members of the cabinet included three from PNI, three from NU, two from PSII, and eleven who were from other minor parties or were non-party. PKI hailed the cabinet as 'a glorious victory of democracy over fascism.'¹

The Aidit leadership could look back with satisfaction over the period of the Wilopo cabinet. Conditional support of the cabinet had helped re-establish the Party's respectability, and it had been repaid by freedom from government repression. At the time the Sukiman cabinet had fallen, the PKI leaders were either in prison or in hiding, and total Party membership was about 8,000. But during the Wilopo cabinet all those arrested in August 1951 were released, all Party and mass organization leaders came back into the open, and the expansion of the Party was begun. By the time the Wilopo cabinet fell, Party membership was over 130,000. In short, the 'progressive force' had consolidated itself and begun a rapid expansion.

What of the 'middle force', the national bourgeoisie? Aidit, speaking to the fifth PKI congress in March 1954, declared that the correct Party tactic towards the Wilopo

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PKI-B, August 15, 1953, p.124.

cabinet had improved and widened the road for unity with the national bourgeoisie, a unity broken since 1948 when the national bourgeoisie had sided with the 'compradores' at the time of the Madiun rebellion.¹ In other words, PKI had successfully exploited the growing PNI opposition to Masjumi policies and PNI fear of the fanatical Moslems. PKI had exacerbated policy differences between PNI and Masjumi into antagonisms by strengthening PNI's hand to the point where PNI was increasingly unwilling to compromise with Masjumi. And PKI had suggested that PNI interests would best be served by a PNI-led cabinet excluding Masjumi and PSI, finally making such a cabinet possible and attractive by offering PKI support at no greater price than friendship and tolerance.

At the same time as the growth of the progressive force and the attraction of the middle force leftwards, the 'reactionary force' had been further isolated from the middle force and had been considerably weakened. The PSI position in the army and the Ministry of Defence had been greatly reduced. Masjumi and PSI had been further separated from PNI, and even excluded from office - a fact which in itself increased their antagonism towards

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D.N. Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi Rakjat bagi Indonesia (The Indonesian Road to People's Democracy), Djakarta, 1955, pp.47-8.

PNI, the more so as PKI support for PNI was in part responsible for their exclusion. Masjumi itself had split, and the friendliness shown by PNI and PKI towards NU encouraged a further widening of the split. Finally, a blow had been struck against the imperialists because the new Ali cabinet was led by a PNI committed to the reduction of imperialist economic and political power, and to a 'free and active' foreign policy.

3. Alliance with PNI

After the formation of the Ali cabinet, many of the prominent PNI leaders came to acknowledge openly and to justify their cooperation with PKI. For example, PNI chairman Sidik Djojokusarto readily admitted at the beginning of October 1953 that he had recently sent an instruction to all party branches which read: 'Establish close relations with the PKI and cooperate closely with the NU. I am confident you will carry out this task tactfully.'¹ Sidik claimed that the instruction followed logically from the 'close cooperation with both parties' in parliament as a result of NU's participation in and PKI's support for the cabinet. On May 19, 1954, the West Java PNI leader Gatot Mangkupraja even proposed a

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TI, October 9, 1953.

common front between the nationalists and communists in the coming elections in order to defeat 'the opposite side.'¹ The alliance with PKI was advantageous not only because it helped maintain PNI in and Masjumi out of the government. It also meant that PKI withheld criticism of the worsening economic situation and corruption, and that PKI turned its fire of vicious denunciation against the party PNI considered to be its most dangerous rival.

The advantages to PKI of its alliance with PNI were obvious: freedom from government repression, regained respectability, and the separation of the non-communists from the anti-communists. But the Aidit leadership had to take care that support for the government in general did not hide PKI's own identity as a revolutionary party. This problem became more acute when the Ali cabinet demonstrated corruption and economic ineptitude. The solution was a combination of support and criticism: defence of the government against reactionary attacks, which helped promote alliance with the nationalist and non-Masjumi Moslem participants in the government; but enough criticism for the Party to maintain itself as the nucleus of social protest, and to make quite clear to

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TI, May 25, 1954; HR, May 22, 1954.

members and the public in general that although the current government may be better than previous reactionary ones, only a people's democratic government could solve the major social-economic and political problems facing the country. This combination of support and criticism has been maintained down to the present, except for the brief period of the Masjumi-led cabinet from August 12, 1955 to March 3, 1956.

Sakirman, speaking in parliament on September 7, 1953, set the tone for PKI's attacks on the opposition's criticism of the government when he denounced Masjumi and PSI for mouthing old utterances of Van Mook (the last Dutch Lieutenant-Governor of the East Indies), Hitler and the United States' Information Service.¹ Towards the end of September, when rebels declared Atjeh to be a part of the Darul Islam, PKI launched a suitable attack on the 'colonial-militarist-feudal-fascist elements in Atjeh' and offered full support to crush them.² On December 31, 1953, Aidit listed seven important and desirable actions taken by the cabinet in the brief period since it took office,³ and then told the Party

¹ HR, September 8, 1953.

² HR, September 24, 1953.

³ D.N. Aidit, "Perkuat Kedudukan Republik! Tugas Pokok Rakjat Indonesia ditahun Datang" (Strengthen the Position of the Republic! The Basic Task of the Indonesian People in the Next Year), PKI-B, December 31, 1953, p.202.

congress in March 1954 that the government was not really to blame for economic conditions because it had to bear the results of the disastrous economic and financial policies of the Hatta, Natsir and Sukiman governments as well as of the PSI Finance Minister in the Wilopo cabinet.¹

At the same time as defending and complimenting the government, however, PKI presented the government with ten demands to be met during 1954,² and the Party congress of March 1954 put forward twelve demands to be met by the government if it wished to continue to receive communist support.³ The PKI leaders did not expect the government to take the demands too seriously because, firstly, the government was not capable of implementing them fully, and, secondly, if it could have implemented them the economic situation would have been improved and real or potential discontent reduced. The demands were for popular consumption, to show that the Party had the interests of the people at heart, and to show that the

1

Aidit, Djalan ke Demokrasi, p.28.

2

Aidit, "Perkuat Kedudukan", PKI-B, December 31, 1953, p.203.

3

PKI, Program PKI (PKI's Programme), Djakarta, 1954, pp.25-9.

government was incapable of solving the major problems facing the country.

During February 1954, Masjumi made a show of strength in Djakarta that was countered by joint PKI-PNI action. Masjumi announced that it would hold a demonstration on the 13th to demand a change in the recently-appointed Djakarta Raja election commission, which included only one Masjumi member. Nine political parties, including PKI, PNI, NU, PSII and Perti, and eight mass organizations immediately issued a statement declaring Masjumi's intention to be the removal of PNI's mayor and the creation of an all-Masjumi election commission.¹ On the 13th Masjumi held a rally attended by 30,000. One week later, 27 parties and mass organizations combined to hold a giant rally, addressed by speakers from PKI, PNI, NU and Perti, and attended by 250,000. The rally adopted a resolution which rejected Masjumi's demand and called for alterations in the Masjumi-dominated city council.² Masjumi in turn replied with a rally of half a million people on the following day, and used it to attack what were considered insults to Islam made by nationalist leaders.

¹ HR, February 12, 1954.

² HR, February 19 and 22, 1954.

An army captain was killed during the second Masjumi rally, which led PKI to emit loud cries of horror and to request that the government ban all Masjumi demonstrations.¹ The anti-Masjumi parties could not compete with Masjumi's crowd-raising, but on April 12 a joint delegation, including PKI and PNI representatives, visited the Minister of Internal Affairs to discuss the matter of changing the composition of the Djakarta city council.² The government obliged by increasing the number of council members from 25 to 60 on June 18, thus giving large representation to the non-Masjumi groups.

At some time around the beginning of June 1954, a Committee for Cooperation between Parties and Organizations in Djakarta was established, probably on the basis of the joint anti-Masjumi actions. It contained a broad range of parties and mass organizations, including all government parties plus PKI, but excluding Masjumi and PSI.³ The committee was active in demanding stern measures against the Dutch, the unilateral abrogation of the Indonesia-Netherlands Union, and the immediate creation of a province of West Irian.⁴ Boyd Compton

1

PKI-B, March 1954, pp.28-9.

2

HR, April 13, 1954.

3

TI, June 23, 1954.

4

TI, July 5, 1954.

reported that local party chiefs in other cities were forced by their Djakarta headquarters to establish similar committees, but that in at least Surabaya the local committee soon disappeared amidst disputes between members.¹ Informal cooperation continued where the formal committees disappeared, and took the form of joint manifestos, statements and a few mass meetings.

Meanwhile the campaign for the 1955 general elections was under way. In its election manifesto, endorsed in the March 1954 congress, PKI early demonstrated its self-effacing friendliness towards the parties of the 'middle force' by calling on the electors 'to vote for PKI and the other democratic parties,' and not merely for PKI.² On May 18, 1954, Aidit urged all democratic parties who were convinced of the need to defeat Masjumi-PSI in the general elections to either pool their surplus votes or agree not to attack one another during the campaign.³ No vote-pooling was arranged between PKI and

1

Boyd R. Compton, Indonesian Communism: Friends and Allies, American Universities' Field Staff Report, New York, 1955, pp.6-7.

2

PKI, Manifes Pemilihan Umum PKI (PKI's General Election Manifesto), Djakarta, 1954, p.20.

3

PKI-B, May 1954, p.55. Under the version of proportional representation as practised in the 1955 elections, two or more parties, organizations or individual candidates could, in each electoral district, pool their surplus votes after the first distribution of seats.

any other major party, but by an unspoken agreement none of the government parties or PKI engaged in mutual recrimination during the campaign. Their combined fire was aimed especially at Masjumi, and even NU joined in the attack on its fellow Moslem party.

In October 1954 the Ali cabinet was threatened by dissension within its own ranks. On October 17 the minor nationalist party PIR called for the resignation of the cabinet, and PIR split into an opposition faction led by what PKI was already calling 'the Tadjuddin Noor clique,' and a pro-government faction led by Deputy Prime Minister Wongsonegoro.¹ In the resultant cabinet reshuffle, Perti entered the government. Sukarno worked hard to drum up support for the government, persuaded the wavering PSII leaders to keep in line, and called the government's opponents traitors.

PKI reacted by denouncing the PIR anti-government group as 'fully supported by the Dutch and American imperialists, the Kuomintang and their accomplices,' by assuring the government of the Party's support, and by threatening that if the government fell PKI would demand

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For accounts of the split in PIR, see Feith, "Indonesian Politics", pp.629-30; and Justus Maria van der Kroef, Indonesia in the Modern World, part II, Bandung, 1956, pp.347-8.

participation in the next cabinet.¹ When Masjumi introduced a motion of no confidence in the government's policy to liberate West Irian, Aidit in parliament declared that if a Masjumi-PSI cabinet were to replace that of Ali, then the general elections would be held according to procedures applied by Bao Dai, Syngman Rhee, Zahedi and Mohammed Ali.² Aidit's words were no mere rhetoric as far as PKI was concerned. The memory was still fresh of the August 1951 arrests and of Sukiman's proposal for a stern anti-communist policy, while the Anti-Communist Front, sponsored by a wing of Masjumi, was leading a strenuous anti-communist campaign.

Fortunately for both PNI and PKI, the Masjumi motion was defeated on December 14 by 115 votes to 92 with 6 abstentions. After the split in PIR, total government support in parliament was only 119 votes, including 17 PKI, 2 each of SOBSI and BTI, and 9 Progressives, including several fellow-travellers; the opposition held 101 votes; and the Murba party, with 4 votes, remained neutral.³ Thus, from October 1954 the Ali cabinet was directly dependent on communist votes.

1

D.N. Aidit, "For Broad Unity of All National Forces in Indonesia", FALP, December 31, 1954, p.4; HR, October 15, 18 and 20, 1954.

2

TI, December 10, 1954.

3

TI, October 29, 1954.

This did not give PKI a special lever because PNI was fully aware that PKI needed the cabinet in order to prevent a possible Masjumi-led, anti-communist alternative; but it did demonstrate to PNI the benefits of cooperation with the communists. The PSI newspaper "Pedoman" reported that the PKI central committee meeting of November 8 to 10, 1954 decided to sound out Ali as to the possibility of the Party's receiving the post of Minister of Agrarian Affairs,¹ but nothing further was heard of this.

As the PNI leaders found it increasingly necessary to appeal to anti-Dutch feeling as a means of winning support and diverting attention from their obvious failures in the economic field, joint West Irian action committees were established throughout Indonesia and included PNI, PKI and other political parties and mass organizations, though usually excluding Masjumi and PSI. The first major action by one of the committees was in Djakarta where a mass demonstration of over half a million people was organized on December 5, 1954. The speakers included two communists.²

1

Reported in TI, November 17, 1954.

2

HR, December 12, 1954.

At the beginning of May 1955, PKI and SOBSI proved of service to the government by breaking a strike of the PSI-led KBSI trade union federation. The strike began in Djakarta on May 7 as a protest against deteriorating economic conditions. PKI and SOBSI leaders denounced the strike as 'reactionary, anti-worker,' and as 'a sabotage effort,' and claimed it was part of the imperialist plot to overthrow the Republic.¹ SOBSI used its members as strike-breakers, and the strike collapsed.

The end of the Ali cabinet was approaching, not because of opposition within parliament but because of unrest within the army leadership at the government's 'interference' in army affairs.² In brief, many high army officers were becoming increasingly concerned at the application of the political spoils system to the army. Opposition crystallized especially against the Minister of Defence, Iwa Kusumasumantri, a close friend of both Sukarno and the communists. When the army chief of staff

1

HR, May 9 and 11, 1955; Buletin SOBSI, May 15, 1955, pp.3-5.

2

For accounts of what became known as 'the June 27 affair', see Robert J. Myers, "The Development of the Indonesian Socialist Party" (Chicago University, Ph.D. thesis, 1959), pp.144-52; and Justus Maria van der Kroef, "The Place of the Army in Indonesian Politics", Eastern World, January 1957, vol.XI, no.1, p.15.

resigned, Iwa did not consult the army but appointed a Colonel Bambang Utojo as the new chief. Bambang Utojo was considered a partisan of PNI and Sukarno, and the other officers did not believe him to be professionally qualified for the highest post in the army. PKI welcomed the appointment under the headline "Tactics of the '17th Octoberists' Again Defeated,"¹ and the Party was particularly relieved because the acting chief of staff, Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, was an adamant anti-communist.

The central army leadership boycotted the installation of Bambang Utojo on June 27, 1955, and refused to recognize his appointment. Iwa summoned Lubis to his office, Lubis refused to go. Iwa dismissed him, Lubis refused to accept dismissal, and the army regional commanders backed Lubis despite strong pressure from Sukarno to accept Utojo. In the midst of the events PKI proposed disciplinary measures against the insubordinate officers, and called on the people to give 'the greatest possible assistance' to the government 'in order to remove the danger of military dictatorship, the danger of fascism.'² Party members and sympathizers were mobilized to state their conviction of the sagacity

¹ HR, June 22, 1955.

² HR, June 30, 1955.

of the government's appointment of Bambang Utojo as army chief of staff.¹

On July 18 Sukarno left on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and one of the cabinet's chief props was removed. It became clear that the army leaders would reject any compromise with the cabinet, including the resignation of Iwa who had departed for Mecca with the president. First the minor nationalist party Parindra and then NU decided that the cabinet should resign - which it did on July 24.

The first Ali cabinet had stayed in power for over two years, a record for Indonesia. The benefits PKI reaped from its apparently selfless support for the cabinet in general and PNI in particular were considerable.

First, the government had permitted PKI and its mass organizations to work with a minimum of government restrictions and obstruction. It was during the period of the Ali cabinet that the Aidit leadership developed what was the largest non-governmental organization in Indonesia: PKI grew from about 130,000 members to almost one million; SOBSI consolidated its organization;² the

¹ HR, July 12, 1955.

² In September 1953, the government gave a boost to the SOBSI estate workers' union by submitting to a strike-backed demand for a change in a major award by the central labour disputes arbitration and conciliation committee.

communist-led peasant organizations fused, and their claimed membership increased from about 400,000 to about 3½ millions; Pemuda Rakjat's claimed membership rose from less than 70,000 to about 500,000; and Gerwani claimed that its membership rose from about 45,000 to about 400,000.

Second, the advantages of cooperation between nationalists and communists was demonstrated to an important section of PNI, and also to Sukarno. Third, cooperation with the nationalists permitted PKI to regain its nationalist respectability, to promenade alongside prominent nationalists in campaigns demanding militant action against Dutch imperialism. Fourth, an unstated agreement was reached between PKI and the government parties not to attack one another during the election campaign - which made the communists' task of winning mass support much easier.

Fifth, communist support of the Ali cabinet permitted the cabinet to remain in office for many months longer than it would otherwise have done, and each month of the PNI-led cabinet which excluded Masjumi increased the rift between those two parties. This was especially so when the cabinet depended directly upon PKI votes. Sixth, communist support permitted the cabinet to remain in office longer, and so allowed PNI to consolidate its hold

over the civil service, particularly over the rural administrative service, with which it was to emerge as the largest single party in the September and December 1955 general elections. This meant that the future parliamentary balance was tipped away from Masjumi.

Seventh, PKI support of the government gave the Party full freedom to attack the anti-communists, especially Masjumi and PSI, with little fear of government action against the attacks.¹ On the other hand, the government in September 1953 banned demonstrations by anti-communists to celebrate the outbreak of the Madiun rebellion.

The PSI leader Sjahrir has suggested that the communists supported the Ali cabinet 'because they believed it would lead the country into a blind alley more quickly than any other.'² Certainly the period of the Ali cabinet was marked by extensive corruption, inflation, and general decline in standards of living.

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Aidit was belatedly brought to court at the end of 1954 and the beginning of 1955 for defaming Hatta in a statement on the Madiun rebellion. A three-months suspended gaol sentence was finally given, and the Party was not prevented from publishing Aidit's defence which repeated and embellished the original defamation.

2

Sutan Sjahrir, "Problems the Country Faces", in "Perspective of Indonesia", a supplement to Atlantic Monthly, June 1956, p.24.

But what might be called the economic incapacity of the groups in the Ali cabinet was merely a fortunate coincidence for PKI, who chose to support them primarily because they were less hostile to PKI and more hostile to Western colonialism than Masjumi and PSI.

NU had taken its place on the political scene by joining the Ali cabinet. Because the NU leaders were prepared to take opposite sides to Masjumi, and showed their willingness to cooperate with any political group as long as they felt cooperation could benefit themselves, their party or their Islamic principles, the Aidit leadership extended a hand of friendship. Early in September 1954, for example, PKI sent warm greetings to the NU congress.¹ The "Harian Rakjat" editorials always included NU among the 'democratic parties.'

As soon as the Ali cabinet resigned, PKI proposed that instead of a completely new cabinet there should be a reshuffled Ali cabinet entrusted with carrying out the elections and opening new discussions with the army leadership.² Vice-President Hatta, acting in Sukarno's absence, appointed three formateurs on August 1, 1955: Wilopo, Sukiman, and Assaat, an independent politician

¹ HR, September 9, 1954.

² HR, July 27, 1955.

closely linked with Masjumi and PSI. They failed to reach agreement, and on August 3, Hatta appointed Burhanudin Harahap of Masjumi as formateur. PKI thereupon mobilized the Party and its mass organizations to flood the head of state with petitions and telegrams demanding the preservation of parliamentary democracy and rejecting a Masjumi-led government. On August 7, Aidit proposed an all-party cabinet, though one not led by Masjumi, that could settle the dispute with the army and carry out 'truly free and honest elections.'¹

However, Harahap succeeded in forming a cabinet, which was installed on August 12, 1955 and included members of NU, PSII, PSI, and four smaller parties as well as Masjumi. PNI and PKI moved into the opposition.

Aidit declared that Masjumi and PSI 'collaborate with the federalists, the hirelings of the Dutch imperialists,' and that this reactionary combination:

threatens the democracy and unity of the Indonesian Republic. At the bidding of the Dutch imperialists, these parties are inciting the Darul Islam and other terrorist gangs to anti-democratic activities.²

¹ HR, August 8, 1955.

² D.N. Aidit, "The General Elections and the Tasks of the Indonesian Communist Party", FALP, September 9, 1955, p.3.

But Aidit was wary of offending those parties other than Masjumi and PSI which were in the government. He therefore explained:

The CPI [Communist Party of Indonesia] holds, however, that these facts do not detract from the merits of certain ministers of the cabinet who belong to the parties that formerly belonged to the Ali Sastroamidjojo government and that showed good will.

In keeping with its policy of selective attacks on the government, PKI criticized the Harahap cabinet for its financial and economic policy, its defence policy and its foreign policy - because the ministers in charge of those policies were members of Masjumi, PSI or the Roman Catholic Party. Especially the question of rising prices, not a new phenomenon in Indonesia, was used throughout the life of the cabinet to win broad support and to embarrass the government.

When the new cabinet began to take active steps to bring to trial the beneficiaries of the most blatant examples of corruption under the previous cabinet, PKI displayed the value of its friendship to the nationalists. Instead of praising the anti-corruption drive, PKI attacked it. Sakirman, speaking in parliament, declared that 'To combat corruption in a dishonest way is to create greater corruption.'¹ He defended Djody

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HR, August 22, 1955.

Gondokusumo, the PRN Minister of Justice in the Ali cabinet, who was the first prominent person brought to account, for his courage in fighting the 'Kuomintang plot' and reactionary elements in his ministry. "Harian Rakjat", in an editorial, commented that the anti-corruption slogan could be used as a first step towards fascist power, as witness the Dimitrov case in Hitler's Germany.¹ Such defence of the notoriously corrupt must have raised doubts among the less politically sophisticated Party members, but Aidit reminded them that 'In pursuing the unity policy we must not do anything strange or deformed in the eyes of those who should unite with us.'² In other words, unity was paramount, and, if necessary, even corruption had to be excused.

Two issues tied PKI and PNI closer together: the question of negotiations with the Dutch, and, more importantly, the question of forcing the government to resign once the provisional results of the September 1955 parliamentary elections were known.

In December the government opened negotiations with the Netherlands in order to settle peacefully the return

1

HR, August 23, 1955.

2

D.N. Aidit, Pertahankan Republik Proklamasi 1945! (Defend the 1945 Proclamation Republic!), Djakarta, 1955, p.31.

of West Irian, the abrogation of the Indonesia-Netherlands Union, and a change in the terms of the Round Table Conference agreement. NU and then PSII objected to the negotiations, and on January 18, 1956, PSII withdrew from the government. PNI, PKI and PSII demonstrated their joint, militant opposition to imperialism in general and Dutch imperialism in particular by organizing a giant anti-colonial rally in Djakarta on January 15, 1956. The speakers at the rally were Ali Sastroamidjojo, Aidit and a PSII leader, and the rally also called for a caretaker government to replace the Harahap cabinet.

The provisional results of the September 1955 parliamentary elections were known by the first week in October 1955. Aidit called for the formation of a national coalition government that would be led by PNI and NU, would also include PKI, Masjumi, PSII, the Protestant Party 'as well as other parties and groups,' and would pursue the 'anti-colonial policy' of the Ali cabinet.¹ On November 14, PNI, PKI and some smaller groups began a boycott of parliament. Next day, however, the government succeeded in receiving seventeen votes more than the necessary quorum, and on the 17th the

¹ HR, October 11, 1955.

government parties voted to advance the date of the parliamentary recess from December 10 to November 21. The government continued in office, though PKI pointed out that only 83 of the government's votes were valid as the rest came from groups and individuals who had received no popular support in the elections.¹

When PNI showed no readiness to consider PKI for inclusion in the next cabinet,² PKI changed its proposals. On November 30, 1955 Aidit stated that because Masjumi had rejected the idea of an all-party cabinet, PKI now proposed a cabinet of PNI, NU, PSII and Perti with communist support but not participation.³ PKI would give, he said, 'real and critical' support for such a cabinet if its programme was acceptable.

Early in 1956, throughout the country joint PNI-PKI meetings were held and joint delegations formed to demand a transitional cabinet whose composition was more in line with the election results. On February 16, PNI, NU, PSII and Perti tabled in parliament a joint motion of no

¹ HR, November 16, 1955.

² Sarmidi Mangunsarkoro, PNI general chairman, for example, on January 7, 1956 rejected the idea of PKI participation in the next cabinet, but said that PKI support was possible; TI, January 9, 1956.

³ HR, December 3, 1955.

confidence in the government, and on the 27th PNI and NU issued an ultimatum to Masjumi that unless the cabinet resigned by March 2, then both parties would refuse to consider future cooperation with Masjumi. When the official announcement was made, on March 1, of the distribution of seats according to the September 1955 elections, 68 members of parliament resigned - including those from PNI, PKI, NU and PSII. Two days later the cabinet returned its mandate.

The general elections had not led to a simplification in the number of parties, and after the new distribution of parliamentary seats the two largest parties combined still could not command a majority.¹ Multi-party coalition government was still necessary.

The PKI leaders expressed their relief at the fall of the 'reactionary' Harahap cabinet, and again proposed an improved version of the Ali cabinet in which neither PKI nor Masjumi would participate.² 'But if Masjumi must sit in it, then so also must PKI in order to

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The distribution of seats in the new, elected parliament was: PNI - 57, Masjumi - 57, NU - 45, PKI - 39, PSII - 8, Protestant Party - 8, Roman Catholic Party - 6, PSI - 5, IPKI - 4, Perti - 4, seventeen small parties - 23, and one individual.

2

HR, March 7, 1956.

counterbalance Masjumi policy.' The PNI leaders, reportedly under pressure from NU, whose representation in parliament had increased from 8 to 45, and presumably afraid that Masjumi and NU together with such as the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties, IPKI, and several smaller groups, might form a cabinet to the exclusion of themselves, negotiated with Masjumi for a broad coalition cabinet.

Ali Sastroamidjojo as formateur presented his proposed cabinet to Sukarno for ratification on March 16, but the president delayed ratification for four days because, according to "Harian Rakjat", he was dissatisfied with the composition and wanted to have included either Professor Purbodiningrat, a well-known fellow-traveller, or Sadjarwo, who for many years was a member of the BTI leadership - which Masjumi refused.¹ The PKI politbureau on March 18 welcomed Ali as formateur and the cabinet programme he put forward, but criticized the proposed inclusion of Masjumi and the weak attitude taken by PNI and NU towards Masjumi.² The politbureau approved Sukarno's hesitation over ratifying the proposed cabinet, and called on 'the democratic parties' to improve its composition. Feith reports that PKI

¹
HR, March 21, 1956.

²
HR, March 19, 1956.

tried to have Purbodiningrat, Sadjarwo or the pro-communist Hanafi included in the cabinet.¹ This sounds plausible as none of the three was openly a PKI member, and would therefore not raise violent objections from the non-Masjumi parties, while any of the three might have served as a listening post in the cabinet, ready to warn the Party of any impending government repression.

Ali's proposed cabinet was finally installed, unaltered, on March 24, 1956. It consisted of five PNI members, including Prime Minister Ali also in charge of the Ministry of Defence, five Masjumi members, five NU, two Protestant Party, two PSII, two Roman Catholic Party, one IPKI, one Perti, and one non-party. PKI could do no more than offer critical support, for opposition might have meant forfeiting the goodwill of PNI in particular, and might also have given Masjumi the opportunity to persuade the rest of the cabinet to pursue an anti-communist policy.

4. The Approach to Sukarno

The second Ali cabinet, which was to return its mandate on March 14, 1957, proved to be a turning point in Indonesian politics. Four major political develop-

¹

Feith, "Indonesian Politics", p.771.

ments occurred that forced the Aidit leadership to seek a basic alliance with Sukarno rather than with PNI.

The first development was the drastic decline in the prestige of the parliamentary system and of political parties in general. When the second Ali cabinet took office, the political parties were still the most important and decisive political forces. Many deficiencies in the actual practice of parliamentary democracy were recognized - for example, widespread corruption and the spoils system, the failure to promote economic development, and frequent cabinet changes due to disputes between and within the many parties - but hopes had been pinned on the general elections as a means of somehow removing them. Then, after the new cabinet was installed, and the new parliament two days later, nothing seemed to have changed. There were still the squabbling parties, the same old faces in the cabinet, the same economic gloom. As a result, there developed among the politically conscious Indonesians a widespread feeling that the parliamentary system - 'free fight liberalism' as Sukarno was to call it - had failed and must be replaced. The political parties did little to defend the parliamentary system.

The second major political development was closely related to the first. As the political parties virtually

surrendered their authority and admitted their inability to solve Indonesia's economic and political problems, two extra-parliamentary political forces rose to fill the power vacuum: Sukarno and the army. By the time the Ali cabinet resigned, these two political forces dwarfed the parties.

The third development was the removal from the central government of the last representatives of what PKI calls the reactionary force, which included Hatta, Masjumi and PSI. After Sukarno had made it plain that he no longer wanted Hatta as vice-president, Hatta resigned at midnight on November 30, 1956. Masjumi withdrew from the cabinet on January 9, 1957. With the removal from the central government of Hatta and Masjumi, who by and large represented much of the population outside Java, and the implacable opposition of Sukarno (and therefore PNI) and PKI to their return, important segments of the population of the outer islands came to feel increasingly that the government in Djakarta in no way represented their interests. This feeling was one of the factors which led many of the leaders of the outer islands to reject, with varying degrees of politeness, the authority of the central government.

The fourth development, also closely related to the others, was a political realignment by Sukarno. Until

the September 1955 elections, Sukarno had identified himself closely with the party he had helped establish, PNI. Then, at first hesitantly, in 1955 he began to seek the alliance of PKI. Two factors help explain his leaning towards the communists.

First, Sukarno felt that the hegemony of the political parties was drawing to a close, and he wished to diminish his identification with what had proved to be a corrupt, basically conservative, and clearly incompetent PNI. Sukarno may have felt that PKI was the only party able and willing to help him towards his major goal, 'the completion of the revolution'. What Sukarno conceives as the completion of the revolution is difficult to ascertain, but it includes maintaining the people in a state of nationalist fervour through mass actions towards the elimination of all imperialist (that is, Western) economic, cultural and political power in Indonesia. And PKI, which combined a vociferous anti-colonialism with an efficient organizational network, was the only party that could be of much assistance to him.

Second, particularly during the period of the second Ali cabinet when the end of parliamentary democracy was in sight, Sukarno sought allies to help counterbalance the other emerging political power, the army, which he viewed with suspicion as it included many persons who

would be glad to oust him. PNI, despite rare floutings of his wishes, was so dependent upon him for its mass support and his backing in political manoeuvres that he was sure it would stand by him whatever happened. As PNI was not strong enough to counter Masjumi and the army, Sukarno sought the alliance of the largest and best-organized party, PKI. PKI could collect enormous crowds for his speeches, and so apparently demonstrate to the army his great popularity and strength. The threat of bringing PKI into the cabinet or other governmental positions could also force concessions from the army. Sukarno reportedly believes that the growth of PKI can only add to his own strength, and that if the PKI leaders became truculent he could remove their mass support with one speech, as he did in September 1948.

The changing political situation created serious tactical problems for the Aidit leadership. As will be seen, PKI worked hard to assist the second Ali cabinet and thus to save parliamentary democracy or at least stave off its demise. But when it was clear that the regime would be drastically overhauled, PKI was forced to adapt its basic national united front policy to the special circumstances of a political situation in which the role of parliament would be greatly reduced, and in which the chief power centres would be the army on the

one hand and Sukarno on the other. The old parliamentary alliance might still serve a useful purpose, but a new alliance obviously had to be established with either the army or Sukarno in order to safeguard the existence of the Party. Within the army there arose loud voices advocating the abolition of all parties, and many prominent officers, both in the central command and in the regions, were outspokenly anti-communist. Therefore the PKI leaders, in private reluctantly, but in public eagerly, accepted Sukarno's proffered hand.

Alliance with Sukarno had clear drawbacks. It enabled him to consolidate his own power and proceed towards the creation of a one-man dictatorship or an oligarchy; but there was no alternative. The alliance with him would, however, have its advantages too. Not least, it would strengthen Sukarno's hand in his efforts to prevent a military dictatorship. The PKI leaders must also have presumed that the president's balancing game with the army and other enemies meant that in the last resort he would have to retain those political parties that provided him with support. If he eliminated them he would tilt the balance in favour of his extra-parliamentary political rivals. Another advantage was that the identification of PKI with Sukarno would greatly enhance the Party's popular prestige and

support, while his influence on PNI and NU would prevent those parties from taking an anti-communist line. Furthermore, Sukarno was primarily concerned with maintaining nationalist fervour, not with the economic development that possibly could have removed much of the basis of communist support.

The rapprochement between PKI and Sukarno was not sudden, but was the result of developments over several years.

Strong attacks on Sukarno had continued during the first few months after the Aidit leadership gained control of PKI.¹ Then, as the new form of the national united front was formulated and implemented, the attacks on him were halted when it was realized that he was a popular nationalist symbol and that he was opposed to Masjumi and PSI, the most ardent anti-communist parties. Alimin, at a ceremony on May 25, 1952 to celebrate the founding of PKI, even led cheers for Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, Kim Il Sung and ... Sukarno.²

In his August 17 speech in 1952, Sukarno, much to PKI's delight, pointed out that the transfer of sovereignty was neither complete nor unconditional, and that the fight against imperialism in Indonesia was as

¹

See above, p.490.

²

HR, May 26, 1952.

yet unfinished. At the time of the October 17, 1952 affair, Sukarno proved his opposition to military dictatorship and was instrumental in the removal of PSI members and sympathizers from important posts in the army and the Ministry of Defence. But, with the memory still fresh in their minds of Sukarno's alliance with the anti-communists at the time of the Madiun rebellion and during the Sukiman cabinet, the PKI leaders still could not regard him as a true political ally. In November 1952 he was categorized with the old group of intellectuals who had 'ceased to be progressive the moment they themselves occupied places of leadership in society', who defended the status quo and were afraid of the revolutionary forces, and 'who, in general, can at the most be neutralized, especially in revolutionary times'.¹

During the first Ali cabinet, however, Sukarno's actions opened the possibility that he might become an important ally for PKI. It was partly due to Sukarno's intervention that Masjumi and PSI were excluded from the cabinet, and he did his utmost to defend the cabinet, even accusing its opponents of being foreign agents. On August 17, 1953 he outspokenly attacked the Darul Islam

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"Bekerdja dikalangan Intelektuil" (Working among the Intellectuals), BM, October-November 1952, pp.121-2.

as an enemy of the state and people, which the government had previously been afraid to do. And from December 1954 he began to advocate national unity specifically embracing the communists. In that month he proposed a congress to include all parties and tendencies in order to create the power with which to liberate West Irian. The formation of the congress was left to the parties. Masjumi, and the two PSI Christian parties refused to cooperate from the beginning, and PNI withdrew in about July 1955, after which the congress organization fell under communist control. Although the congress never came to anything important, the very idea of such a congress, which would bring the parties together, increase nationalist, anti-Dutch agitation, and strengthen the identification of PKI with Sukarno's charisma, was most attractive to the PKI leaders.

Sukarno's actions during the Burhanudin Harahap cabinet further increased PKI's readiness for and decreased its fear of alliance with him. He made his opposition to the cabinet quite clear, intervened in a dispute among airforce officers in order to save the pro-communist airforce chief, and prior to the Constituent Assembly elections toured the country speaking on West Irian and Pantjasila. More than this, he expressed his belief that:

It is ... illogical that the Indonesian Communist Party, whose ideology and ideals are supported by six million people, should be excluded from the government.¹

On January 15, 1956, he told the mass rally against colonialism that had been addressed by Ali, Aidit and PSII's Arudji Kartawinata:

Now facing me is the Triple-A: Ali-Arudji-Aidit ... The present Triple-A is an anti-imperialist Triple-A, an anti-colonial Triple-A, a Triple-A defending the people's rights. This makes me happy, this is why my heart is alight to receive the present Triple-A.

This Triple-A represents three groupings. As has just been said by Mr. Dipa Nusantara Aidit, your giant meeting is indisputable proof that there can be Moslem-nationalist-communist unity.

For 37 years I have worked for unity. Therefore I am happy to see unity now created ... How can I, who have worked for unity for 37 years, how can I say, 'Heh, Indonesian people, unite, unite, but twenty per cent, sixteen millions, that is, the communists, are not included ...'? Can we create unity while bungling twenty per cent, sixteen millions, the communists, down a mouse-hole?²

Then, at the time of the formation of the second Ali cabinet, Sukarno, as has been seen, is said to have

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Boyd R. Compton, Indonesia, 1955, Institute of Current World Affairs Report, New York, 1956, p.11.

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HR, January 16, 1956. Sukarno presumably included in the figure of sixteen million communists the families of the six million who voted for PKI in the 1955 general elections.

delayed endorsement of the cabinet while he unsuccessfully attempted to have several fellow-travellers included in it.

The ground was therefore prepared for the shift in PKI's basic alliance from PNI to Sukarno. The ideal situation for PKI would have been the continuation of parliamentary democracy and the paramount role of the parties, but also an alliance with Sukarno. When this was impossible because of the changed political situation, the PKI leaders threw in their lot with the president.

The second Ali cabinet was soon faced with grave insubordination from prominent army officers.¹ The first major affront to the government occurred on August 13, 1956, when the Foreign Minister, Ruslan Abdulgani of PNI, was arrested by the West Java military commander on charges of corruption. In November, Colonel Zulkifli Lubis of the central army command planned an unsuccessful coup. And on December 20 the first of the regional councils in defiance of Djakarta's authority was set up

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For an account of the army officers' grievances against the government, see Justus Maria van der Kroef, "Instability in Indonesia", Far Eastern Survey, April 1957, vol. XXVI, no. 4, pp. 49-62. For a quite full chronology up to September 1957 of the disputes between the regional army commanders and the central government, see Report on Indonesia, August-October 1957, pp. 11-25.

when former members of the long-demobilized Banteng Division, led by Lt. Colonel Achmad Husein, took over the government of Central Sumatra. Two days later, Colonel Simbolon, the army commander in North Sumatra, announced that he had taken over the government in this region and that he refused to recognize the Ali government. The central government acted quickly and successfully against Simbolon, replacing him by his second-in-command who effected a counter-coup on December 27. This did not deter other regional commanders. On March 2, 1957, Lt. Colonel Sumual took over the government of East Indonesia; and, after some months of rumblings, the military commander of South Sumatra did likewise in his area on March 9.

PKI's fear of the army was justified by the arrest of members of the Party and its mass organizations by the councils established by the dissident army commanders. PKI was therefore the first party militantly to oppose the regional councils. On December 23, 1956 the PKI politbureau issued a statement denouncing Husein's action as 'anti-democratic' and Simbolon's as 'rebellion'.¹

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PKI, "Bersatu dan Bantu Pemerintah untuk Mengatasi Peristiwa Sumatera Tengah dan Sumatera Utara" (Unite and Assist the Government to Overcome the Central and North Sumatra Affairs), HR, December 24, 1956.

The politbureau blamed Masjumi and PSI for the creation of the councils and for Lubis' attempted coup, and declared that the regional commanders' action 'divides and stabs the Indonesian Republic from within; in this way they directly benefit the Dutch and American imperialists'. Finally, the politbureau called on the people to assist the government and armed forces in settling the two Sumatran affairs.

At the same time as the acts of insubordination by the regional army commanders, the government coalition was falling apart. On December 26, 1956, the small party IPKI, which had close ties with many high army officers, withdrew from the government; on December 30, the Protestant Party called for the dissolution of the cabinet; and on January 9, 1957, Masjumi withdrew into the opposition.¹ Many leaders of the army as well as Masjumi and many smaller parties sought a solution to the crisis in a fresh period of cooperation between Sukarno and Hatta, and there was much talk of making Hatta Prime Minister. This prospect was a grim one for PKI which at once claimed that the withdrawal of Masjumi actually strengthened the government.² On January 11, 1957,

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For the official Masjumi explanation of its withdrawal, see Suara STII (Voice of STII), January 1957, pp.6-7.

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HR, January 11, 1957.

Aidit expressed PKI's continued support for the government and declared that the Party would not ask for cabinet posts.¹ On February 7, a PKI member told parliament that the resignation of the cabinet would mean capitulation before the 'military coup plot'.² Across the country PNI, PKI and the communist mass organizations held meetings in support of the government.

At this point Sukarno announced his concept for solving Indonesia's political troubles, and PKI turned to the president as the only political force capable of preventing the emergence of either military dictatorship or a rightwing anti-communist government headed by Hatta. After the combined opposition of all political parties except Murba to his suggestion of October 28, 1956 to 'dream away the existence of so many parties', Sukarno on February 21, 1957, announced his long-awaited concept. It contained two main points: a 'mutual-cooperation' cabinet that would reflect the parties' representation in parliament and would thus eliminate opposition; and a National Council that would include representatives from all important functional groups in society, would advise the cabinet in its work, and would be headed by himself. In answer to the question why communists

¹ HR, January 12, 1957.

² HR, February 8, 1957.

should be included, he replied that a party that had won six million votes could not be ignored, and that 'everybody is needed in the work towards national progress'.¹ The concept was Sukarno's first step towards 'guided democracy'.

The PKI leaders gave Sukarno's concept a joyous welcome² because it was a rebuff to proposals for an army-led or Hatta-led cabinet, and because it promised early communist participation in the cabinet, something that the alliance with PNI had notably failed to produce. For Sukarno's benefit, and perhaps as justification to ordinary members of the Party's new alliance with a highly dubious 'democrat', the politbureau claimed that:

the Western system of democracy carried out in Indonesia up to the present has been harmful to the development of the revolutionary and democratic movement,

that the Western system had proved unable to solve the fundamental problems in society, and that it had been used by 'the foreign imperialists and their puppets within the country' to play off one group against another.³ The politbureau claimed that the concept in

¹ TI, February 22, 1957.

² HR, February 18, 1957.

³ PKI, "Bung Karno's Concept Answers the Urgent Political Problems Faced by the Indonesian People Today", in supplement to RI, February 1957, pp.9-11.

no way disturbed the party system or the parliamentary system, and that it permitted the development of democracy. It must already have been evident, however, that the future of political democracy was severely limited.

While Masjumi expressed opposition to the concept, and succeeded in persuading NU, PSII, PIR and the Roman Catholic Party to issue a joint statement rejecting it, and while PNI hesitated over its choice of a policy, the PKI leaders launched into feverish activity to arouse mass support for Sukarno's proposal. An Action Committee of Support for Bung Karno's Concept was immediately established in Djakarta with communist Suharto Rebo as chairman. Demonstrations and rallies were organized throughout the country to express support for the concept. The largest meeting was organized in Djakarta only three days after the official announcement of the concept, when a million people were gathered together.

The government finally resigned on March 14, having been unable to cope with the regional acts of insubordination and having lost the support of many of the original member parties. Sukarno placed the whole country under a state of war and siege which gave great powers to the army commanders in their capacity as war

administrators. Sukarno attacked those who wished to exclude PKI from a coalition government, commenting 'They want me to ride a horse, but insist that they must first chop off one foot of the horse. I cannot and will not ride a three-footed horse.'¹ SOBSI, probably made brave by expressed or presumed support from Sukarno, led a 24-hour strike in South Sumatra on March 18 to demand the restoration of civil government there.² On the following day the SOBSI leaders told formateur Suwirjo that if a cabinet were formed including Masjumi but not PKI, 'SOBSI will not hesitate and is always in readiness to lead a total strike action all over Indonesia.'³

PKI wanted Suwirjo to succeed because the alternatives, ranging from Hatta to Sukarno as formateur, were much less attractive. Aidit therefore told Suwirjo that PKI accepted his proposed programme, that PKI would support a cabinet based on PNI and NU, and that PKI would demand a mutual-cooperation cabinet only if Masjumi was brought into the next cabinet.⁴ The PKI leaders

¹ New Age (weekly, New Delhi), April 21, 1957, p.12.

² ITUN, March 1957, pp.4-5.

³ ITUN, March 1957, p.6. In response to this threat, the Djakarta military command announced that severe action would be taken against any political strike; TI, March 28, 1957.

⁴ HR, March 22, 1957.

knew that the army and NU were strongly opposed to communist participation in the cabinet, and so they renounced PKI's claim in order to encourage NU to accept another cabinet that excluded both PKI and Masjumi. But NU was adamant in its insistence on including Masjumi, and Suwirjo returned his mandate on April 2. Two days later Sukarno appointed himself, 'citizen Sukarno', as formateur of an 'emergency extra-parliamentary business cabinet'. Masjumi at once condemned Sukarno's action as illegal, but PKI called on 'the entire people and armed forces to give the fullest assistance to our President-Supreme Commander'.¹ On April 7, the polit-bureau declared Sukarno's action to be fully legal, but also raised the slogan 'prevent all abuses of the state of war and siege'.²

The new cabinet, the Djuanda cabinet, was installed on April 9. It included four PNI members, four NU, two Masjumi, one each from PSII, IPKI, SKI, Murba and the Protestant Party, and eight non-party persons. Masjumi rejected the cabinet outright as unconstitutional and expelled its two members who had joined the cabinet; NU refused to identify itself with the cabinet, but

¹ Editorial, HR, April 5, 1957.

² RI, April 1957, pp.8-9.

permitted its members to participate as individuals. Significantly, Sukarno did not choose any of the PNI leaders as ministers, and the 23 cabinet members were almost all political nonentities who owed their position to the president and who would be amenable to Sukarno's commands.

Within the new cabinet, PKI could count at least five 'progressives' who were considered at least quite friendly towards the Party: Sudibjo, the PSII Minister of Information, Sadjarwo, ex-BTI Minister of Agriculture, Prijono, Murba Minister of Education and Culture, Chairul Saleh, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and Hanafi, the Minister for the Mobilization of the National Strength for Reconstruction.

5. Alliance with Sukarno

The period of the Djuanda cabinet, from April 9, 1957 to July 6, 1959, marked the transition from parliamentary democracy to guided democracy, that is, to the formal assumption of power by Sukarno. In April 1957, however, Sukarno still preferred to rule indirectly and once he had formed the cabinet stepped back into the guise of constitutional president. Prime Minister Djuanda declared that although he led an 'extra-parliamentary business cabinet' he felt he was responsible to parliament.

One of the first major acts of the Djuanda cabinet heartened PKI and indicated that Sukarno might truly be aiming at a mutual-cooperation cabinet and not just talking about one in order to win communist support. On July 12, 1957, the National Council was installed as an adviser to the cabinet. Its forty-five members represented what Sukarno calls 'functional groups',¹ and included nine persons who were either communist or known to be sympathetic to PKI. The newspaper "Indonesia Raja" reported that the president's original list of members had been mostly 'leftists', but that it had been modified by the cabinet.²

In April 1957, Aidit explained that the Djuanda cabinet was not the 100 per cent implementation of Sukarno's concept, but that 'it is a phase which, according to the hard facts of the situation, must be traversed before 100 per cent implementation'.³ While supporting the cabinet, PKI raised as its major slogan, 'Implement

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The 'functional groups' represented in the national council were: workers, peasants, intellectuals, youth, national industrialists, artists, citizens of foreign descent, reporters, women, religious groups (Moslem, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Bali-Hindu), the generation of 1945, the armed forces (including the police), the attorney-general, the cabinet, and the regions.

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Quoted in TI, June 17, 1957.

3

HR, April 15, 1957.

Bung Karno's Concept 100 Per Cent!' Efforts were made to identify the Party as closely as possible with the president. Communist policies, programmes and requests came to be justified by suitable quotations from Sukarno's speeches and writings of thirty years. This close identification served several purposes at that time. It strengthened Sukarno's friendship with PKI, and it made it very difficult for PKI's opponents to attack the Party without appearing to attack the president. Furthermore, it permitted PKI to exploit his tremendous personal appeal in order to win votes in the local elections held from June to November 1957 in Java, and then in some of the outer regions.

PKI's identification with Sukarno played some part in enabling the Party to emerge as the largest party in the local elections. In Java, the communist vote was increased from 5,477,707 in September 1955 to 7,514,197. PKI was now the largest party in Central Java, and the second largest in the other regions of Java.¹ It appeared that at least some of the communist gains were made at the expense of PNI.

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In the September 1955 parliamentary elections, PKI had been the second largest party in Central and East Java, the third in West Java, and the fourth in Djakarta Raja. For a brief discussion of the 1955 and 1957 election results, see above, pp.469-78.

The communist gains caused much resentment among the other political parties. As soon as the results of the first, the Djakarta Raja, elections were known, a "Harian Rakjat" editorial stated in reply to charges that PKI-PNI-NU cooperation was benefiting only PKI:

PKI does not like it if cooperation benefits only the other side, but neither does PKI like it if cooperation benefits only its own side. This is the elementary principle of cooperation: the principle of equal status and mutual benefit.¹

Aidit advised PNI and NU that they had lost votes because they had not been resolute enough in adhering to the path of democracy and unity with the people, nor in attacking the reactionaries.² He said that the results showed 'a shift to the left of the Indonesian people', and that only parties that realized this and also swung left would gain the people's confidence.

Some of the regional leaders of PNI in particular were angered by PKI's electoral gains. First the Central Java section of the party and then the East Java, North Sumatra and West Java sections instructed their branches to cease cooperation with PKI.³ Worse still for PKI, on August 10, 1957, the PNI secretary-general declared PNI's readiness to cooperate with

¹ HR, June 27, 1957.

² HR, June 28, 1957.

³ TI, November 1 and 6, 1957; February 5, 1958.

Masjumi and NU 'in the interest of the defence of democratic principles',¹ and although PNI-Masjumi cooperation did not materialize on a national level, the PNI regional councils in West and Central Java and North Sumatra expressed their desire for such cooperation.² PNI national and local leaders attacked PKI as a Soviet tool, while the PNI newspaper on November 14 declared that PKI was trying to create a 'second Yenan' in East Sumatra as a prelude to an armed takeover of all Indonesia.³ NU leaders also said harsh things about PKI.⁴

In the developing situation, in which the regional army-led councils were taking stern anti-communist measures at the same time as apparently strengthening their position vis-a-vis the central government, and in which important elements in PNI and NU were becoming ever more critical of PKI and were seemingly moving towards a

¹ TI, August 12, 1957.

² TI, November 1 and 6, and December 28, 1957.

³ Editorial, Suluh Indonesia, November 14, 1957.

⁴ For example, Abdulwahab, a member of the NU executive council, was reported as saying that PKI's advances were bringing Indonesia close to civil war, and as demanding that PKI and other communist organizations be outlawed; Justus Maria van der Kroef, "Disunited Indonesia", Far Eastern Survey, part I, April 1958, vol. XXVII, no. 4, pp. 57-8.

rapprochement with Masjumi, the PKI leaders could only maintain their support of the government and endeavour to move even closer to Sukarno.

Lavish praise of Sukarno became a regular feature of PKI statements and speeches, and is widely believed to have made a favourable impression on the flattery-loving president. In August 1957, when Sukarno launched a 'New Life Movement', a vaguely defined movement to renovate the life of the Indonesian people, the PKI central committee at once ordered all Party leaders in the regions to join in it.¹ On August 19, Aidit was among the president's party which did a little but much publicized work in cleaning one of Djakarta's markets. On October 20, Aidit declared PKI's acceptance of the Pantjasila unchanged as the basis of the state.² As Sukarno created the Pantjasila and was currently striving to have it accepted by the Constituent Assembly, PKI's acceptance of it unchanged, despite objections to the first sila, the belief in God the Almighty, was a gesture of friendship towards the president.

Apart from praising Sukarno and giving support to his ideas and to the government he had appointed, the PKI

¹ HR, August 6, 1957.

² RI, October-November 1957, pp.19-20.

leaders also increased their attacks on the common enemies, the army-led regional councils, Masjumi and PSI. The increasingly derogatory attacks on the councils was illustrated by a booklet, written by the communist leader in West Sumatra, which attacked 'the fascism of the "Banteng Council - PSI"' for its 'little warlord government', its protection of Dutch capital, and its efforts to bring down both Sukarno and the cabinet.¹ PKI opposition to the councils was not limited to words. A 24-hour general strike was launched by SOBSI against the Garuda Council in South Sumatra on March 18, 1957, and on August 21, PKI organized a giant rally in Bukit Tinggi, the capital of West Sumatra, in protest against the Banteng Council. These were the only non-verbal actions taken by political parties against the councils, and afforded evidence for Sukarno that PKI would stand bravely at his side in his dispute with the councils.

Communist attacks on Masjumi and PSI continued, especially for their alleged complicity in the creation of the regional councils. In November 1957, both "Harian Rakjat" and another communist newspaper in

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Nursuhud, Menjingskap Tabir 'Dewan-Banteng' (Lifting the Banteng Council's Curtain), Djakarta, 1958, 36 p. The Banteng Council was the council established in Central Sumatra by Lieutenant-Colonel Husein.

Djakarta, "Bintang Timur", published a report from China which had originated in the Indian periodical "Blitz" and which linked Masjumi and PSI with 'the American plot to overthrow the Sukarno regime'.¹ The report also claimed that Masjumi had requested Taiwan to furnish more assistance to the Darul Islam rebels.

An anomaly in PKI's political line was a temporary halt towards the end of 1957 in attacks on Hatta. This occurred for one of two reasons, or for a combination of both. First, a conference of national and regional military and civilian leaders, held at the beginning of September, had shown that many important persons wanted renewed cooperation between Sukarno and Hatta. The possibility of a new period of cooperation between the two seemed possible, and PKI, unsure of Sukarno's intentions or his ability to keep Hatta out of a top government post, played safe by not antagonizing Hatta too much. Second, Hatta had visited China in October, and not only had been well received by the Chinese leaders but had also made favourable comments on China's development under communist rule. PKI's leaders might have felt that he had experienced a genuine change of heart, or they might have wished not to embarrass the

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Reported in TI, November 22 and 28, 1957.

Chinese government or themselves by attacks on him at that time. From September attacks on Hatta were dropped, and Lukman, speaking in parliament on a resolution to establish a commission to re-create the Sukarno-Hatta duumvirate, expressed support for the resolution and even his gratitude that there were meeting points in the views of Hatta and the Party.¹ Fortunately for PKI, events were to take a rapid turn which irrevocably separated Hatta from Sukarno and strengthened Sukarno's hand sufficiently so that he could continue to ignore Hatta.

It should be noted that at the same time as it gave support to the Djuanda cabinet, PKI also made sufficient criticisms of the government in order still to present itself to its members and society at large as a critical and revolutionary party. SOBSI strongly criticized a regulation of August 24, 1957 which banned all strikes in 'vital' industries, enterprises and offices.² On August 27, parliament voted 94 to 81 against a government draft state of emergency law and for amendments proposed by PKI.³ A popular campaign was waged to urge the

¹ TI, December 2, 1957.

² RI, September 1957, pp.28-9.

³ RI, September 1957, pp.15-16.

government to implement SOBSI and BTI proposals for the distribution of rice at low prices, and in October "Harian Rakjat" called on the government to end the ban by local and regional army commanders on the shipment of rice from their areas.¹ Towards the end of the year, communist representatives in parliament criticized the government's budget for its low allocations for such as the Ministry of Education and Culture, thus implying that expenditure on the armed forces was too high.² Such criticism was, however, kept very much in check so that it would not alienate the government or its supporters, or provoke repression by local army commanders.

Towards the end of 1957 an anti-Dutch campaign spread across Indonesia in preparation for the United Nations' discussion of the West Irian question at the end of November. In the second week of November, Sukarno went so far as to warn that if the United Nations did not back Indonesia's claim for West Irian, then Indonesia might use methods that 'would startle the world' in order to win West Irian. On November 18, Sukarno and several political leaders including Aidit addressed a Liberate

¹ Editorial, HR, October 12, 1957.

² RI, December 1957, p.25.

West Irian rally in Djakarta. The rally endorsed a resolution which demanded that if the United Nations did not uphold Indonesia's claim, then the government should nationalize the vital enterprises owned by the Dutch and accelerate the participation of Indonesians in the management of all Dutch enterprises.¹ When the United Nations failed to give the necessary two-thirds vote in favour of the Indonesian claim, the government on December 1 ordered a general strike for the following day against all Dutch enterprises. Local boycotts against Dutch companies and nationals had already begun in different parts of Indonesia. On December 3, workers began taking over Dutch concerns.

The extent to which PKI was responsible for the course of events which led to the take-over of all Dutch enterprises is difficult to ascertain. Certainly the communists were happy to encourage or foment anti-Dutch feelings, and communist mass organizations had called for stern measures and boycotts, while PKI gave its support to the government's threat to take 'the other road' to liberate West Irian. On October 21, however, the "Harian Rakjat" editorial, while it agreed that 'clear measures must be begun' against Dutch capital,

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HR, November 19, 1957.

pointed out that Indonesia was in no position to confiscate at one stroke all Dutch capital in the country.¹ On November 4, the central committee issued a statement by Aidit which also spoke vaguely of 'taking action in proportion to the Dutch stubborn and insolent attitude', but put forward no concrete proposals for action. It would appear that Sukarno was one if not the prime mover in the campaign to seize all Dutch enterprises,² and that PKI gladly followed him, though always careful never to get one step ahead in case that would bring retribution. The actual take-over was effected by the trade unions, of which the majority belonged to SOBSI.

Hearsay has it that many members of the cabinet, and probably including Djuanda, were opposed to such drastic action against the Dutch partly because they feared the economic disruption that was expected to ensue. But once the take-over had taken place they were presented with a fait accompli that they had to support. The first government reaction to the workers' take-over was

¹ HR, October 21, 1957.

² Sukarno told Louis Fischer that he had given the order for the take-over and that he had urged the confiscation of Dutch properties as early as 1950 when he had been opposed by the Natsir cabinet; Louis Fischer, The Story of Indonesia, London, 1959, p.300.

to declare all Dutch enterprises to be under government management. The PKI leaders, probably afraid that the workers' action might frighten the national bourgeoisie and the army into an alliance with Masjumi, called on the workers in the seized enterprises to avoid 'adventurist' acts, to maintain firm work discipline, to assist the new management 'with all their energy', and to help prevent sabotage.¹ On December 13, Nasution, as army chief of staff, ordered the military to take over and supervise directly in the name of the Republic all Dutch enterprises - a measure that PKI welcomed as 'good'.² PKI also suggested that 'In order to prevent sabotage, to increase production and to raise quality it would be very wise' for the government to introduce worker participation in the management councils of the enterprises.³ This the army refused to countenance.

Criticism of the take-over, which came from Hatta and Masjumi, mostly condemned the lack of preparation which was resulting in economic disorder. PKI, in order

¹ Editorial, HR, December 7, 1957.

² PKI, "Memasuki Tahun 1958 dengan Fase Baru Perdjjuangan Anti-Kolonialisme" (Entering 1958 with a New Phase in the Anti-Colonial Struggle), BM, January 1958, p.6.

³ Loc.cit.

to demonstrate its support for the government and to pursue its basic policy of isolating the reactionaries, denounced all opponents of the government as traitors,¹ and had Abulhajjat, a 'non-party' member of parliament elected on the PKI list, introduce a motion of confidence in the sagacity of the government's efforts to free West Irian. The motion was carried on February 28, 1958 by 95 votes to 20, with PNI, NU and PKI voting for, Masjumi and PSI against, and IPKI and the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties abstaining.² Meanwhile the PRRI-Permesta rebellion had broken out.

An assassination attempt on Sukarno on November 30, 1957 marked the end of efforts at rapprochement between Sukarno and his Djuanda cabinet on the one hand and the dissident regional councils on the other. Sukarno left on a forty-day 'rest tour' of the world on January 6, 1958. While he was away the Banteng Council on February 10 presented the central government with a five-day ultimatum either to withdraw the mandate of the Djuanda cabinet and designate Hatta and the Sultan of Jogjakarta as formateurs, or to see the establishment of a separate state in Central Sumatra. Next day the cabinet rejected the ultimatum and dishonourably discharged the leading

¹ Ibid., p.11.

² HR., March 1, 1958.

army officers who had drawn up the ultimatum. The rebel government was announced on February 15. Sukarno returned to Indonesia on the following day and was apparently the chief voice demanding stern measures against the rebels. Aidit, on the 17th, called for immediate and firm action against the 'corrupt and treacherous "revolutionary government"' and against its supporters.¹ His call was echoed by the communist mass organizations. Both PNI and NU also demanded the speedy elimination of the rebels.

The central government acted with surprising speed. Large numbers of troops landed in East Sumatra on March 7, and on the west coast of Sumatra on April 17. The rebel forces were quickly pushed into the jungle where they have continued to exist as guerrilla bands. PKI not only gave verbal support to the central government, but also claimed that in Central Sumatra members of the Party and of Pemuda Rakjat took to the hills and actively fought the rebels.² Widespread reports indicate that the communists served as sources of intelligence for the advancing government troops and were of assistance in

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RI, March 1958, p.7.

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This claim was made to me by PKI and Pemuda Rakjat cadres. See also the reference to 'people's guerrillas' fighting the PRRI-Permesta rebels, in PKI, 40 Tahun PKI, p.87.

helping re-establish an administration in the cleared areas. Persons from North Sulawesi also reported that communists from Tondano organized guerrilla units to harass the Permesta rebels there. Communist support to the government forces can have been of only peripheral importance, but it did demonstrate PKI's support for the Djakarta regime. It also resulted in the government forces tolerating organizational activities by PKI and its mass organizations in the cleared areas at a time when all political activity was theoretically banned there.¹

In the heat of the first weeks of the rebellion, PKI was unwilling to make criticisms of the government. The central committee, in its meeting from March 31 to April 3, 1958, blamed the rising price of rice on the rebels, Kuomintang agents, commission agents and landlords - but not on the government.² When a cabinet reshuffle occurred in June 1958, Aidit pledged even

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See above, p.162, for PKI's claim that during the period from August 1956 to August 1959 it increased membership by 38 per cent in West Sumatra and 40 per cent in North Sulawesi.

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"Resolusi tentang Penurunan Harga Beras" (Resolution on Lowering the Price of Rice), BM, March-April 1958, p.178.

stronger support.¹ Once the danger of the rebellion was past, however, PKI resumed its policy of support plus criticism. Individual government measures that received criticism included the alien tax act, of July 1958, which imposed a severe head tax on all aliens, which in effect meant on the Chinese; the foreign investments act, of September, which if implemented would have established conditions for the regulated inflow of foreign private capital; the 1959 budget; and a decree of May 1959 which stated that licences for foreign-owned, that is, Chinese-owned, shops in all villages and sub-district capitals would be withdrawn by the end of 1959.

The economic situation gave the Party the greatest opportunity for criticism of the government that would be of broad popular appeal. The take-over of Dutch enterprises had caused considerable economic disruption, and then the rebellion caused even more. Enormous quantities of new money were printed to finance the anti-rebel operations, and inflation rocketed. From the beginning of September 1958, SOBSI waged a campaign to prevent increases in the price of rice. At the end of October,

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D.N. Aidit, "Pidato dihadapan Kongres ke-V Partai Persatuan Sosialis Djerman" (Speech before the Fifth Congress of the German Socialist Unity Party), BM, August 1958, pp.384-5.

Lukman warned the government that unless it wished to face great opposition inside and outside parliament, then it should cancel proposals to further increase the official price of rice¹ - which the government did on November 5. When the SOBSI national council met from December 22 to 28, 1958, it pointed to the confused nature of the general economic situation and of state finances, and to the marked deterioration in the workers' living standards.² Instead of blaming only the rebels, the imperialists and the corrupt, the council attributed the situation in part to the government's inadequate economic and financial policies.

The Aidit leadership was presumably forced to criticize the government or else risk losing the support of its cadres and the populace in general who were directly suffering the deteriorating economic conditions. As formerly and in the future, however, PKI had to tread warily lest its criticisms became so harsh as to alienate the ruling groups and drive them towards the anti-communists.

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HR, November 1, 1958.

²

"Resolution on the General Report of the Central Bureau of SOBSI", ITUN, January 1959, p.3.

The rapid removal of the PRRI-Permesta as a threat to the central government greatly strengthened the position of both Sukarno and the central army leadership, and enabled the former to move further towards guided democracy, the latter towards greater participation in government. Parliamentary democracy suffered in the middle and was finally eliminated.

PKI was without the strength to effect any major change in the course of political events, but decided on a line that was designed to try to influence the course as far as possible away from dictatorship, and yet at the same time retain Sukarno's now all-important protection and not bring down army repression. This line, which was to continue beyond the end of the Aidit leadership's first ten years in control of PKI, has consisted of rearguard action in defence of parliamentary democracy and the party system, promotion of Sukarno's main policy decisions (though at the same time trying to influence them along channels more desirable to PKI), and the expression of strong opposition to dictatorship, military dictatorship in particular.

The major political force which was most intolerant of the political parties and of the parliamentary system was the army. Army participation in extra-military affairs had been greatly increased under the state of war

and siege decree of March 14, 1957 by which the army commanders had become war administrators. Then, beginning in June 1957, the army established cooperation committees between the army and the functional groups, such as youth, workers, peasants and women, which contained all existing mass organizations in their respective fields and were designed primarily so that the army could keep watch and some control over the functional groups. When the Dutch enterprises had been seized, army officers entered their management, and on February 10, 1958 an army-led National Front for the Liberation of West Irian was established to channel all activities in the campaign. It looked possible at first that the Front might become a powerful organization under army control, but, reportedly due to Sukarno's opposition, it failed to become significant. As of May Day 1958, the army brought the May Day trade union rallies under control, banning parades and vetting the texts of speeches. It was also suspected by the communists that the army was behind the August 24, 1957 ban on strikes in 'vital' enterprises and offices, and also the postponement, announced on September 22, 1958, of the 1959 general elections.

The PKI leaders naturally viewed with alarm the growing army participation in non-military affairs,

especially as the army was, by and large, anti-communist, and as there were rumours that many important officers wanted a military dictatorship. Therefore, at the same time as hailing the eternal unity of the army-people 'dwitunggal' (two-in-one), PKI waged an intensive campaign among Party members to warn against the fascist danger presented by the army, and publicly opposed army 'interference' in non-military affairs. The first outspoken opposition to army interference was made by both PKI and SOBSI in November 1958.

Aidit, speaking to the central committee on November 19, 1958, said that the people were willing to give certain powers to the armed forces so long as those powers were not misused, but he complained of 'the interference by certain officers in economic, financial and governmental policy matters'.¹

In brief, the growing interference of certain officers in economic and financial matters can lead to demoralization, can give birth to warlords, and is a threat to the purity of the patriotic armed forces of the Republic.

Aidit also attacked the army's use of the state of war and siege to restrict democratic liberties by such

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D.N. Aidit, "Bersatu Menempuh Djalan Demokrasi Terpimpin Menuju Pelaksanaan Konsepsi Presiden Sukarno 100%" (Unite Along the Road of Guided Democracy towards the 100% Implementation of President Sukarno's Concept), HR, November 20, 1958.

measures as the prohibition of political meetings and the prohibition of strikes. Aidit's words were echoed by Njono, the SOBSI secretary-general, on November 29.¹ The PKI central committee's New Year message, issued on December 31, 1958, went further to state that the communists must resist all efforts towards the creation of a military dictatorship.²

During December 1958, the extension of the state of war and siege for another year was accepted unanimously by parliament, probably because opposition would have been futile and might have antagonized the army into increased pressure for an end to parliamentary activities. Shortly afterwards, at the beginning of 1959, PKI reportedly struck a blow which threatened to remove Nasution from his post as army chief when it leaked the news of massive army illegal trade dealings through Tandjong Priok, the port of Djakarta.³ Nasution should have taken the blame, but it was placed on officers around him who were moved to other posts. If this report is correct, it would mean that PKI greatly antagonized the

¹ ITUN, December 1958, pp.7-8.

² HR, December 31, 1958.

³ My source for this report was a prominent politician, but one who must remain anonymous.

army leadership but at the same time earned the thanks of Sukarno who was attempting to reduce the power and prestige of the central army command.

Communist opposition to the army became more courageous during the first months of 1959, and one suspects that the courage derived from Sukarno's connivance. On January 31, Lukman stated the Party's opposition to the appointment to parliament of unelected representatives of the armed forces,¹ while in May Aidit declared that:

There has never yet been, nor will there ever be, anything to prove that a military dictatorship can save the people and further advance world developments.

If a military dictatorship were established, Aidit warned, then the Indonesian communists would fight it.²

The PKI fear of and shadow boxing with the army forced the Party to a greater reliance on Sukarno as its protector against the military. The essential nature of the alliance in turn compelled PKI to support Sukarno's moves towards guided democracy, while at the same time pleading for the maintenance of the party system and for the greatest possible authority for parliament.

¹ HR, February 4, 1959.

² D.N. Aidit, "Building the Organization is Important, but Building Ideology is Even More Important", supplement to RI, June-July 1959, pp.4-5.

In a statement issued on October 24, 1958, Aidit attempted to show that support of guided democracy was 'the most revolutionary policy'.¹ He acknowledged that liberal democracy had failed to solve Indonesia's major problems and was associated with corruption and bureaucracy. As an alternative, PKI accepted guided democracy on the understanding that it was opposed to both dictatorship and liberalism. He then defined the anti-liberal aspects of guided democracy in the political field as the 100 per cent implementation of Sukarno's concept, that is, the creation of a cabinet based on proportional representation; and in the economic field as building the state sector of the economy to a dominant position. Aidit claimed that only Sukarno should be the guide in guided democracy, and 'not as a dictator, but as a democrat who resolutely observes the party system and the rights of parliament'. Sukarno would require special rights in order to guide, but Aidit insisted that this was 'The only way to defeat military or individual dictatorship on the one hand, and to defeat liberalism on the other', the only way to bring Sukarno's concept into existence.

¹

D.N. Aidit, "Mendukung Demokrasi Terpimpin Adalah Politik jang Paling Revolusioner" (To Support Guided Democracy is the Most Revolutionary Policy), HR, October 25, 1958.

Just what Sukarno meant by guided democracy had not been revealed, and here Aidit was attempting to formulate a definition for the president and then to use the Party and its mass organizations to popularize it. Aidit's definition involved relinquishing a little of democracy in order not to antagonize Sukarno or strengthen the hand of those demanding the complete abolition of the party and parliamentary system. In short, an attempt at a tactical retreat to a position chosen by the Party. But the retreat was to continue. At the end of December 1958 and in January 1959, the PKI leaders were vocal in their defence of parliament. They praised it for the record amount of work done in 1958, spoke of 'the great prestige of parliament', and declared that 'Only fascists and foul thieves do not respect a parliament chosen by the people.'¹ On January 11, 1959, however, when Sukarno bluntly asked for PKI's opinion of his proposal for the inclusion of functional groups in parliament, Aidit was forced to declare the Party's support 'in principle'.²

On February 19, 1959, the cabinet reached important decisions on the implementation of guided democracy.

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HR, December 31, 1958; January 3, 1959.

2

HR, January 12, 1959.

The cabinet decided first, to ask the Constituent Assembly to restore the 1945 constitution,¹ second, to introduce an act to simplify the party system, third, that functional groups would be included as every second candidate in all electoral lists, with the armed forces receiving 35 appointed representatives, and, fourth, that a National Front would be established to assist the president. Five days later the PKI politbureau announced its support for a return to the 1945 constitution.²

Sakirman, writing in 1960, gave the official PKI version, and one with a ring of truth, of why the Party decided to support the return to the 1945 constitution.³ He explained that at the time that the cabinet decided to urge the restoration of the 1945 constitution, PKI had little choice but to agree. The Constituent Assembly

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It should be noted again that under the 1945 constitution the president holds powers roughly equivalent to those of the president of the United States. The 1945 constitution was so brief and vague, however, that the president could take to himself powers far beyond those of his American counterpart.

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Njoto, "Hold High the Spirit of 1945", RI, April-May 1959, p.17.

3

Sakirman, "Apa Arti Sokongan PKI kepada UUD 1945 dan Demokrasi Terpimpin" (The Meaning of PKI's Support for the 1945 Constitution and Guided Democracy), part II, BM, July-August 1960, pp.320-8.

had been meeting for two years but had made little headway towards a new constitution because the Pantjasila and Moslem blocs were unable to compromise. At the same time, certain groups outside the assembly were putting forward the demand, which 'greatly endangered democratic life', for the complete dissolution of political parties. In such a situation, according to Sakirman, PKI was faced with three possibilities: to unite with the anti-Pantjasila bloc, led by Masjumi, and so permit the assembly to continue, with the possibility of completing its work by compromises harmful to the people's struggle; to take a passive attitude, or reject Sukarno's appeal for the restoration of the 1945 constitution, which would have meant in effect uniting with the anti-Pantjasila forces, continuing the assembly meetings, or supporting the continuation of the 1950 constitution; or to unite with 'the democratic groups' led by Sukarno by accepting his appeal unconditionally but at the same time fighting outside the assembly for conditions to prevent the misuse of the 1945 constitution by 'reactionary groups'.

Sakirman explained that for PKI the third possibility was the best, bearing in mind the national united front policy of isolating the reactionaries. To agree with the reactionaries to continue the Constituent Assembly was not possible either politically or psychologically. To agree

to the continuation of the 1950 constitution was also impossible because of the intensity of the campaign against liberal democracy and for the dissolution of the parties. To agree to the continuation of the 1950 constitution, Sakirman claimed, would have strengthened the hand of the 'fascist elements' who wished to dissolve the parties. Therefore in order to isolate further the reactionary group and to strengthen the unity of the democratic group, PKI took quick and concrete steps to overcome the critical situation by urging the restoration of the 1945 constitution.

On April 22, 1959, Sukarno asked the Constituent Assembly to approve the restoration of the 1945 constitution. Masjumi succeeded in rallying the other Moslem parties, NU, PSII and Perti, to present a solid front, so that when three votes were taken in the assembly on May 30 and June 1 on a proposal to restore the old constitution, the proposal failed to obtain the necessary two-thirds majority.¹ In the last session of the assembly,

¹ PNI leader Ali Sastroamidjojo is reported to have stated that PKI, unhappy with the restoration of the 1945 constitution, spread rumours designed to frighten NU into opposition to the restoration; Irene Tinker and Millidge Walker, "Indonesia's Panacea: 1959 Model", Far Eastern Survey, December 1959, vol. XXVIII, no. 12, p. 179. It could be argued that PKI hoped to prevent the proposal from receiving the two-thirds majority in order to force Sukarno to compromise with the parties and grant them a

Aidit proposed the dissolution of the assembly on the grounds that it had failed to draft a new constitution and was no longer representative of the balance of forces in society.¹ He also pointed out that there were now two ways of legalizing the 1945 constitution. Either a new Constituent Assembly could be elected, which was the democratic and constitutional way, or the president could decree the restoration of the old constitution, a course that PKI could accept because the constitution had the support of a majority in the assembly.

On June 4, 1959, the central war administrator placed a temporary ban on all political activities. Aidit at once instructed all Party members to observe the ban, 'the purpose of which is none other than to prevent unnecessary contradictions from arising among the ranks of the people.'² He called on members to intensify

greater status and authority than given by the 1945 constitution. But it would seem that the communist leaders were genuinely afraid that if the 1945 constitution was not approved, then the forces that wished a complete end to all party and parliamentary activity might have won the president's support. Therefore if the report of Ali's statement is correct, it would appear that he made it in order to sow discord between Sukarno and PKI as a means of restoring Sukarno's decreasing sympathy with PNI.

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RI, June-July 1959, pp.16-17.

2

RI, June-July 1959, p.11.

their education, and to:

ponder deeply over the steps that we have taken up to the present and ... give serious thought to the future steps so as to further strengthen national unity.

Sukarno returned from a two-month world tour on June 29, and on July 5 decreed the restoration of the 1945 constitution. The Djuanda cabinet resigned on the following day, and Sukarno was left to form his own presidential cabinet which, under the terms of the 1945 constitution, would not be responsible to parliament.

6. Towards an Impasse?

Sukarno announced his cabinet on July 12, 1959. The civilian ministers were either non-party persons or party members who could not be expected to go against the president's wishes. Prominent party leaders were conspicuously absent. The armed forces were represented by eleven ministers. PKI could count five ministers who might act as listening posts for the Party: Sadjarwo, Minister of Agrarian Affairs, Yamin, minister in charge of social-cultural affairs, Prijono, Minister of Education and Culture, and Sudibjo and Sudjono, the two ministers in charge of 'mobilizing the people's energy'.

In the rapid turbulence of events that occurred in the following eighteen months, a fairly simple pattern

was discernible. On the one hand, it became evident that Sukarno was dependent on the political parties, especially PKI, in his balancing act with the army. He tried to domesticate the parties to become the instruments of his own will, but he protected against dissolution those that declared themselves to be his allies. On the other hand, strong pressure was applied by the army to curb the power of the parties, especially PKI. The following section is concerned with four aspects of the events of the eighteen months: PKI's relations with the government, the Party's rearguard action in defence of parliamentary democracy and political freedom, an assessment of the Party's gains and losses under guided democracy, and the effect within the Party of the continued alliance with Sukarno and the move to guided democracy.

On July 13, 1959, Aidit announced PKI's attitude to the new government.¹ He said that PKI would do everything possible to ensure the implementation of the cabinet's three-point programme,² and that the Party's

¹

Stop press supplement to RI, June-July 1959, pp.2-3.

²

The programme was food and clothing for the people, security (meaning the elimination of rebel and bandit groups), and anti-imperialism.

attitude was basically the same as that taken towards the Djuanda cabinet: unreserved support for measures of benefit to the people, criticism of wavering measures, and strong criticism of ministers' actions harmful to the people. Subsequently, the Party was to maintain its eulogies of Sukarno himself, but, perhaps aware that the power situation forced Sukarno to protect the Party, to take greater freedom in outspoken criticism of government measures.

As Sukarno was the only barrier preventing stern anti-communist repressive measures by the army, PKI has taken care to continue its praise of him, its support for his leadership of the revolution. Aidit went so far as to show that it would be quite compatible with Marxism for a non-proletarian, such as Sukarno, to become the leader of a socialist Indonesia.¹ After all, neither Marx nor Engels was a worker! In the communist criticisms of the government, Sukarno was never implicated, and in turn he never defended those of his ministers who were criticized.

As early as August 6, 1959, Aidit expressed disappointment at the composition of the cabinet, suspicion at

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D.N. Aidit, Peladjaran dari Sedjarah PKI (Lessons from PKI's History), Djakarta, 1960, pp.22-3.

the inclusion of so many military personnel, and his determination to work for communist inclusion in the cabinet.¹ Communist participation in the government, he said:

is just as certain as the fact that the Indonesian people will wake up tomorrow to see the sun rising in the east, and to see it setting in the west in the evening.

In September, SOBSI warned of 'secret counterrevolutionary passengers' in the cabinet.² The first major attack on the government was launched in December 1959 and January 1960 when the Party and its mass organizations led a massive campaign to protest the government's economic measures, and to demand a 25 per cent increase in wages with a 50 per cent cut in the price of essential commodities. Delegations, petitions, letters and telegrams flooded in - until Nasution ordered strict measures against demonstrations held under the cloak of economic grievances.

In the midst of the agitation against the government's economic measures, Lukman on January 10, 1960, declared that the people had lost its hope and trust in

1

D.N. Aidit, "Back to the 1945 Constitution for a Change in Politics and Living Conditions", in supplement to RI, September-October 1959, pp.3-11.

2

Editorial, "After the Proclamation of the Presidential Decree", ITUN, September 1959, pp.2-3.

the cabinet's ability.¹ Sukarno was requested to replace the deficient ministers. The request for an alteration in the composition of the cabinet was continued until Sukarno left the country for another world tour on April 1.² The moment Sukarno left, PKI at once dropped the request, and denounced efforts towards a cabinet reshuffle as aimed at creating new tensions.³ It was feared that without Sukarno a reshuffle might mean a swing to the right. Once he returned, the request was resumed.

The most thorough attack on the cabinet was made on July 8, 1960 when the PKI politbureau issued a document entitled "An Evaluation of the Kerdja Cabinet after One Year in Office".⁴ According to the politbureau:

a year is long enough to know which of the president's assistants or ministers are capable and which of them are not, or do not wish to carry out the three-point programme of the Kerdja cabinet in all earnestness.

¹ BB, January 15, 1960, p.1; HR, January 11, 1960.

² See, for example, HR, February 11, 1960; and RI, April 1960, pp.4-5.

³ Bintang Timur, April 22, 1960.

⁴ PKI, An Evaluation of the Kerdja Cabinet after One Year in Office, mimeographed, Djakarta, 1960, 14 p. Kerdja (Work) Cabinet is the name given to Sukarno's cabinet. Of course the ministers criticized in this statement had been previously subject to criticism by PKI.

It then went on to attack 'the inability of the Minister of Trade, Arifin Harahap'; the Minister of Labour, Ahem Erningpradja, who 'does not defend the interests of the workers'; Yamin, for 'harbouring dangerous illusions about the imperialists'; Foreign Minister Subandrio for pursuing a foreign policy that 'is more one of needing imperialism than of opposing it', and for exacerbating Indonesian-Chinese relations; the Minister of Internal Affairs, Ipik Gandamana, for issuing anti-democratic regulations; and the Minister of Information, Maladi, for his toleration of the reactionary Democratic League. As for the army, the politbureau claimed that 'it is not such a difficult thing' to smash the rebels, 'so long as a serious attempt is made to do so', so long as the security forces ceased 'also waging a fight against the people and the communists'. However:

In contrast with some of his minister assistants ... we see the effort made by President Sukarno to pave the way for the implementation of the programme of his cabinet.

The politbureau ended with a plea for changes in the composition of the cabinet. In the later months of 1960, Sukarno's new slogan 'Nasakom', standing for nationalist-religious-communist unity, was used by PKI to demand a Nasakom cabinet.

PKI's hardest battle during the first eighteen months of the Sukarno cabinet was a continuous one against restrictions on political freedom. It was a losing battle because the Party was not strong enough to withstand the combined pressure of Sukarno, who wanted to domesticate the parties for his own use, and the army, which in general was eager to ban the parties, especially PKI, or, if that was not yet possible, to severely restrict their freedom of action.

The temporary ban on all political activities, imposed on June 4, 1959, was eased in the areas free of rebels on August 1, 1959. Public meetings and demonstrations were still forbidden, but closed meetings were allowed on the sole condition that the authorities be informed in advance of the intention to hold one. In practice, however, many, if not all, war administrators retained the power to prohibit closed meetings, and if one was permitted, to send along a representative of the military. At the end of July 1959, all higher government officials were given until August 31 to resign from political parties - a measure which met ineffectual communist protest.¹ Then, at the beginning of September, it was announced that henceforth the heads of autonomous

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HR, July 29, 1959; RI, September-October 1959, p.8.

provinces, kabupatens and towns would be appointed, not elected as formerly, and that they and the members of their executive councils would have to resign from party membership. This new measure brought a storm of protest from all political parties, which led the government to agree to review the system after a trial year.

At this point, the PKI congress in September 1959 courageously endorsed the statement that:

the people of Indonesia not only love democracy, but under the alert leadership of the Party the people actively defend democracy.

For the progressive development of Indonesia, PKI will continue to fight against the danger of military dictatorship or individual dictatorship, and at the same time to defend and extend democracy. But in case a military or individual dictatorship cannot be prevented, ... the duty of every communist will be to fight it with all his strength.¹

Despite the words of courage, primarily intended to boost the morale of the congress delegates, the retreat continued. PKI had no weapons with which to fight.

Under the 1945 constitution the powers of the president are not clearly defined, and Sukarno took the right to rule by presidential decrees and decisions

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PKI, Resolusi tentang Laporan Umum CC PKI kepada Kongres Nasional ke-VI (Resolution on the PKI Central Committee's General Report to the Sixth National Congress), Djakarta, 1959, pp.33-4.

without requesting parliament's approval. This meant, in fact, that parliament was being reduced to complete impotence. On October 2, 1959, PKI described what it considered to be the important role of parliament under the 1945 constitution,¹ and, made bolder by PNI support, asserted, during the parliamentary debates of December 1960 through February 1961, parliament's right to control the budget.² Sukarno thereupon demonstrated his power by dissolving parliament and announcing his intention to appoint a new one.

At the same time that Sukarno was removing the power of parliament, the army was increasing its harrying tactics against the communists. Examples are many. "Harian Rakjat" was suspended for a total of 65 days from January to September 1960 inclusive, and it was temporarily banned in several regions; the communist news-service, INPS, was closed for several months; the small pro-communist Djakarta newspaper "Republik" had its licence cancelled on April 26; and SOBSI's periodical, "Bendera Buruh", had its licence cancelled in October 1960. Several central and regional Party leaders were

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Editorial, HR, October 2, 1959.

2

The main speeches of the communist representatives in the budget debates are given in abbreviated form in RI, February 1960, pp.10-15.

imprisoned for short terms or interrogated on several pretexts; many SOBSI cadres were arrested for inciting or allegedly inciting workers to strike; and in March, strikes in the ports of Tandjong Priok, Semarang, and Surabaya were quickly suppressed by the army, their SOBSI leaders arrested. In East Java the war administrator ordered political parties and their subsidiary organizations to remove all signs and nameboards from public view. During the second half of August 1960, a series of demonstrations, apparently led by Moslem and PSI youths, demanded a ban on PKI and its mass organizations. On August 22, the regional war administrator in South Kalimantan imposed such a ban, and was soon followed by his colleagues in South Sumatra/Djambi, and South and South-East Sulawesi.

PKI reacted at once to the bans by asking Sukarno to repeal them and to punish their perpetrators for contravening the law and for slandering PKI.¹ The communist mass organizations also protested the bans. Sukarno received Aidit on September 1, and then called in all regional war administrators. The compromise between Sukarno, who opposed a ban on PKI, and the army, most of which wanted one, was a decision on September 13 to

¹

RI, September-October 1960, p.7.

suspend all political activities until December 1, 1960. When the ban was lifted a new regulation went into effect under which meetings, gatherings or parades of a political nature would be permitted only if the authorities had been informed 72 hours in advance and if the agenda had first been submitted. Presumably the local state of emergency authorities¹ still exercised, in practice, the right to prohibit meetings or to sent spectators along. In South Sumatra/Djambi and South Kalimantan the state of emergency authorities continued the ban on all activities by PKI and its mass organizations.

Thanks to Sukarno's protection, PKI succeeded in avoiding complete suppression by the army. But the Party could not evade Sukarno's own efforts to domesticate the parties and parliament for his own use. As has been seen, he dissolved the elected parliament on March 5, 1960 because it claimed the right to control the budget. On March 7, Aidit sent a telegram to Sukarno expressing extreme regret at the action which, he wrote, 'seriously endangers democratic life in our country'.² Aidit

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With a change in the state of war and siege law, the war administrators are now called state of emergency authorities.

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RI, April 1960, p.9.

proposed that either a new parliament be elected or a temporary parliament be nominated in conformity with the balance of forces among the people. PKI's "Review of Indonesia" commented that the guided part of guided democracy had already been elaborated; 'it now remains for the "democracy" aspect of it to be established'.¹ In order not to alienate the parties too far, Sukarno invited the chairmen of PKI, PNI and NU to his palace in Bali to discuss the composition of a new parliament. On March 29, 1960 the appointed parliament was announced. Of the 261 members, 131 were from functional groups, including 35 representatives of the armed forces, and 130 were from the political parties, including 30 from PKI. Masjumi and PSI were excluded. General elections for a new parliament were promised for before the end of 1962, security conditions permitting.

Aidit announced PKI's reluctant acceptance of the new parliament, commenting that an appointed one was better than none.² He said that including communists in the functional groups, PKI would have 50 votes, or just under 20 per cent of the total. NU leaders

¹ RI, April 1960, p.11.

² RI, April 1960, p.12, Suara Ibukota, year III, no.7, (April 1959), p.1.

estimated communist representation to be between 65 and 70,¹ and due to their protests at the low number of Moslems, Sukarno added an extra 22 members, mostly Islamic leaders. That the appointed parliament would have only minor power was made clear by the government announcement on April 20 that the 1960 budget was in operation by decree. The appointed parliament was installed on June 25, 1960.

Once parliament had been 're-tooled', it was only a matter of time before the regional and local representative councils were similarly dealt with. A presidential decree ordered that as of September 30, 1960 all councils would be brought in line with guided democracy. Functional groups were to receive half the seats. Former members of the now-dissolved Masjumi and PSI were excluded unless they had proved their loyalty to Sukarno's goals. The Minister of Internal Affairs proceeded to appoint the members of the provincial councils, the province heads to appoint the members of lower councils. As the new councils were announced, PKI and its mass organizations raised cries of protest because communist representation was often greatly

¹

TI, April 22, 1960; also interviews with NU leaders.

reduced.¹ Sukarno early in January 1961 agreed to a review of the appointed councils, but even if PKI and its mass organizations were to gain more seats, under guided democracy the councils could be expected to exercise even less authority than formerly.

As part of his plan to domesticate the parties, Sukarno wished to bring the newspapers under control. The army was exercising its power under the state of emergency to suspend or even ban newspapers and periodicals for publishing news or opinions it did not like. Then, on February 15, 1960 a decree was announced under which the government could withhold newsprint from any newspaper or periodical whose contents failed to develop public opinion and/or a national culture along the lines laid down by Sukarno in his August 17, 1959 speech. On October 12, 1960, publishers were told that their newspapers and periodicals must support and defend the principles of the August 17, 1959 speech, assist in the abolition of liberalism, imperialism and separatism, promote a free and independent foreign policy and not be instruments of the cold war, and promote the Indonesian personality. On October 31, the licences of several

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See, for example, HR, December 3, 6, 19, 21, 23 and 27, 1960.

Djakarta newspapers were revoked, including that of the communist "Pantjawarta", formerly called "Sin Po". In short, the government issued decrees with conditions so vague as to permit it to ban any newspaper if it is so desired. "Harian Rakjat" was saved from extinction by Sukarno's protection, but the army continued to harass it with frequent suspensions.

Of greater concern for PKI has been Sukarno's effort to simplify the party system. On January 12, 1960, Sukarno issued a law entitled "Conditions and Simplification of the Party System". Four stipulations in the law could cause trouble for PKI:

1. political parties must accept and defend the 1945 constitution and the Pantjasila, and must use peaceful and democratic methods to attain their political goals;
2. political parties may receive assistance from abroad only with the consent of the government;
3. the president may order an investigation into the administration, finances and wealth of any party;
4. the president may dissolve any party whose programme is aimed at undermining the principles and objectives of state policy, or which has not officially condemned the actions of any member of the party who has acted in support of a rebellion.

The PKI leaders were in no position to condemn the law out of hand. Lukman explained that the best way, the democratic way, to simplify parties would be through general elections and changes in the electoral law so that, for example, only parties receiving a certain percentage of votes could sit in parliament.¹ At the same time, he meekly declared that PKI's attitude to the new law would depend on how the law was implemented. Later in 1960 the parties were required to present the government with a list of their branches and members - which PKI did on February 4, 1961.²

In an assessment of PKI's losses and gains during the first eighteen months of the Sukarno cabinet, the most important loss was the eradication of most aspects of democracy. Even if elections were to be held in the future, neither parliament nor the regional and lower representative councils could be expected to exercise much authority. The block of appointed military representatives in parliament also reduced what likelihood there was of a communist majority there. Strikes were

¹ RI, February 1960, p.16.

² On April 25, 1961, the PKI politbureau announced that so far 694,633 Party members had been registered with the government; HR, April 27, 1961.

repressed, BTI dared not lead any militant actions, demonstrations and rallies were forbidden except for causes chosen by the government, cadres were harassed. Worse still, the government now had laws by which it could ban PKI or its publications at will. And the importance for any communist party of presenting a non-communist government with a list of its members cannot be exaggerated. However, in the power situation in which Sukarno needed PKI, the Party could make more criticisms than at first appeared possible - as was shown by the July 8, 1960 statement, the protests at the temporary bans on PKI in three regions, and the loud cries for a revision of the appointed regional and local councils.

PKI would appear to have alienated many PNI and NU leaders, especially in the regions. Important factors in this alienation were their jealousy at PKI's obvious favours from Sukarno, and their resentment at PKI's superior organizational ability. At the centre, however, PNI and NU were forced to maintain at least overt friendship towards PKI. This was due partly to Sukarno's insistence on nationalist-Moslem-communist unity which to oppose, he declared, was treason, and partly to PNI's fear of the army and the need for an alliance with PKI to oppose what both parties regarded as the greatest danger to their existence.

An ominous development for PKI in 1960 was the attempt by the Minister of Labour to create an all-embracing trade union federation, to be called OPPI, which would not be under communist control. Most of the non-communist unions expressed their support for his efforts, and committees to prepare such a federation were established in several provinces. SOBSI strenuously resisted the minister's efforts. Sukarno either supported SOBSI or reacted negatively to the idea of OPPI for otherwise OPPI would already be in existence.

Of the advantages accruing to PKI from the first eighteen months of the Sukarno cabinet, the most important was the continued existence of the Party and its mass organizations. The Party even introduced a second three-year plan, BTI launched its first three-year plan of organization and education, while SOBSI in August 1960 formulated its first three-year plan. At the same time, Masjumi and PSI were ordered on August 17, 1960 to dissolve themselves, and the Democratic League,¹ formed

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The Democratic League was reportedly formed by leaders of Masjumi, PSI and IPKI with the connivance of certain sections of the central army leadership. Its short-term goal was to prevent the installation of the appointed parliament; its long-term goal was to bring together the diverse elements dissatisfied with Sukarno's leadership. Some members of NU, the Christian parties and even PNI were attracted into it. But, again reportedly, those

in March 1960, was banned on February 27, 1961. The only anti-communist newspapers in Djakarta, "Abadi", "Nusantara", "Pedoman" and "Pos Indonesia" were all closed.

In return for their support of Sukarno, the communists were given considerable representation in the three new governmental bodies: the National Advisory Council and the National Planning Council, installed on August 15, 1959, and the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly, which began work on November 10, 1960. PKI was also given representation in the executive committee of the National Front, a Sukarno organization, installed on September 8, 1960. When the appointed heads of autonomous regions were announced in the first months of 1960, communists obtained the posts of deputy governor in West and Central Java, and of deputy mayor in Djakarta. The communist mayors in at least Surabaya, Surakarta, Magelang and Salatiga were re-installed, and a communist became mayor of Tjirebon, a post formerly held by NU. It was widely rumoured that Sukarno had wanted to appoint communists as governors, but that he had retreated before army objections. None of the positions given to PKI

sections of the central army leadership which had supported the formation of the League soon withdrew their protection and the League failed to prosper.

entailed real power, but they did provide status rewards for important Party cadres, they allowed some extra pressure to be exerted on the government, they increased the Party's knowledge of administrative procedures (which would be important if PKI should ever win control of Indonesia), and they provided apparent proof for Party members of the leadership's assertion that PKI was moving ever nearer to power.

Of long-term importance to PKI was the retention of the key political position by Sukarno and the radical nationalists. Plans for economic development or land reform may have been talked about, but the emphasis was on continued nationalist agitation, diatribes against Western colonialism, and the struggle to liberate West Irian. Meanwhile the economy deteriorated. As several communists assured me in private, the ruling group was utterly incapable of making profound improvements in Indonesia's social and economic condition, which meant that social tensions must increase and the basis of communist support must be both strengthened and broadened. The PKI leaders may also have been content to see the army participating but not dominant in the Sukarno cabinet. If the cabinet failed to solve Indonesia's major problems, and it gave no indication that it would succeed, then both Sukarno and the army might be discredited. PKI

might then appear as the only alternative, the other political forces having tried and failed.

Sakirman, writing in May 1960, admitted that there was concern within the Party at the support given for the return to the 1945 constitution and for the establishment of guided democracy.¹ Some comrades were asking whether guided democracy was not in fact 'a semi-fascist political and economic system more criminal than liberal democracy'. Others were concerned that the Party, by identifying with the Sukarno government, would be blamed by the people for the continuing economic deterioration. In reply, Sakirman said that since the failure of the Constituent Assembly to produce a new constitution, the Party 'has tried hard to decide on a correct and true political attitude' on the basis of a Leninist analysis of the Party's past and present experience. The situation 'is difficult', he admitted, especially as the middle group held state power, possibly a unique situation never before faced by a communist party. But the Party already had the correct strategy and main tactics of the Indonesian revolution. Where the Party was not

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Sakirman, "Apa Arti", BM, part I, May-June 1960, pp.194-219; part II, July-August 1960, pp.320-40, 348. See especially pp.194, 325, 328-9, 339, 340.

yet in complete agreement was 'concerning problems of day-to-day tactics or short-term political tactics'. He repeated the official Party view that the contradictions between the ruling groups and the democratic forces outside the cabinet were not basic, but were contradictions within the people. In order to reassure the doubtful, he declared that the Party's general line, especially since the restoration of the 1945 constitution, 'has given beneficial results and gives a perspective that will make the internal and external reactionaries tremble'.

The Party leadership was itself concerned at the behaviour of the ruling groups. When the Nehru government evicted the communist-led cabinet in Kerala, Aidit warned that 'even though the proletariat wants to take the peaceful path to win victory for its policy, the bourgeoisie will not voluntarily accept this path' but cast aside democracy when it was harmful to its interests.¹ In February 1960, Aidit wrote of Indonesia that 'some groups of the national bourgeoisie, jointly with the compradore bourgeoisie, want to take the road of military or personal dictatorship'.²

¹ RI, September-October 1959, pp.8-9.

² D.N. Aidit, "For National Unity", World Marxist Review, February 1960, p.21.

In his speech to the central committee plenum at the end of December 1960, however, Aidit expressed only confidence in the course of events in Indonesia.¹ He claimed that 'basically the political situation at home continues to shift to the left in spite of the many difficulties, obstacles and troubles', and that the communists 'have achieved certain encouraging successes in building the national front'. He called on members to intensify their work of building the Party, especially by work among the peasants, but reminded them that 'The basic principle we must adhere to in the conduct of the national struggle is to subordinate the class struggle to the national struggle' - maintaining, of course, the independence of the Party. In short, Aidit's speech contained no hint of an overhaul of the form of the national united front policy that had been in operation since early in 1952. Support for Sukarno would continue because the alternative, opposition, would spell the elimination of the Party at least as an above-ground organization. But was the optimism expressed by Sakirman and Aidit only intended to strengthen the flagging morale of Party members? The Party had survived, and any

¹Aidit, "Madju Terus", HR, January 2, 1961.

alternative policy would bring stern repression, but was
PKI, in fact, making progress towards its basic goal,
the assumption of power?

CONCLUSION

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1. The Situation in 1951

When the Aidit leadership won control of PKI in January 1951, certain factors made a militantly oppositionist policy seem to contain little if any likelihood of bringing the Party to power in the foreseeable future: the condition of the Party, the relative weakness of social antagonisms, the completion of the political revolution (except for the liberation of West Irian), the strong coercive power available to the government, the geographical nature of Java, and the international situation.

In January 1951, the total membership of PKI was about four or five thousands. Work to re-establish the Party organization, after the Madiun rebellion and the second Dutch attack, was being undertaken but was not far advanced. The lines of command from the centre to the members were, apparently, still tenuous, while many of the local and regional leaders were unsatisfactory to the Aidit leadership. Furthermore, the Socialist Party of Tan Ling Djie was still in existence, and the Indonesian Labour Party had been dissolved officially only in October

1950. The Aidit leadership therefore urgently needed time in order to re-establish an efficient Party organization, to weed out undesirable elements from within the central, regional and local leadership bodies, to effect the dissolution of the Socialist Party, and to sift the membership of the two 'cover parties' and incorporate into PKI those of their members who were found to be trustworthy.

The Madiun disaster had a profound and lasting psychological effect on all levels of the PKI leadership. Although at the outbreak of the rebellion PKI had had armed units at its command, these had been broken quickly by only a small part of the government forces. Most of the top-level leaders had been killed, and many thousands of communists and sympathizers had been imprisoned, escaping trial only because of the disorganization caused by the second Dutch attack. As a result, the surviving Party leaders dreaded the occurrence of a 'second Madiun', and they sought policies which could avoid another insurrection, either one planned by the Party or one provoked by the government.

At the same time as the Party was unprepared physically and psychologically for a militant policy, social conditions in Indonesia further discouraged militancy. The Indonesian revolution of 1945 to 1949, being

primarily a struggle for national independence from a foreign power, was not fought for the radical alteration of society at all levels. Nor were 'the masses', the poorer sections of the urban and rural populations, aroused to demand a social revolution. Under Dutch rule the poorer sections of society were, on the whole, successfully insulated from political party activities or even from sectional mass organizations such as trade unions and peasant associations. Under the Japanese, political parties, trade unions and peasant associations were banned. And although the Moslems were encouraged to organize Masjumi and the nationalists were allowed to broadcast nationalist propaganda, neither group prepared its followers for radical social change. Masjumi was led by generally conservative Moslems, while nationalist propaganda was directed towards building a sense of Asian-ness, towards fomenting anti-white hatred.

During the revolution, from August 1945 to December 1949, the Republican leaders could demand and receive support on the basis of nationalism alone. Vague, almost mystical, concepts of a future just and prosperous society were created, but few concrete programmes of social and economic re-organization. Where mass organizations and 'people's armies' were formed, the basic rallying force was either nationalism, religion, charisma or a combination

of these, not the promise of social revolution. With the success of the political revolution, Indonesians moved in to fill the political and administrative posts formerly reserved for Dutchmen, but the condition of the workers and peasants was little affected. The political revolution led to neither a strong demand from the poorer levels of society for radical social change, nor a realization among those levels that by organization such a change could be effected.

In 1951, there were certain areas of the countryside, especially around estates and where peasant squatters had occupied estate and forestry lands, where a certain political consciousness and the makings of political radicalism were to be found among the rural poor. Elsewhere, in the great majority of villages, social antagonisms remained weak. Inequalities existed in both social and economic life, but, in Java at least, village society was able to absorb an increasing population without creating a genuinely alienated agricultural proletariat. It is significant that the political revolution was not accompanied by popular demands for land reform or by peasant attacks on landlords and moneylenders. Demands for the removal of inequalities were not made because, in general, the poorer peasants accepted the inequalities as natural, not as an injustice. Long after 1951, the PKI

leaders complained that even some cadres were unable to see in what ways the peasants were exploited by the landlords. After over five years of extensive work among the peasants, the PKI leaders in 1959 admitted that 'The task of cultivating the peasants' trust in the Party and of convincing the peasants of their own strength is a difficult one, especially in view of their backwardness', and that the task would be completed only after 'a long time, facing difficult tests, and hard and diligent work'.¹ In January 1960, the BTI leaders acknowledged the difficulty they were meeting 'to convince the peasants of the justice of the 6:4 demand and of the power of the peasants' unity'.² That is, the peasants were still unaware that they themselves could alter conditions, or even that it was just to demand a larger proportion of the harvest for the sharecropper.

In 1951 the situation in the towns resembled that in the villages: the 'tradition of open obedience' was still strong among the poorer sections of society, and social antagonism was no more than latent. There were few workers employed in large, impersonal undertakings and

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PKI, "Laporan Mengenai Pekerdjaan Partai dikalangan kaum Tani" (Report on Party Work among the Peasants), BM, April-May 1959, p.139.

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ST, January 1960, p.3.

few with experience in trade union work. Even during the revolution, militant trade union action was at a minimum: in the Republican areas it was regarded as anti-patriotic, and in the Dutch-occupied areas it was not permitted.¹ Other mass organizations among the poorer classes were either small (such as Pesindo, which had been badly broken by the participation of many of its members in the Madiun rebellion), newly formed or as yet unformed in January 1951. In short, the Indonesian urban poor were in no condition for revolution or for militant action of any description. Aidit, speaking in May 1958 to the first national conference of communist women, described the submissive, passive nature of the workers as seen from the communists' point of view:

The greatest obstruction to Party work among working women is the old-fashioned belief, still dominant, that the present bad situation is predestined and cannot be altered. This old-fashioned belief also exists among the men.²

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It would, perhaps, be misleading to state that the Dutch repressed militant trade union action during the revolution. The Indonesian workers in the Dutch-occupied areas did not attempt to engage in massive strike action, even for nationalist reasons. I have not heard, for example, of large scale strike action by the Indonesian dock labourers or transport workers in order to disrupt the flow of Dutch military equipment into Indonesia.

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D.N. Aidit, "Wanita Komunis Pedjuang untuk Masyarakat Baru" (Communist Women, Fighters for a New Society), BM, June 1958, p.247.

As for what the PKI leaders call the urban petty bourgeoisie, many of its members had joined non-communist political parties, mass organizations and armed groups during the revolution. Any propensity for political radicalism among them was considerably diminished by the status, if not material, benefits they reaped from the victory of the political revolution. The Indonesian petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie filled the administrative and political positions vacated by the Dutch, and the many new positions afforded by the burgeoning bureaucracy.

In both China and Viet Nam the communists were able to win the allegiance of broad sections of the indigenous society through the appeal of nationalism, resistance to the foreign invaders. In 1951 the political revolution in Indonesia was over, with the exception of the struggle for West Irian which at that time was not yet a focussing point of militant nationalist fervour. Political forces other than the non-communists had been brought to power, and non-communist radical nationalists could shout at least as hard as PKI in any future nationalist agitation over West Irian. Furthermore, the Indonesian government had at its command strong coercive power in case of communist attempts to seize power or disrupt the economy by sabotage and guerrilla bands. In January 1951, the

PKI leaders had neither access to weapons nor more than a handful of supporters in the armed forces.

The geographical nature of Java also militates against a communist attempt at forceful overthrow or disruption of the government before there is strong PKI infiltration into the armed forces and government apparatus. All but about twenty per cent of the long, narrow island is occupied by cultivated land, towns, villages, roads, and rivers, while the scattered pockets of mountain and forest are mostly encircled by good rail or road communications. The relatively extensive tracts of more impenetrable country are in West Java (especially south of the line Bogor-Bandung-Banjumas) and in the extreme east of East Java - both areas with strongly santri populations, while the anti-communist Darul Islam operates in the West Java area.

The international situation in 1951 also discouraged a bid by the Indonesian communists to seize power through violence. The United States had made clear by the Korean War and the seventh fleet's protection of Taiwan that it would fight to prevent a communist victory in eastern Asia, and it had the ability to stop large scale aid reaching communist rebels in Indonesia. In Malaya, the British were waging a ruthless war against the Malayan

Communist Party that had chosen to start a war of liberation.

While in 1951 conditions were unfavourable for either insurrectionary action or a militant anti-government stand on the part of PKI, there were many factors in the situation which encouraged the leadership to choose a long-term policy of extending greatly its support among the masses, and exploiting the differences among the other political forces. These favourable factors were: the disunity of the national revolutionary leadership, the lack of rival political and mass organizations among the urban and rural poor, the lack of strong, vested 'anti-people' political interests in the countryside and the towns, and the general socio-economic pressures apparently working against the prevailing social calm.

Indonesia has no 'liberator party', such as the Congress Party in India, the Anti-Fascist People's League in Burma, and the Viet Minh in Viet Nam, with an accepted right to govern and with an unrivalled organization. The Indonesian political elite was divided between personalities, between different concepts of the revolution, between santri and non-santri parties. Even the santri population was divided politically between the amorphous Masjumi, within which different groups were maintaining an uneasy alliance that was soon to break, and the smaller

PSII and Perti. Within each party, santri or not, cliques jockeyed for position and at times broke away to form new parties. The fragmented, clique nature of the revolutionary leadership was reflected in parliament where no two parties combined could command a majority, where parties struggled for office and the spoils of office, and where cliques within parties worked against each other. In this situation, PKI was given the possibility of forging alliances with other political forces. This possibility was greatly increased by the emergent power conflict between PNI and Masjumi, in which PNI was to seek allies against what it considered to be its most dangerous rival.

In 1951, the santri population was already relatively well organized under the Masjumi party and the Moslem associations which were its associate members. But the lower levels of the non-santri population, in both urban and rural areas, were still largely untouched by political parties and mass organizations. The few mass organizations of any size that existed, notably SOBSI, BTI and Pesindo, had fallen under communist control, despite PKI's small size, because of the absence of other claimants. The non-communist, non-santri political forces were engrossed in the in-fighting within the political elite, little concerned with developing strong grass-roots

organizations because they believed that 'the masses' were without important political effect.¹ The Aidit leadership was therefore presented with the possibility of filling the political and organizational vacuum among the poorer non-santris.

Indonesia, and more specifically Java, lacked strong socio-economic vested interests, with political power, that could successfully oppose the spread of political parties and mass organizations in either rural or urban areas. Java had very few large landowners who could control the politics of their peasants. Most of the few areas with a significant number of large landowners were strongly santri, where PKI, anyway, could not be expected to make large advances. And neither the lurahs nor members of the pamong pradja were effective barriers to the growth of parties and mass organizations. This absence of strong 'class enemies' in the villages facilitated the growth of parties and mass organizations, as it also made more difficult the communists' task of creating or increasing social antagonisms. In the towns and the estates, the large employers were mostly foreigners

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The other non-santri forces did realize, of course, that mass support would be vital when elections were held, but they presumed that they could rely on traditional authorities to mobilize that support.

with little or no political power in newly-independent Indonesia, and the government, in general, encouraged the growth of trade unions and supported trade union demands against the foreigners. That is, there was no effective barrier to the growth of trade unions or other mass organizations and political parties in the towns.

Finally, despite the prevalence of relative social calm among the Indonesian poorer classes, both urban workers and peasants had many small problems which any organization could exploit in order to win support. Furthermore, expectations had been raised among certain sections of the poorer classes as a result of the revolution and the subsequent increase in elementary education, while the relentless population growth could be expected to create or exacerbate social conflict.

2. The National United Front Implemented

A communist party is not compelled to pursue a policy which seems from available evidence to be most suitable to its own growth in a particular situation. A party may take a line that leads to decimation or stagnation as a result of doctrinal rigidity, of the leaders' personal preference for a particular line, or of instructions or suggestions from Moscow. In the case of PKI, it appears that after the failure of the Madiun rebellion Moscow did

not intervene in PKI policy-making. The Aidit leadership, emerging as the clear victors in an internal Party dispute, and free from foreign interference, was able to decide what overall strategy was most likely to permit the Party to grow and eventually to win power. The strategy chosen was a long-term one designed to exploit the favourable factors in the Indonesian situation.

The Aidit leadership's broad national united front policy has entailed two main tasks: building mass support among the politically uncommitted and unorganized masses (and creating from that support a mass party, disciplined and indoctrinated); and winning the cooperation of a broad range of other political forces, in fact with all but the avowed anti-communists. The national united front served and serves several purposes, that is, it prepares for several possible ways of achieving power. Mass support was necessary for a possible electoral victory. It was necessary to increase the Party's bargaining position in the political struggle, to make the Party's alliance worth seeking. It was also necessary to prepare for victory by other means, because in 1951 PKI had few good cadres, few members in strategic positions in the armed forces and bureaucracy, and little disciplined support located in strategic industries or strategic geographical areas. In order to discipline the mass support, the Party had to

be enlarged and to be trained in political and organizational matters.

Cooperation with the broadest range of non-communist political forces was desirable for three reasons. First, it was probable that the recruitment of mass support and the building of a large Party would have been impossible without it. A disruptive, oppositionist policy could have brought down repressive government action, which PKI, small and weak, was in no position to withstand. Second, friendship with the non-communists might have prepared the way for communist participation in the government and an eventual bloodless seizure of power. Third, alliance with the non-communists opened the possibility of isolating and breaking the anti-communists as part of the piecemeal destruction of the other political forces.

These two basic tasks forced the Aidit leadership to build a certain image of the Party, without which neither task could have been accomplished: the image of PKI as militantly patriotic, sympathetic to religion, responsible and self-effacing, democratic, opposed to the use of violence in the attainment of political goals (other than the restoration of West Irian), and humanitarian.

In order to build mass support, the Aidit leadership has relied basically on a vast network of mass organi-

zations; to consolidate, discipline and train that mass support, it has relied basically on the Party itself.

The great majority of the people that the Indonesian communists sought to attract and organize had such a low level of political awareness that they were unprepared for entry into a communist party. Therefore mass organizations have been built, each aimed at a specific section of 'the people', each attuned to the simplest demands of its respective section, and each seeking to attract the largest possible number of people in that section. With the exception of Pemuda Rakjat, each mass organization has maintained the fiction of political independence largely in order not to alienate potential members. The Aidit leadership has attempted to raise the political consciousness of the ordinary members of the mass organizations, and to create from out of the mass membership a well-trained body of cadres and activists. Through 'small, insignificant, trifling' actions in defence or promotion of the people's interests, an attempt has been made to overcome 'the tradition of open obedience' of authorities, 'the old-fashioned belief that the present bad situation is predestined and cannot be altered'. This work is slow, but it has been hoped to use each action to teach two lessons: that 'class enemies' are responsible for the

existing inequalities, and that those class enemies can be successfully opposed by united, organized action.

Mass support has been viewed as the essential material from which to create a large body of trained cadres and activists. The more active members of the mass organizations have been brought into PKI and there given political and organizational education. Since August 1956, when the PKI first three-year plan of organization and education went into effect, an education system has been established that reaches from the centre into the ordinary members' groups. As the Aidit leadership has become assured of the loyalty and capabilities of the Party members in the mass organizations, the larger mass organizations themselves have initiated their own Party-planned education systems. It is claimed that so far several hundred thousand cadres and activists have passed through the schools and courses of PKI and its mass organizations.

The Party and its mass organizations have worked together in the geographical spread of the communist movement. In fact, cadres often work for two or even more organizations. Where conditions are favourable, a Party organization is first established, which then helps establish mass organizations. In other places, mass organizations are established first, the more active

members trained, and then a Party organization created. Where Party and mass organizations exist together, the Party assists the mass organizations in matters of organization, while they in turn act not only as 'spheres of influence' for the Party, but also as recruiting grounds for Party members.

Although the Aidit leadership has at its disposal larger funds than any other Indonesian party, they are not inexhaustible and there has been the question of priority in the apportionment of funds and cadres. The Party itself has received first priority, but it is closely followed by SOBSI which is perhaps the major recruiting agent for Party membership, and which, with its membership in key industries, is certainly the best potential weapon in case of a political crisis. Since July 1953, the communist leaders have made repeated avowals of the agrarian nature of the Indonesian revolution, and in December 1960 Aidit once more called on the Party to give special attention to work among the peasants. At the same time, BTI remains chronically short of money and cadres. Here, then, there seems to be a discrepancy between what the Aidit leadership says and the actual work carried out by the communist organization. Work in the rural areas has been hampered by the great difficulty of developing good cadres from the peasantry, and by the

reluctance of urban cadres and activists to go into the villages. It is also possible that the leaders of PKI, like the other political leaders in Indonesia, may in fact consider the peasantry to be really of little political importance in the foreseeable future, especially when the future of free elections and of the authority of parliament appears to be severely restricted. Pemuda Rakjat has received priority somewhere a little behind BTI, with Gerwani trailing far in the rear.

In viewing the other political forces, the young communists early drew a distinction between the non-communists, among whom PNI was the most important party, and the anti-communists, to be found mainly in Masjumi. In 1951 PNI and Masjumi were already in disagreement over matters of policy, personality, and the distribution of government offices. PKI threw what weight it had in an attempt to widen the gap between the two main parties, and to exclude Masjumi from office. The PNI leaders welcomed PKI's proffered friendship because its advantages were large, its cost apparently minor. The support of PKI strengthened PNI in its struggle first to be the major partner in a coalition government, and then to be the dominant party in a government that excluded what was considered to be its most dangerous rival, Masjumi. Alliance with PKI also meant that the communists withheld

criticism from PNI ministers and directed their attacks against PNI's enemies, Masjumi and PSI. In return for its support, PKI asked for neither inclusion in the government nor a share in the spoils of office, but merely government toleration of communist organizational and propaganda work, and a corner of the broad cloak of nationalist respectability. The PNI leaders also believed that should PKI grow large and become truculent, it could still easily be put back into place, especially with the help of Sukarno.

On August 1, 1953, PNI at last formed a cabinet that excluded Masjumi and PSI. The exclusion of Masjumi from government office during the long period of the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, the cabinet's direct dependence on communist votes from October 1954 to August 1955, and the PNI's open friendship with the communists, further exacerbated the hostility between the two main parties - particularly as PNI was using its position in the government to fill the party's coffers and to consolidate its control of the bureaucracy in preparation for the general elections. After its control of the government for the two years preceding the general elections, PNI was able to emerge from the elections as the largest party although Masjumi had been expected to win. The PNI victory in turn affected the power balance after the elections.

During the brief Burhanudin Harahap cabinet, PNI, PKI and Sukarno cooperated in attacks on the Masjumi-led government, thus decreasing what possibility there remained for a true rapprochement between Masjumi and the nationalists. Masjumi was to withdraw from the second Ali cabinet after only nine months. In February 1958 many of the Masjumi leaders joined the unsuccessful PRRI-Permesta rebellion, and in August 1960 Sukarno ordered the dissolution of the party.

In short, PKI's policy of low-price support for PNI was one of the factors that separated Masjumi further from PNI, and that permitted those nationalists tolerant of PKI to play the major role in the government, certainly during the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet. It is interesting to speculate what would have been the course of Indonesian politics if the Aidit leadership had pursued a militant, oppositionist and disruptive policy as the communist parties did in Malaya, Burma and the Philippines. If PKI had pursued a disruptive policy, not only is it likely that PKI would have been reduced to a minor, persecuted sect, but it is possible that PNI would have been forced to maintain the basic Masjumi-PNI coalition, and that Masjumi would have retained the major role in that coalition. And if Masjumi had continued to participate in, let alone dominate, the pre-election

cabinets, it is possible that the election results would have been far less in PNI's favour, which in turn would have had major repercussions on post-election politics.

During the second Ali Sastroamidjojo and the Djuanda cabinets, the power situation in Indonesia changed radically. The focus of power moved away from the parties and parliament to extra-parliamentary forces: Sukarno, the regionalists, and the central army command. PKI was too weak to stand alone in the new situation, and a mutually protective alliance was forged with Sukarno against first the regionalists and then the central army leadership. The price of Sukarno's alliance was a certain domestication of the Party, servile praise of the president, and grumbling acquiescence to the curtailment of political freedom and of the power of parliament. In return, the Party received the president's protection against severe repression by the army, it exploited his prestige in order to win wider support, and it enjoyed his patronage to gain substantial representation in a wide range of governmental bodies.

Communist support for Sukarno would seem to have influenced the course of events since 1956 - apart from ensuring that the large communist organization was kept intact. In order to demonstrate Sukarno's apparently tremendous popularity, the communist organization has been

used to assemble huge crowds to hear Sukarno speak, to send floods of petitions, letters, delegations and telegrams in praise of those of his proposals that PKI favours, and to embellish walls with his latest slogan. Sukarno's personal popularity is so forcefully demonstrated that the army leaders have been afraid to attempt to relegate him to a less exalted position. And knowing that the army dare not attempt to replace him, Sukarno has used the communists as a lever to exact concessions from the military: either they accept a certain proposal, or the communists will be given more official posts, perhaps even seats in the cabinet.

Due in part to assured communist support, the radical nationalists, including Sukarno, have obtained a major part in government. They have emphasized nationalist, anti-imperialist agitation (which PKI can exploit too), not economic growth and political stabilization that might remove or reduce the bases of communist support. It is most probable, for example, that assured communist support and good behaviour encouraged the radical nationalists to seize all Dutch property in December 1957 despite strong opposition even within the cabinet. Economically, in the short run at least, the take-over was disruptive, and led to increased unemployment and inflation, decreased

production, and a grave transport crisis in many of the export-producing outer islands.

Communist support for PNI and for Sukarno enabled them to be more uncompromising towards those they considered to be their political enemies: Masjumi, PSI and the regionalists. Masjumi and PSI were first forced into the opposition; then Sukarno successfully withstood the strong pressure in 1957 to restore Hatta to a major role in the government; and, finally, the regionalists and some leaders of Masjumi and PSI were driven, by their continued exclusion from a role in the central government, into the abortive PRRI-Permesta revolt. The armed strength of the open anti-communists was quickly eliminated, and Sukarno was given the opportunity to ban both Masjumi and PSI. Once the revolt was broken, communist support for Sukarno was an important factor, as we have seen, in enabling the president to retain the primary position in his governmental alliance with the central army leadership.

While many factors contributed to the course of events since the 1955 elections, it is reasonable to ask whether the course would have been different if PKI in the post-election period had been disruptive and obstructionist, not calculatingly friendly with the radical nationalists. For example, could Sukarno and

PNI, without assured communist support, have successfully resisted the demands for the restoration of Hatta to a prominent position in the government? If Hatta had been restored to such a position, would the seizure of Dutch property have been effected in such an ill-prepared manner, and would the rebellion have occurred? And if PKI had not supported Sukarno would he have been able to retain the leading position in his government coalition with the central army leadership?

3. The Situation in 1961

In January 1961, the Aidit leadership, after ten years in control of PKI, had cause for both satisfaction and for concern. An organizational network had been built which was claimed to include almost two million members in the Party itself and about nine millions in the mass organizations. These claims were exaggerated, but it is certain that several million people belonged to or were associated with one or other of the organizations led by PKI, and that the organizational network was strengthened by a large body of full-time, politically indoctrinated cadres. At the same time, PKI was in alliance with President Sukarno and had been granted substantial representation on a large number of governmental bodies, ranging from parliament and the People's

Consultative Assembly to the National Advisory Council, the National Planning Council, the National Front, and the provincial and local councils.

On the other hand, the other political forces were still far stronger than PKI, and the communists appeared to be still far from power. Sukarno was an ally, but as an able political manipulator he was concerned with maintaining PKI as a domesticated force and with preventing it from acquiring sufficient power to be able to challenge by itself the other political forces. The other major partner in the government, the army leadership, seemed willing and able to impose crippling repressive measures on PKI and its mass organizations - if Sukarno's veto on such action were removed. While the communist organization had expanded and grown stronger, the army too had improved greatly its internal unity, its equipment, and its fighting ability. PKI was in no position yet to fight the army, and the army also could be expected to receive the support of the police and the pamong prajja in the event of a showdown with the communists. Many leaders of both PNI and NU who had earlier been open allies of PKI were, in January 1961, not unwilling to see the suppression of the communist organization. In short, the situation was very different from that of the earlier years of the Aidit leadership when a large majority of the

political elite as it was then constituted would not have contemplated or condoned anti-communist action by the government.

Although the PKI leaders could point to their Party's impressive popular support, both in organizational membership and electoral backing, they must have had misgivings about the quality of that support. As we have indicated particularly in the study of SOBSI and PKI's peasant support, it was extremely doubtful whether, in a crisis situation, PKI could count on the disciplined and militant action of its supporters. Given the general political conditions obtaining in January 1961, and given the dubious quality of their mass support, the PKI leaders had to envisage special organizational work in preparation for any one of three possible future situations: a continuation of the present situation, with legal recognition of the communist organization but restrictions on its freedom of action; severe repression by the central government or by sections of the army; and a situation providing an apparent opportunity to seize power.

It appears at the time of writing that even a continuation of the existing situation contains dangers for the communist organization. It is conceivable that if the cadres and members of the Party reach the conclusion that the national united front policy has brought the

Party into an impasse, then internal disputes could break out over questions of doctrine and policy. It is also conceivable that the restrictive measures imposed on the activities of the political parties and mass organizations and the threat of severe anti-communist repression in the foreseeable future could hamper the Party in the recruitment of new members and could even scare away some present members.

There is also the danger for PKI that if the present situation continues, then cadres and activists with positions of status in the Party or mass organizations or governmental bodies from the national parliament to the village might become infected with 'bourgeois values', at least to the extent of losing revolutionary militancy. That is, if communist cadres and activists obtain positions of status and local or even national influence under the present regime they might lose what ardour they have for the overthrow of the regime.¹ 'Bourgeoisification' seems to be a universal complaint of proletarian parties

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In Surakarta, for example, I met a communist member of the city council. He was a schoolteacher and lived in a kampong house. As a councillor, however, he had great prestige: he mixed with the social elite, even including the Susuhunan, and reserved seats for him and his wife in the front two rows of the Sriwedari wajang theatre demonstrated his high status to all. One wonders if he would be willing to risk his enviable position under the present regime for the gamble of militant action.

working openly in bourgeois societies, and PKI would seem to be no exception.

PKI leaders have hinted on occasion that some of their cadres have become 'demoralized' when they have received positions of status. For example, the chairman of the PKI group in the Central Java regional representative council admitted in April 1958 that:

from the moment the transitional local representative councils were founded in 1956, the Party committee in Central Java has witnessed the appearance of symptoms of bureaucracy, decreased genuine participation in the internal life of the Party, decreased understanding of the condition of the masses, conceit, easy satisfaction, dislike of criticism, and slacker Party discipline.¹

At the village level, the PKI leaders have admitted that 'sometimes Party members voluntarily lower themselves to become landlords after they have obtained the position of lurah or village official'.² Bearing in mind the possibility of the 'revolutionary demoralization' of communist cadres under the national united front policy, the present action of Sukarno in giving PKI and its mass

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Musajid, "Mengembangkan Pimpinan Partai dipemerintahan Daerah" (Developing Party Leadership in Regional Government), KP, April 1958, p.33. Musajid claimed that the Party cadres in the local councils were being given special education in province-level Party schools in order to overcome the undesirable tendencies.

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PKI, "Laporan", BM, April-May 1959, p.135.

organizations substantial but not conclusive representation in the appointed local, regional and national governmental bodies is not as rash as might at first appear to be the case. The president's policy may well accelerate revolutionary demoralization and thereby further reduce the Party's capacity to act militantly if necessary. To exclude the communists from positions of prestige could increase the militancy of cadres, and strengthen their resolve to replace the present regime by a new one.

As Sakirman acknowledged in 1960, there is the danger for PKI that continued support of a 'semi-fascist' government which is, moreover, unable to improve the condition of the people, could cause the people to place on the Party some of the blame for present conditions.¹ Many questions arise from continued communist support, even with criticism, of the present government. Could this support lead to disgust or apathy among the cadres and members of PKI and its mass organizations who suffer most from the government's repressive measures and from the continued decline in living standards? Are cadres

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Sakirman, "Apa Arti Sokongan PKI kepada UUD 1945 dan Demokrasi Terpimpin" (The Meaning of PKI's Support for the 1945 Constitution and Guided Democracy), part II, BM, July-August 1960, pp.320-40, 348.

sufficiently trained to understand the need for the present tactics, and is the members' loyalty still maintained by the communists' socio-economic activities? While PKI builds up Sukarno as the leader of the revolution, are cadres and members sufficiently trained to realize that Sukarno's support is essential for Party survival, that the daily eulogies are meant to fool only the eulogized? Or does this constant praise of Sukarno in fact place many of the members under his ultimate leadership so that if the necessity arose he could, as some think him to believe, cut the mass support away from the Party leadership with a single speech as he did in September 1948?

Should PKI be faced with severe repression or a coup situation which would require or suggest a change in the national united front policy, it is possible that an intra-party dispute could arise over what action to take. The Party leaders must be more concerned, however, with the condition of the membership of the Party and of its mass organizations and of the 'electoral communists'. This condition is such that the leaders would experience extreme difficulties in adapting their large organization to a radically different situation or policy.

The present form of the national united front is in part the result of the unrevolutionary nature of the

social groups on which PKI depends for most of its support. But the front policy, with its friendliness towards the 'national capitalists' and 'patriotic landlords', its opposition to 'radicalism', and its inhibitions against displays of militancy against 'the authorities', is hardly likely to develop the degree of social antagonism that would be needed to prepare communist supporters and members for militant action. Severe repressive measures against the few signs of peasant or trade union militancy have also restricted the opportunity for the people and cadres to gain experience in militant action. Perhaps, but only perhaps, social tensions have increased since 1951, but the people in general and the great majority of the members of at least the communist mass organizations still do not feel that their inferior social, economic and political condition is grossly unjust or that they have the right and the strength to oppose the authorities.

The members of the Party and the cadres of the mass organizations are part of the wider society whose poorer sections are still largely free from strong social antagonisms and the belief in their own ability to alter conditions. All but about five thousand of the Party members and mass organization cadres have entered the Party or have become associated with it after March 1952. That is, they have not been attracted by clandestine work

or by militant action. And once within the sphere of PKI they have been subjected to a programme of education that explains and justifies the national united front policy, the moderation that must be displayed by the progressives, the tolerance that must be shown towards the national bourgeoisie, and the need for cooperation with other political and social groups. Education has also been aimed at creating organizational discipline, but it is very doubtful if a large segment of even the Party itself, raised on the broad national united front and existing within the wider society, could adapt readily to an abrupt change of Party policy that would be required by severe repression or a coup situation.

In short, the leaders of PKI cannot be satisfied with the ability of their organization to meet the demands of even a limited range of future situations: they have reason to suppose that its strength may not increase, and may even decrease, so long as the present general political situation continues; they must doubt the ability of the organization to weather a period of severe repression and yet retain sufficient strength to remain within striking distance of power; and even without repression, they must doubt whether their organization is able to undertake a militant drive for power. In order to prepare the organization to meet any one of these three

contingencies, the Party leaders must work first to preserve the organization, to resist any attempt to ban the Party or to merge or dissolve any of the mass organizations, especially the most important ones, SOBSI, BTI, and Pemuda Rakjat. At the same time they must strive to strengthen both the Party and the mass organizations. This will have to be done largely through education because overt action is repressible and repressed by the authorities, and because the Party leaders dare not risk the demoralizing effect of unsuccessful actions. Through education an effort will be made to prevent the spread of 'bourgeois values' among cadres who obtain positions of prestige, to prepare cadres and members psychologically for government repression and militant action, and especially to weld a firm discipline among the cadres of the Party and its mass organizations so that they will act as instructed in the event of an emergency. The Party leaders will also presumably continue to attempt to infiltrate government ministries and the armed forces, and to extend and consolidate SOBSI's control of the workers in key work, especially in transport.

If the PKI leaders are able to accomplish the difficult tasks of preserving their organization and of strengthening it along the lines indicated, then they will still have to await a situation favourable to the acqui-

sition of power. At the time of writing, such a situation appears a remote possibility, but it could arise, international factors excluded, in one of three ways: the very unlikely development of an insurrectionary mood among the poorer sections of Indonesian society, an unlikely capitulation of the ruling groups as a result of their inability to rule well, and a more possible, but still improbable, disintegration of the ruling groups.

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Special mention ought to be made of the reports issued between 1952 and 1960 under the auspices of first the Institute of Current World Affairs and then the American Universities' Field Staff. The individual reports are too numerous to mention individually, but I found them most useful, especially those by Boyd R. Compton in the period 1952 to 1955. It should also be noted that I have not listed the following periodicals of which I was able to obtain only one or two scattered

numbers: "Berita Gerwani" for 1959 and 1960, "Buletin Pemuda Rakjat" for 1955, and Gerwani's "Wanita Indonesia" for 1955 and 1956.

The English-language materials were, in general, readily available in Australian libraries. The Indonesian-language materials were more difficult to come by. Some were borrowed from Australian libraries and from colleagues in Australia, others were microfilmed in Cornell University library, but most were obtained or examined during my stay in Indonesia. The following libraries in Indonesia were found to contain a fair amount of political literature: the libraries of the Djakarta museum, of parliament, and of the Ministries of Information and Labour, all in Djakarta; and the Hatta Foundation library in Jogjakarta.

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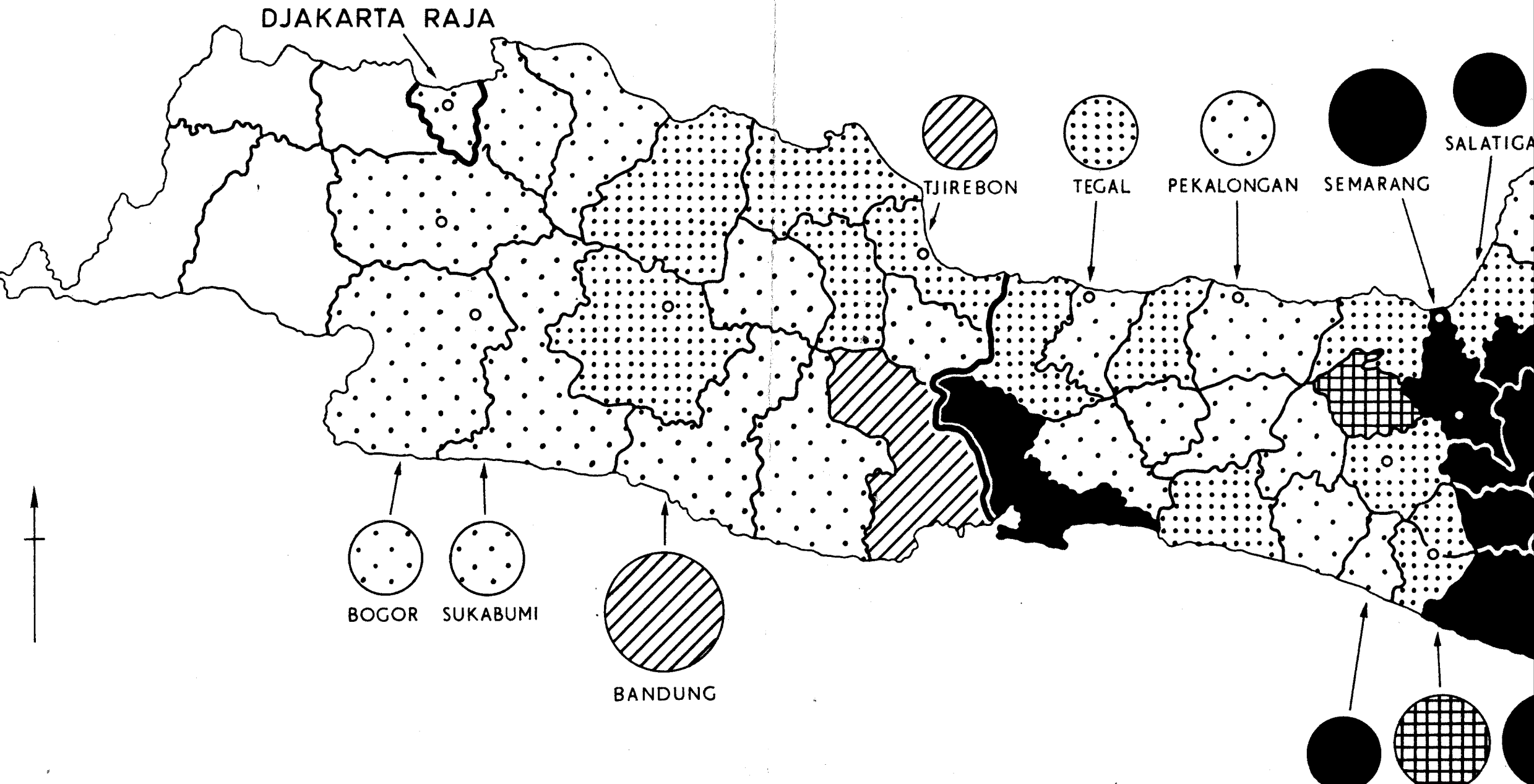
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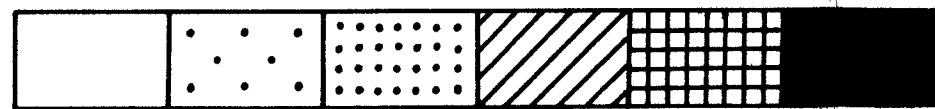
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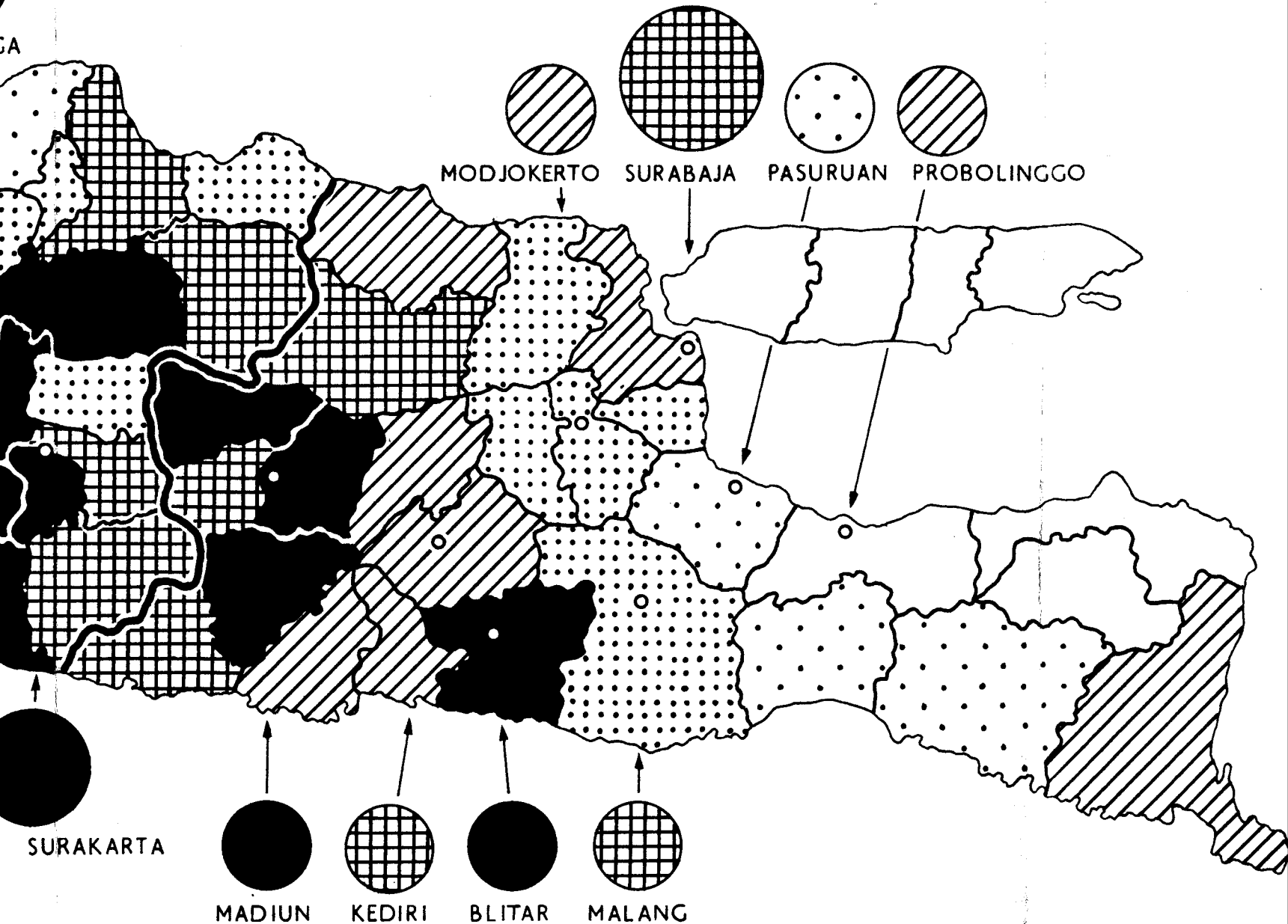
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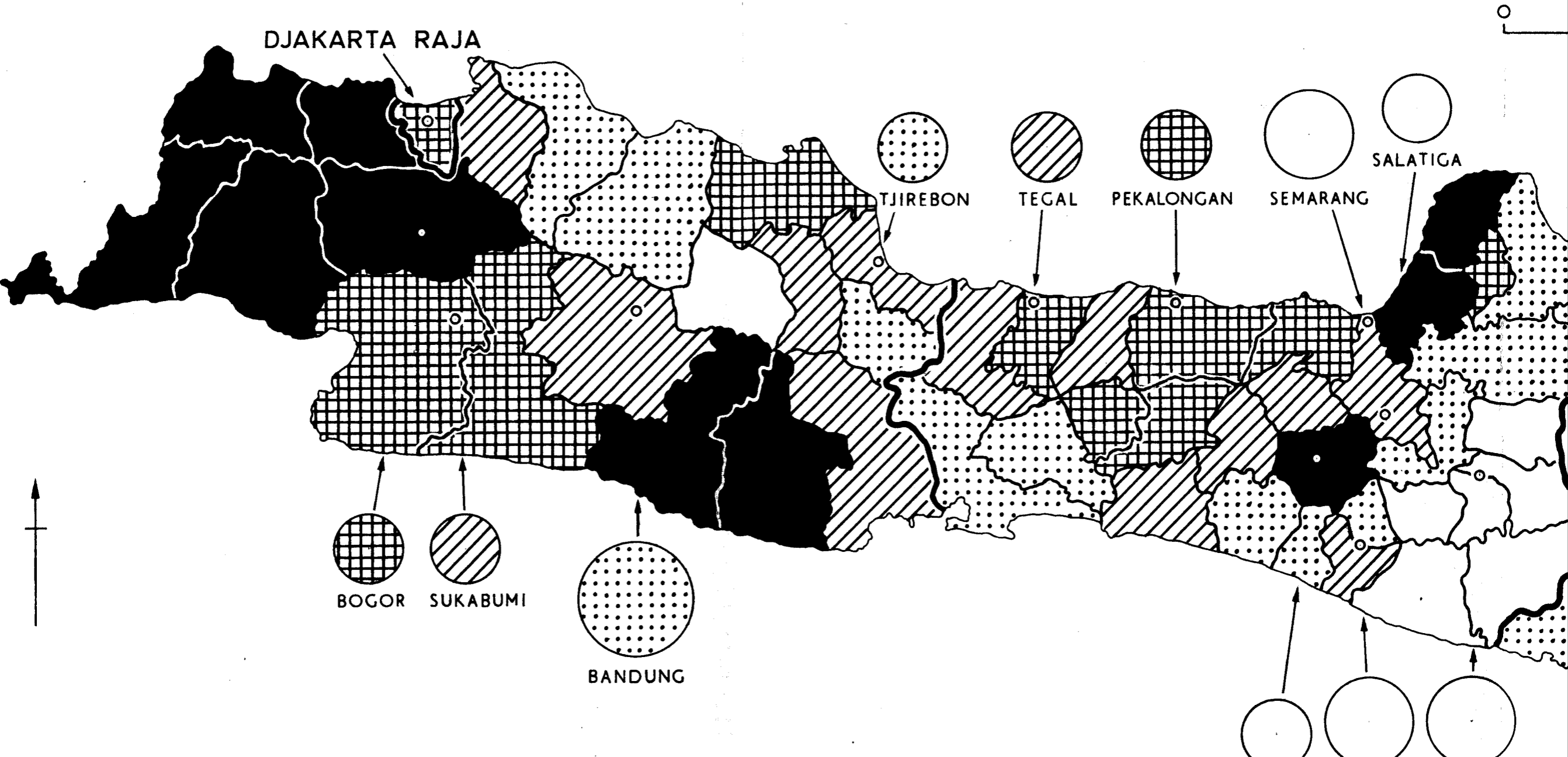
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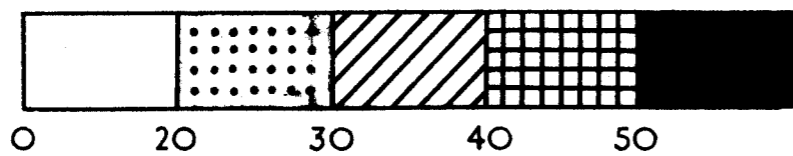
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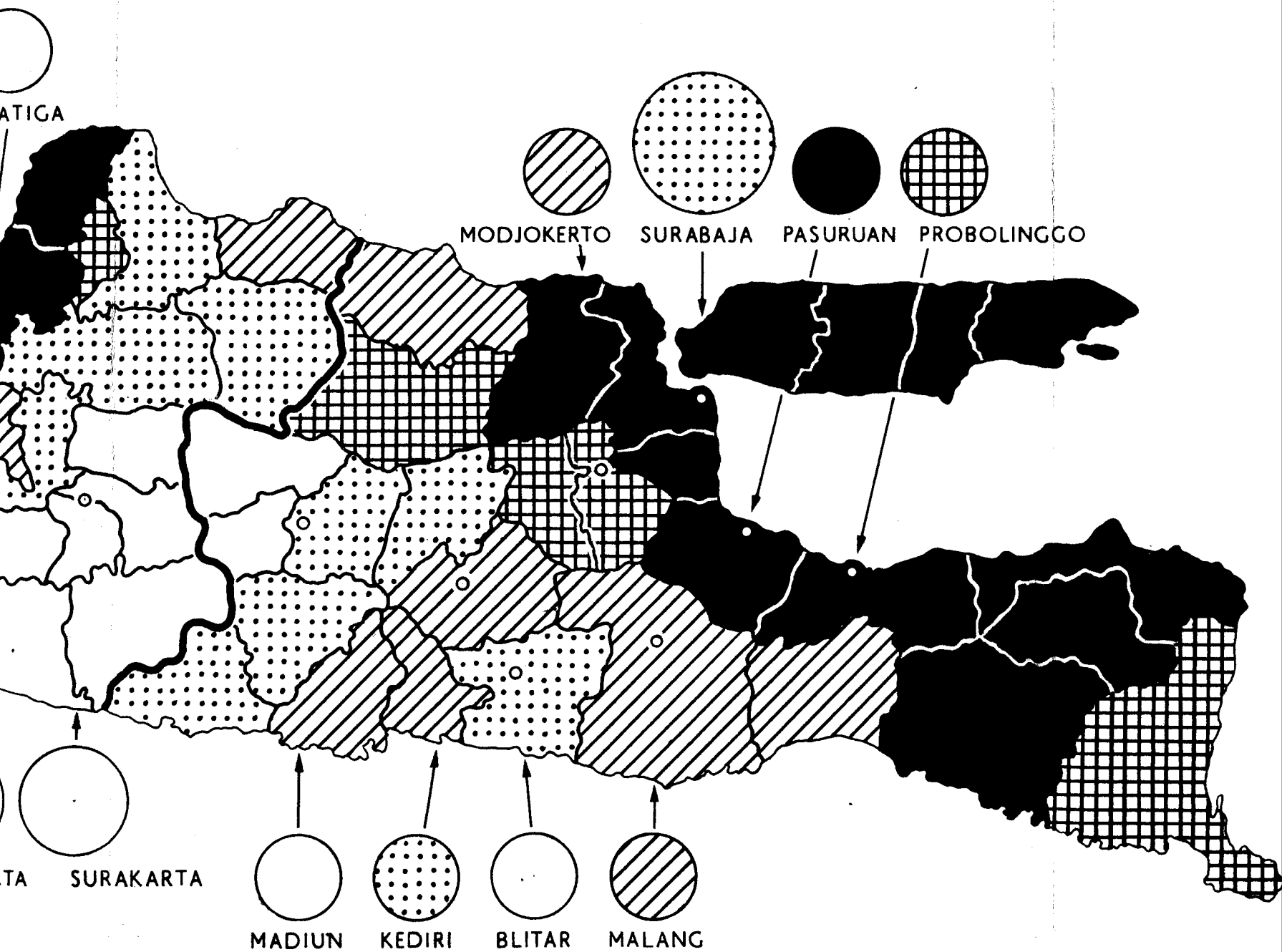
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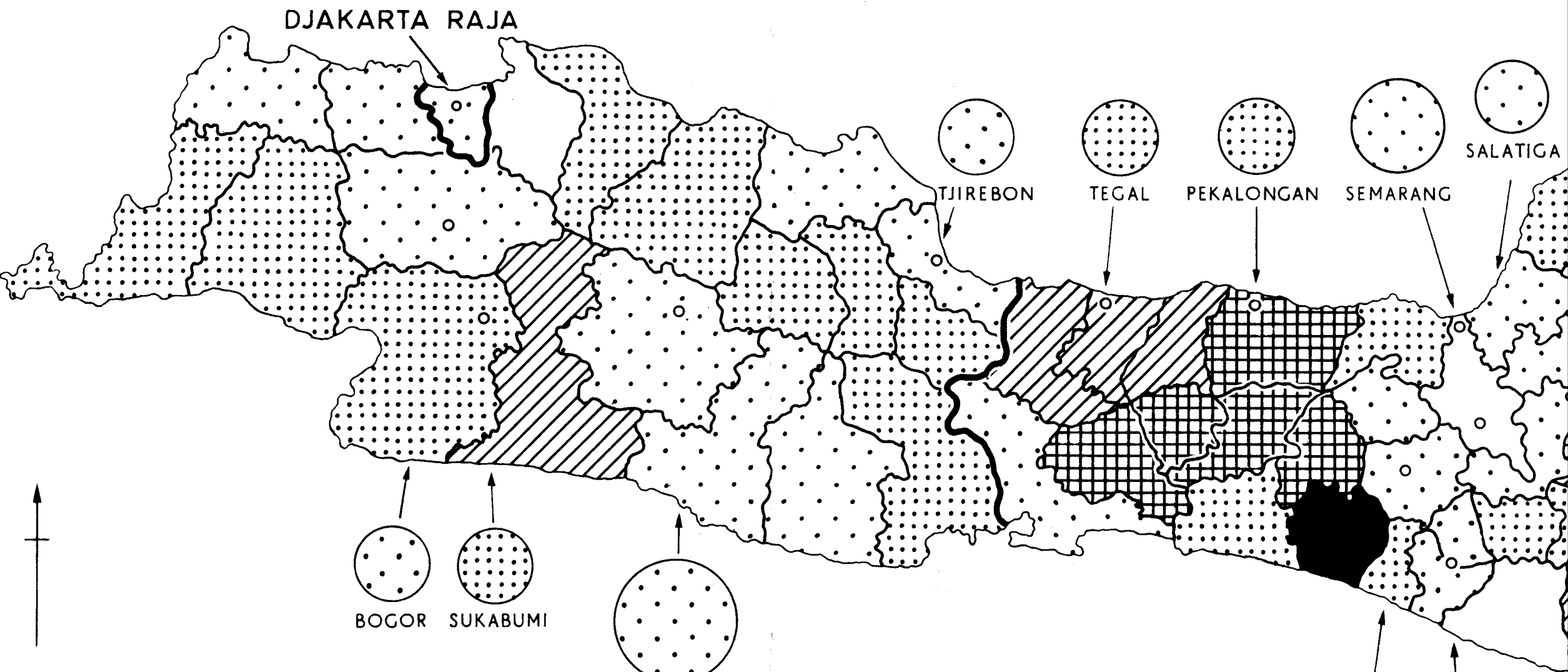


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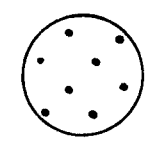
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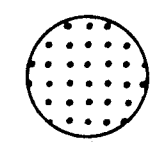




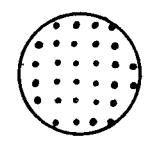
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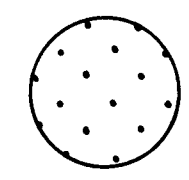
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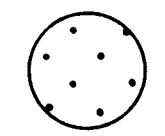
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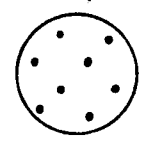
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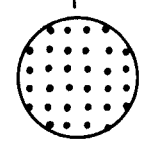
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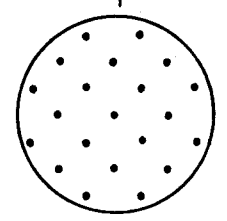
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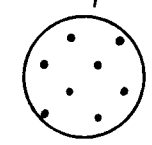
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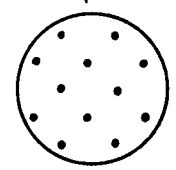
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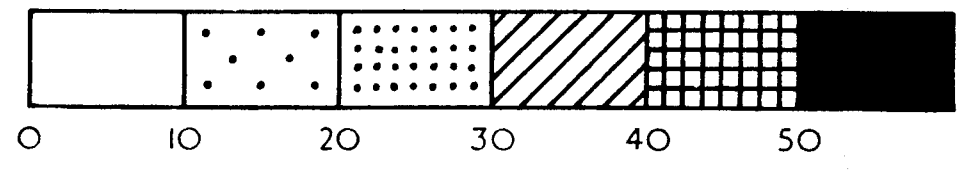


MAGELANG



JOGJAKARTA

VOTES AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VOTES



KABUPATEN BOUNDARY

PROVINCE BOUNDARY

P.N.I. VOTES, 1957 (JAVA)

0 50 100 MILES

