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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDONESIA

Guy J. Pauker

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PREFACE

For some years, the United States Air Force has sponsored research in depth on Indonesia, because of the great strategic importance of that country and of the lack of such studies elsewhere. With a rapidly growing population, now in excess of 115 million, and a geographic location that makes it the barrier between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean as well as the bridge between Asia and Australia, Indonesia is a significant factor in the global balance of power.

Three years ago, in the summer of 1965, Indonesia seemed on the eve of a Communist takeover and relations between Djakarta and Peking were described in both countries as those between "comrades-in-arms." If the trend set by former President Sukarno had continued, Communist China would have acquired a major ally in Southeast Asia, and the strategic situation in the Western Pacific would have been altered substantially, against the national interest of the United States.

The sudden and dramatic reversal of trends that took place in October 1965 has been the subject of numerous interpretations and speculations. The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), which three years ago appeared to be the strongest and most successful outside the Communist orbit, was outlawed and its organization destroyed. From "comrades-in-arms," Indonesia and Communist China have turned into hostile neighbors who do not maintain diplomatic relations. Former President Sukarno lives in disgrace, and the principal PKI leaders of three years ago are dead.

A historic event of this magnitude, involving innumerable inter-related human actions, cannot be explained with any high degree of accuracy on the basis of the facts available to the author at this time, but source materials that have not been previously accessible gathered during four trips to Indonesia since 1965, permit him to present here for the first time what he considers a coherent account of events and a plausible interpretation of the motives of the Communist leaders.

An event of such dramatic political significance as the destruction of the PKI was bound to generate heated controversy and persistent accusations of covert American involvement. This effort documents the domestic causation of the clash between the PKI and the Indonesian military. Communist China appears as the only foreign power which influenced indirectly the course of events by encouraging the militancy of the PKI.

A lengthier study of the events discussed here, examining in detail the investigations and trial records of the participants in the September 30 Movement of 1965, is now in preparation.

SUMMARY

After two ill-fated armed rebellions, in 1926 and 1948, the Communist Party of Indonesia embarked on a slow and patient policy of becoming a mass party that had chosen the "peaceful road" to power. Under the leadership of four young men, Aidit, Lukman, Njoto, and Sudisman, who gained control of the Politburo of the PKI in 1951, a policy of collaboration with President Sukarno and the national bourgeoisie was successfully followed until 1965.

During those years the PKI grew from an obscure party with less than 8,000 members to a gigantic movement numbering three million party members. Three million other supporters were found in the Communist youth groups, and a variety of front organizations claimed they had the support of fourteen million more, which gave the PKI altogether about twenty million direct followers.

At a time when the PKI seemed close to achieving political victory through a non-violent, gradual takeover of the Indonesian Government, a dramatic incident changed the course of history and led within a few months to the destruction of the Party and the death of its leaders: in the early hours of October 1, 1965, a group of military who called themselves the September 30 Movement kidnapped and assassinated the commander of the Army, General A. Yani, and five senior members of his General Staff. At the same time the September 30 Movement occupied the Djakarta radio station and proclaimed the creation of a Revolutionary Council and the dismissal of the Indonesian cabinet.

In the aftermath of those assassinations, numerous PKI cadres all over Indonesia were liquidated by the Indonesian Army's ruthless security operations, guided and supported in

many instances in East Java by members of the Nahdadul Ulama (Moslem) Party and in Central Java and Bali by members of the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI). These killings released pent-up social tensions generated by the PKI's aggressive agrarian policies of 1963-1965 and touched off a rural massacre in which several hundred thousand PKI followers lost their lives.

The investigations and trials of some of the major participants in the September 30 Movement, conducted by an Extraordinary Military Tribunal, have brought to light a wealth of information which, corroborated by other sources, makes it abundantly clear that the action against the six Army generals was initiated and planned by the chairman of the PKI, D. N. Aidit. His purpose was to accelerate the process of Communist takeover and to eliminate the only group from which he expected serious obstruction of his plans.

Under Aidit's leadership, PKI policy evolved from the patient gradualism of the 1951-1963 period to the adventurist use of violence in 1965. From 1963 to 1965, Aidit progressively lost faith in the "revisionist" doctrines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the political support of the Soviet Government. Rapprochement with the Communist Party of China and reliance on support from the rulers in Peking took the place of previous ideological and material ties with the Soviet Union.

This study suggests that the crucial moment of transition occurred during Aidit's visit to Communist China in September 1963, after which he set a course of bold militancy for the PKI and placed the Party on a collision course with the Army -- the only other significant political force of

Indonesia. This strategic decision was reflected overtly in persistent demands in January 1965 for the creation of an armed militia of 5 million workers and 10 million peasants. Covertly, it was revealed by the creation in November 1964 of a Special Bureau under the direct control of Aidit, with the well-guarded secret mission of recruiting and organizing military officers favorably disposed toward PKI objectives.

The September 30 Movement consisted exclusively of Communist-controlled officers managed by the Special Bureau. Although those involved in the plot seem to have believed that they acted in response to a political crisis created by the failing health of President Sukarno and by rumors that a "Council of Generals" was about to stage a coup ("instigated by the CIA" -- of course), evidence suggests that Aidit did not panic or react hastily to this situation. Rather, he had methodically prepared for the liquidation of the Army leadership from the time when he decided that the PKI had to abandon the "peaceful road to socialism" and use violence for the achievement of its purposes.

Following the assassination of the six generals and the summary execution by the Army of Aidit and his principal assistants, Lukman and Njoto, the PKI was driven underground, and the fourth-ranking member of the Politburo, Sudisman, undertook the reorganization of the Party along clandestine lines. Before he was arrested and tried publicly in July 1967, Sudisman secretly circulated a "self-criticism" of the Politburo that formulated the party line for the future, namely that "the Indonesian revolution must follow the road of the Chinese revolution."

Today the PKI is constantly harassed by the very efficient security operations of the military. In the summer of 1968 the new Politburo, formed after the arrest of Sudisman in December 1966, was destroyed during operations in the South Blitar area of East Java where a number of key cadres were arrested or killed. It is open to question whether Chinese Communism will continue to be influential among the remnants of the PKI after the disastrous setbacks suffered by those who followed "Mao's thought." Whether Soviet Communism will be able to reassert its influence in Indonesia depends on many imponderables, but most particularly on the success of the present government in carrying out economic development policies and social reforms responsive to the needs of the Indonesian people.

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I. FROM PERSECUTED FACTION TO MASS PARTY

The Communist Party of Indonesia, in its pursuit of power, has been led by several generations of political activists, all of whom made fatal mistakes and were consequently destroyed by antagonistic forces.[1] Students of Indonesian Communism will eventually have to explain why different generations, whose political consciousness was shaped under a variety of circumstances, namely Dutch colonialism, Japanese military occupation, and an independent nationalist regime, ended equally in disaster. Here I will only attempt to explain the circumstances that led to the fall of the PKI in 1965.

Addressing a Chinese audience in Canton in September 1963, the Chairman of the PKI, D. N. Aidit, divided the development of his Party into four periods:

1. the period of the founding of the Party and the struggle against the first white terror (1920-1926);
2. the period of underground struggle and the anti-fascist united front (1926-1945);

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[1] At the Seventh (Extraordinary) National Congress of the PKI in April 1962, Djoko Sudjono, a member of the PKI Secretariat and one of the founders of the "Illegal PKI" of 1935, stated that delegates from all the generations that created the Party participated in the Congress: the Founders' Generation (1920-1926); the 1926 Generation (1926-1935); the Anti-Fascist Generation (1935-1942); the Anti-Japanese Generation (1942-1945); the 1945 Generation (1945-1948); the New Road Generation (1945-1951); the 1951 Generation (1951-1954); the Fifth National Congress Generation (1954-1959); the Sixth National Congress Generation (1959-1962). See Harian Rakjat (People's Daily), Djakarta, May 9, 1962.

3. the period of the August Revolution in 1945 and the struggle against the second white terror (1945-1951);
4. the period of the national united front and the building of the Party (since 1951).[2]

Two years after Aidit's speech the ill-fated PKI entered another historical period, that of the third white terror. It resulted in the destruction of the largest Communist Party in the world, after those of China and the Soviet Union, and caused the death of numerous cadres, including most members of the PKI's Politburo and of hundreds of thousands of followers.

The PKI was outlawed on March 12, 1966, by a decree signed in the name of President Sukarno by General Suharto, who was at that time Commander of the Army in charge of security operations, following the failure of the Communist-initiated September 30 Movement. The teaching of Marxism-Leninism was prohibited in Indonesia by a decree of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS) of July 5, 1966. Today the PKI is a clandestine movement, divided into factions and constantly and effectively repressed by the security agencies of Indonesia.

The history of the PKI begins with the creation of the first Marxist organization in the Netherland East Indies, the Indische Sociaal Democratische Vereniging (The Indies Social Democratic Association), founded in Surabaya

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[2] D. N. Aidit, The Indonesian Revolution and the Immediate Tasks of the Communist Party of Indonesia, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1964, pp. 111-112.

on May 9, 1914, by H. J. F. M. Sneevliet, a young Dutchman who had arrived in the Indies the preceding year. Later, under the pseudonym Maring, he played an important role in the international Communist movement. The Indies Social Democratic Association (ISDV) brought together some 60 Social-Democrats. At its Seventh Congress, held in Semarang on May 23, 1920, the ISDV changed its name to Perserikatan Kommunist di India, which thus became the first Asian Communist Party. On December 25, 1920, at another conference in Semarang, the Party decided to join the Third International. At its Second Congress, held on June 7, 1924, in Djakarta, the name of the organization was changed to Partai Komunis Indonesia (the Communist Party of Indonesia), which reflected the nationalist aspirations active among the politically conscious population. At the same time, official headquarters of the Central Committee were transferred from Semarang to Djakarta.[3]

The first generation of Indonesian Communists was destroyed by the Dutch colonial authorities following the failure of the 1926-1927 armed Communist rebellion. The rebellion led to the arrest of 13,000 persons, of whom a few were executed, 5,000 were placed in preventive detention, 4,500 were sent to prison, and 1,308 were deported to Boven Digul in West Irian. The PKI was declared illegal in 1927. Ruth McVey, the historian of the early period of the PKI, writes that "this action put an effective end to Communist

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[3] Historical Branch of the PKI "Concise Chronology of the PKI," Harian Rakjat, May 22, 1965.

activity in the Indies for the remaining period of Dutch rule."[4]

The next generations grew up during a period of active repression by the Dutch of all nationalist manifestations. Then came the united front against fascism initiated by Georgi Dimitrov as Secretary General of the Comintern in 1935. In the Indies, that period was marked by the creation of the "Illegal PKI" by Musso, who returned for that purpose in April 1935 from several years of exile in the Soviet Union.[5] Little is known about the activities of the PKI in that period, or during the Japanese occupation, except that during the war years some Communists cooperated with the Allies in the common struggle against the Japanese.

After the war, Musso's name was linked with the New Road policy, which was announced immediately following his second return from the Soviet Union in August 1948. He was killed by the Indonesian Army during the PKI's second unsuccessful armed rebellion which broke out at Madiun in East Java on September 18, 1948. That venture ended with the imprisonment of up to 36,000 PKI members and sympathizers, and the summary execution of 11 top PKI leaders, including 5 members of the Politburo. The implementation of the New Road policy was left to D. N. Aidit and his associates, who took over the leadership of the PKI in 1951.

Although the early months of Aidit's leadership were marred by the arrests in August 1951 of at least 2,000 PKI members and sympathizers by the Masjumi Prime Minister

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[4]Ruth T. McVey, The Rise of Indonesian Communism, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1965, p. 353.

[5]Arnold C. Brackman, Indonesian Communism, A History, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1963, p. 30.

Sukiman, the Party thereafter met few obstacles and grew phenomenally. By the time of its Fifth National Congress in March 1954, the PKI claimed 165,206 members and candidate members. Five years later, at its Sixth National Congress in September 1959, the figure had increased nearly tenfold, to about one and a half million.

Between 1954 and 1959, the PKI scored other remarkable successes. At the September 1955 elections for Parliament it obtained 6,176,900 votes, 16.4 percent of all votes expressed. During the summer of 1957, the elections for regional assemblies in Java, Sumatra, and Riau brought the PKI 7,760,000 votes which, with 504,300 votes in other areas, as Chairman Aidit proudly stressed, amounted to an increase of 34 percent in electoral strength over 1955.[6]

The PKI leaders had reason to expect even more from the next general elections, which according to law were to be held in 1959. Many observers believed at the time that the PKI would emerge as the country's strongest political party, thus entitled by constitutional practice to form the new cabinet. If this had happened, the PKI would have been the first Communist party anywhere in the world to gain control of a national government by legal, peaceful means. Such victory would have been an epochal confirmation that a "parliamentary road to socialism," officially endorsed by Premier Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956, was indeed possible. But the Army, on which President Sukarno depended for protection against the Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia-Perdjuangan Semesta (PRRI-Permesta)

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[6] D. N. Aidit, Pilihan Tulisan (Selected Works), Vol. II, Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta, 1960. Translation published by U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Technical Services, Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS). JPRS, No. 8886, 1961, p. 288.

rebellions in Sumatra and the Celebes that threatened his regime, was not prepared to permit a Communist electoral victory and requested in May 1958 that elections be postponed for six years. Aidit attempted to counteract the fear of a PKI victory in an interview published on May 22, 1958:

> It is not true to assert that one party will be able to get the majority of seats in Parliament through the forthcoming elections. The PKI has estimated that it will obtain not more than 25 percent of all the votes. . . . The PKI will not fight for more than it is struggling at present, i.e. the formation of a National Coalition Cabinet.[7]

These assurances were not satisfactory, and general elections were postponed. Then, in July 1959, Indonesia's parliamentary system was replaced by an authoritarian regime backed by the Army, Sukarno's so-called "guided democracy." Showing considerable political agility, the leaders of the PKI decided to make the most of a bad thing and began to cultivate President Sukarno in his new role as a dictator, while continuing to try to reopen the "parliamentary road."

For five years, from 1958 to 1963, domestic and external crises made it easy for the Indonesian power elite to justify the postponement of general elections. The PRRI and Permesta rebellions, and the fanatic Darul Islam movement as well, threatened the survival of the state and the unity of the nation. The sharpening conflict with the Netherlands concerning the terra irredenta of Western New Guinea conjured the specter of war until international pressures led to a peaceful solution in Indonesia's favor in the summer of 1962.

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[7] Aidit, ibid., p. 323.

II. COMMUNIST POLITICAL STRATEGIES

With the miraculous disappearance of all major foreign and domestic foes, circumstances seemed auspicious for political normalization and, in February 1963, the PKI, showing a good sense of timing, requested elections "at the earliest possible date." The First Plenum of the new Central Committee appointed by the Seventh National Congress of 1962 stated that "there are at present no reasons whatsoever to procrastinate."[8]

But the forces anxious to prevent a Communist take-over prevailed, and President Sukarno announced at the Congress of the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI), on August 28, 1963, in Purwokerto, that "no elections will be held if this splits the unity of the Indonesian people."[9] Undaunted, the PKI reiterated its demands in a resolution adopted by the Second Plenum of the Central Committee held from December 23-26, 1963. Picking up the theme of national unity, it argued that the "time had come . . . to carry out a general election campaign which supports national unity and the Political Manifesto as hoped for by President Sukarno."[10]

The Political Manifesto was a speech given by President Sukarno on August 17, 1959, under the title "The Rediscovery

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[8] Antara News Agency, Djakarta, February 19, 1963, English edition, A/p. 11.

[9] Departemen Penerangan, Penerbitan Chusus 282, Amanat P. J. M. Presiden Sukarno (Department of Information, Special Publications 282, A Speech By His Excellency President Sukarno), pp. 8-9.

[10] Harian Rakjat, January 18, 1964, p. 3.

of our Revolution," in which he justified his coup d'état of July 5, 1959. In September 1959, a committee of the Republic's Supreme Advisory Council, headed by Aidit, recommended that the speech be made into the state's official policy guideline. That proposal, enacted by decree in January 1960, marked the beginning of an intensive effort to indoctrinate the Indonesian nation with Sukarno's ideology. The PKI was able to argue many of its demands in terms of these officially ratified political slogans. Particularly useful was the recognition of the concept of "enemies of the Revolution," which made it possible to purge (or as Sukarno called it, "retool") his opponents, who were in most cases also the enemies of the PKI.[11]

While attempting to keep the parliamentary road open, the PKI increased its options after 1959 by building up an alternative road which I described in 1961 as seeking to come to power by "acclamation":

> . . . building up [the Party's] prestige as the only solid, purposeful, disciplined, well-organized, capable political force in the country, a force to which Indonesia will turn in despair when all other possible solutions have failed. In building up this image, it is important that the PKI demonstrate its power, skill, and influence at all levels of public life.[12]

To establish their legitimacy, the PKI leaders worked hard to appear to the masses as Sukarno's most faithful disciples and therefore his most deserving political heirs.

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[11] See Dewan Pertimbangan Agung, Tudjuh Bahan2 Pokok Indoktrinasi (Supreme Advisory Council, Seven Basic Indoctrination Materials), Djakarta, 1961, pp. 86-87.

[12] Guy J. Pauker, "Current Communist Tactics in Indonesia," Asian Survey, Berkeley, California, May 1961, p. 30.

This unorthodox and novel strategy seemed in keeping with the independent frame of mind manifested by Aidit early in his career, when Stalin was still alive and Communism was far from polycentric. At a time when deviant Communists were executed in Eastern Europe and China was still accepting Soviet leadership, Aidit showed real courage as leader of a then minor Communist Party, stating on May 23, 1952:

> The people of Indonesia must be oriented toward the socialist Soviet Union and not toward imperialist America. This does not mean that the state structure of the Soviet Union, that is, the Soviet system, should be followed by all nations, including Indonesia. Certainly not. On the contrary, each nation will travel its own road toward socialism, on the basis of the development of its national situation, its political situation, its economy, and its culture. [Emphasis supplied.][13]

In courting Sukarno's favors as an alternative road to power, in case the parliamentary one was to remain closed, the PKI leaders were trying an imaginative but dangerous gambit. For their own political purposes they were drawing on the unique popularity of Sukarno, who had used modern techniques of mass manipulation to bolster his charisma as the nation's leader, endowing himself with the aura surrounding traditional monarchs, whom most of the population considered to be possessed of divine, magical powers.

As the leading nationalist agitator of his country for almost four decades and as principal national spokesman and

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[13] D. N. Aidit, "Menempuh Djalan Rakjat" ("Embarking on the People's Road"), speech to commemorate the thirty-second anniversary of the PKI, in Selected Works, Vol. I, 1959. JPRS, Translation No. 6551, 1961, p. 43.

leader for over 20 years, Sukarno had attained the summit of political power. The Provisional People's Consultative Assembly had proclaimed him, in May 1963, President for life, a decision which received enthusiastic Communist support.[14]

The Communist leaders spared no efforts to establish in the public mind their closeness to the President. The statements of Aidit and his associates were replete with reverent quotations from Sukarno's pronouncements, which seem to be recited as frequently as passages from the Communist classics.

By mid-1965 it looked as if Aidit were about to be proclaimed the political heir of the aging President. The forty-fifth anniversary of the PKI on May 23, 1965, was celebrated at the Djakarta Stadium as if it were a national holiday. In the presence of cabinet members, foreign diplomats, and various dignitaries, 120,000 spectators heard Sukarno describe Aidit as the "bulwark of Indonesia." The President then confirmed Aidit's statement that the PKI had three million members, the Communist youth organization Pemuda Rakjat another three million, and that altogether Communism had twenty million sympathizers.

This incredible figure, representing one-fifth of the total population of Indonesia at that time, does not appear farfetched even though many persons must have belonged to more than one organization. After all, in 1964 the Communist Federation of Labor Unions (SOBSI) claimed more than three and a half million members; the Indonesian Farmers' Front (BTI) eight

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[14] See Harian Rakjat, May 20, 1963.

and a half million members; the Women's Front (GERWANI) one and three-quarter million members; and smaller front organizations formed by groups such as artists (LEKRA) and students (CGMI) enough additional members to bring the total to twenty million.

This enormous mass movement provided Sukarno with huge enthusiastic audiences wherever he went -- audiences which he thoroughly enjoyed, especially since he lacked an organization of his own to mobilize support for his agitational politics. Understandably, at the end of his speech at the forty-fifth anniversary of the PKI, Sukarno exhorted the Communists, as in 1962 at their Seventh Congress, "PKI, go ahead! Onward, onward, onward, never retreat."[15]

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[15] Ibid., May 24, 1965.

III. SUKARNO'S AMBIGUOUS ROLE

The true nature of Sukarno's relationship with the PKI lends itself to fascinating speculations. Reactionary politicians and colonial authorities have always been prone to pin the Communist label on nationalists fighting against imperialism. Therefore one ought to approach this subject with great diffidence. Yet there are a number of puzzling questions, answers to which would cast new light on the events of the last years of Sukarno's political career.

Was there special significance in the fact that as a student, in March 1923, Sukarno had addressed the "Congress of the PKI and Red Sarekat Islam," convened in Bandung by the Communists?[16]

Was Sukarno revealing a major influence on his political career when, on July 25, 1965, at the thirty-eighth anniversary of the PNI, he praised the 1926 Communist rebellion and related that "one of the PKI leaders from Tjiamis, who had been sentenced to death by hanging, left a note exhorting me to carry on the struggle"?[17]

Concerning the banning of the PKI after the 1926 uprising, Sukarno had stated in his book Sarinah, published in 1947:

> At that time, Dutch imperialism had just lashed ferociously at the pure heart of the Communists. Severe blows were inflicted upon the Indonesian Communist Party and the People's Union. Thousands of their leaders were thrown into jails or banished

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[16] See Ruth McVey, op. cit., p. 155.

[17] Harian Rakjat, July 26, 1965.

> to the Upper Digul. To carry on the revolutionary struggle, I then founded the Indonesian National Party.[18]

Was the PNI founded by Sukarno in July 1927, a few months after the PKI had been destroyed by the Dutch following the 1926-1927 rebellion, created as a political shelter for Communists who had escaped detection? Was Sukarno, as an imaginative young revolutionary, pursuing in his own way the same political objectives as the banned PKI?

In 1926, Sukarno published in Suluh Indonesia Muda an article entitled "Nationalism, Islamism, and Marxism." Was his thesis developed independently, the thought of a young nationalist eager to see all native political forces join against the common colonialist enemy, or was Sukarno simply reiterating in Aesopian language the "united front from above" strategy advocated by the Comintern from 1920 to 1927? Sukarno was obviously familiar with the Comintern's strategy when he wrote in that article:

> The new tactics of Marxism do not reject cooperation with nationalists and Moslems in Asia. They even support true Nationalist and Moslem movements. Marxists who are hostile to Nationalist and Moslem movements in Asia do not follow the spirit of the times and do not understand the changed Marxist tactics.[19]

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[18] Quoted by Aidit in The Indonesian Revolution, op. cit., pp. 5 and 113.

[19] Sukarno's article seems to have been forgotten until it was reprinted in a collection of his early papers entitled Dibawah Bendera Revolusi (Under the Flag of the Revolution), Vol. I, 1959, pp. 1-23, published in Peking. It was then reprinted as a pamphlet by the PKI in 1963, probably in

I do not interpret these items as circumstantial evidence that Sukarno was a crypto-Communist who rose, under PKI guidance, to the presidency of Indonesia. His personality and his career make it unlikely that he ever accepted orders from others, much less the harsh discipline of a conspiratorial movement. Sukarno was his own man, pursuing his political fortunes according to his own judgment. But his basic political vision was that of left-wing radical nationalism, even though his romantic temperament and taste for high living, as well as political considerations, prompted him to behave, as President, in the style of an Oriental potentate.

Yet, despite such behavioral inconsistencies resulting from character defects that his political beliefs were not able to eradicate, Sukarno cannot be dismissed as a shallow opportunist. He went down with the PKI which he had favored, rather than accept the transfer to the anti-Communist forces that became dominant in the aftermath of the September 30 Movement of the enormous political capital represented by his popularity.

This is not the place for an essay on Sukarno's political behavior, but I believe that a crude, personalized version of Marxism had conditioned him against accepting the role of a "bourgeois nationalist." The revolutionary heroes who had captured his youthful imagination must have implanted the desire, which became stronger after he had passed his prime, to be remembered as a true revolutionary

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support of its claim for participation in the government of Indonesia. On the united front from above strategy, see Ruth McVey, op. cit., p. 68. For the quote from Sukarno's 1926 article, see Nasionalisme, Islamisme dan Marxisme, Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta, 1963, p. 25.

leader. The PKI capitalized on these traits successfully, up to a point, but in the end its reliance on Sukarno had catastrophic results.

Yet all this does not warrant the facile conclusion that Sukarno was the tool of a protracted Communist conspiracy. There are striking discontinuities in his political career. When armed Communist units rebelled against the Republican government in September 1948 at Madiun, Sukarno -- though only after intensive prodding by nationalist officers -- lent his popularity to the Indonesian Army and appealed by radio to the Indonesian people to choose between him and the Communist leader Musso.[20]

In 1951 Sukarno was still being attacked by the PKI as a "false and demagogic Marxist," "playing a primary role in the Madiun Affair" and "selling out his country to the Dutch in the Round Table Conference Agreement."[21]

Only after D. N. Aidit and his young associates Lukman, Njoto, and Sudisman, took over the leadership of the PKI did Sukarno's relations with the Communists become increasingly cordial. Under his protection the PKI then grew from less than 8,000 members in 1951 to a gigantic mass organization in 1965. In the 1960s, Aidit, Njoto, and Lukman became ministers of State. Then the three Communist leaders met

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[20] See George McT. Kahin, [illegible]ism and Revolution in Indonesia, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1952, p. 292. Kahin describes the episode, but does not mention that Sukarno acted under Army pressure.

[21] Donald Hindley, The Communist Party of Indonesia 1951-1963, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964, p. 53.

their death, as did many thousands of their followers, and Sukarno's career ended ignominiously, as the result of one of the most bizarre political episodes of contemporary history.

IV. THE SEPTEMBER 30 AFFAIR

On the night of September 30 to October 1, 1965, six senior generals of the Indonesian Army were either shot down in their homes, or taken to a place on the perimeter of the Indonesian Air Force base Halim Perdanakusuma and murdered there. The only target of the conspirators who escaped, by jumping over the wall and hiding for several hours, was Defense Minister and Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces General A. H. Nasution. Those who lost their lives were Commander of the Army Lieutenant General A. Yani, and five senior members of the General Staff, Major General Soeprapto, Major General S. Parman, Major General Harjono, Brigadier General D. I. Pandjaitan, and Brigadier General Soetojo Siswomihardjo.

Hours after these assassinations, at 7:15 on the morning of October 1st, the Djakarta radio station, which had been occupied by rebel troops, broadcast a long statement which began as follows:

> On Thursday, September 30, 1965, a military move took place within the Army in the capital city of Djakarta which was aided by troops from other branches of the Armed Forces. The September 30th Movement, which is led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung, Commandant of a Battalion of the Tjakrabirawa, the personal bodyguard of President Sukarno, is directed against Generals who were members of the self-styled Council of Generals. A number of Generals have been arrested and important communications media and other vital installations have been placed under the control of the September 30th Movement, while President Sukarno is safe under its protection. Also a number of other prominent leaders in society, who had become targets of the action by the Council of Generals, are under the protection of the September 30th Movement.

> The Council of Generals is a subversive movement sponsored by the CIA and has been very active lately, especially since President Sukarno was seriously ill in the first week of August of this year. Their hope that President Sukarno would die of his illness has not materialized.
>
> Therefore, in order to attain its goal the Council of Generals had planned to conduct a show of force (machtvertoon) on Armed Forces Day, October 5 this year, by bringing troops from East, Central and West Java. With this large concentration of military power the Council of Generals had even planned to carry out a counter-revolutionary coup prior to October 5, 1965. It was to prevent such a counter-revolutionary coup that Lieutenant Colonel Untung launched the September 30th Movement which has proved a great success.[22]

Far from being a great success, the September 30 Movement failed to secure power, led to the death of those involved in it, and reversed the course of Indonesian history, by precipitating the destruction of the PKI.

Many students of Indonesian politics, including the present writer, found it at first difficult to believe that the PKI had anything to do with that brutal and clumsy plot. The leaders of the PKI seemed to be skillful and patient operators who had been able to build their party into a formidable political organization and had acquired in the process considerable stature in their own country and in the international Communist movement. Their past caution made it implausible that they would repeat the mistakes of 1926 and 1948, which had temporarily destroyed their party.

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[22] Harian Rakjat, October 2, 1965. Translation in Indonesia, Vol. I, April 1966, published by the Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, p. 134.

Before October 1965, considerable controversy prevailed among foreign experts with regard to the future of the PKI. It was claimed by some that the apparent strength of the PKI was illusory.[23] In that view, Communist leaders were being absorbed into the Indonesian ruling class, whose way of life they were emulating, while failing to develop among their followers the militancy required for a revolutionary take-over. Therefore, Communist victory appeared to those observers as an unlikely possibility.

By contrast, the present writer concluded, in the first half of 1964, that the PKI had outmaneuvered all major rival political organizations and, because of Indonesia's urgent need for better government, would come to power in the near future, by a combination of three factors: Sukarno's active support, lack of political competitors within the framework of an increasingly radical political milieu, and gradual elimination of all effective opposition, an operation justified in part by a militant foreign policy that equated all actions of the regime with the national interest.[24]

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[23] Ruth T. McVey, "Indonesian Communism and the Transition to Guided Democracy," in A. Doak Barnett (ed.), Communist Strategies in Asia, F. A. Praeger, New York, 1963, p. 149; Herbert Feith, "Dynamics of Guided Democracy," in Ruth T. McVey (ed.), Indonesia, Human Relations Area Files, Inc., Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1963, pp. 340-341; Donald Hindley, "President Sukarno and the Communists: The Politics of Domestication," American Political Science Review, December 1962, p. 915; Daniel S. Lev, "The Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," Pacific Affairs, New York, Winter 1963-1964, p. 355, ftn. 13.

[24] My views were expressed in Communist Prospects in Indonesia, The RAND Corporation, RM-4135-PR, November 1964, and in "Indonesia in 1964: Toward a 'People's Democracy'?" Asian Survey, Berkeley, California, February 1965.

Those who saw no future for the PKI were convinced that it would never dare confront the Army, which would therefore be able to block indefinitely the PKI's road to power. Alternatively, I believed that the prevailing atmosphere of radical nationalism, under a leadership pursuing an aggressive, ego-gratifying foreign policy, claiming for Indonesia the role of "lighthouse" of the Third World, would induce the military establishment to accept the PKI as partner in the common pursuit of national glory.

Communist leaders and Army officers were, after all, members of the same generation, whose lives had been dominated by the struggle against colonialism and by strong anti-imperialist sentiments. They were not divided by genuine class antagonisms, but came from the same social background, in a country that lacked both substantial landowners and indigenous capitalists.

Communist leaders and members of the officer corps might have been brought together by Sukarno's patient policy of reconciliation, in the name of shared national aspirations. In this task, the PKI at first helped Sukarno. Although they were attacking the officer corps as "bureaucratic capitalists," a pejorative term borrowed from Communist China, the PKI leaders were also courting the military by offering cooperation through the National Front, making repeated appearances at the war colleges and incessant appeals for common action in pursuit of nationalist aspirations.

Although past states of mind are difficult to reconstruct, especially after the upheaval of 1965, the military could hardly have avoided being ambivalent toward the Communists, who seemed so successful and had such powerful

friends, not only in Sukarno but also abroad. It could not have escaped the attention of the military that the PKI had abstained from using its influence with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to block the Soviet military assistance programs initiated around 1960. The relationship between the two forces was not as simple as it appears in retrospect.

V. PKI RADICALISM AFTER 1963

What has to be explained is why, after 1963, the PKI committed, first, the strategic mistake of adopting new policies which placed it on a collision course with the Army and then the tactical mistake of making a showdown unavoidable by initiating the assassination of the Army leadership. Were the PKI leaders dizzy with success? Their fatal self-confidence seems to have grown inordinately after Sukarno decreed the abolition of martial law on December 19, 1962, effective as of May 1, 1963. From then on they seem to have overestimated their victory against the military, and perhaps also the strength of their following inside the Armed Forces.

There was, of course, some factual basis for their overconfidence. Security operations since October 1965, and especially in the summer of 1968, revealed that the PKI had made serious inroads within the Army, including senior officers whose affiliation was so well concealed that they still occupied positions of trust two years after the PKI had been banned.

Besides, in the political climate prevailing in Indonesia in 1964 and 1965, even persons secretly hostile to Communism may have given the impression of being friendly toward the PKI or at least neutral. Sukarno, who constantly denounced what he called "Communist-phobia," had not only managed to make anti-Communism appear politically dangerous, but he also presented it as bad form, something just not done in his country.

Aidit and his comrades may have overestimated the weight of their support in the Armed Forces and also the

"revolutionary situation" in the country as a whole. They may have believed their own statistics, according to which roughly one-fifth of the total population, or almost one-half of the adult population, appeared friendly to the PKI. If so, they committed the fatal mistake of equating friendly inclinations with militancy.

In November 1963, a field grade Army officer concerned with Territorial Affairs told me that PKI's membership drives were successful largely because people had much free time in the villages and slums of Indonesia and were starved for news and entertainment. A membership card opened to the holder participation in meetings where newspapers were read, matters of general interest were discussed, and intellectual stimulation was provided. According to that officer, membership figures did not measure the PKI's strength as a militant organization.

At the time, impressed by the PKI's dynamism, which contrasted so strikingly with the apathy of other political parties, I discounted the argument. I realized that aggressive, fanatic, dedicated cadres are a small minority in any movement, but I assumed that the sheer weight of numbers would protect the PKI and was bound to make itself felt in the political life of the country. Naturally, in free elections members of Communist-controlled organizations were likely to vote for the PKI, however lacking they might be in militancy. If a new government were to be appointed by Sukarno, in an extra-parliamentary setting, the size of the PKI and the disarray of its political rivals was a powerful argument in favor of the Communists. Even in case of internal war it could be assumed that those who had Communist sympathies would at least passively

favor PKI guerrillas against their enemies. Finally, it seemed difficult to visualize the destruction of a party with such a broad mass base. In November 1964, I had written:

> Were the Communists to lose Sukarno as a protector, it seems doubtful that other national leaders, capable of rallying Indonesia's dispersed and demoralized anti-Communist forces, would emerge in the near future. Furthermore, these forces would probably lack the ruthlessness that made it possible for the Nazis to suppress the Communist Party of Germany a few weeks after the elections of March 5, 1933, an election in which the Communist Party still won five million votes, almost 13 percent of the total. The enemies of the PKI, including the remnants of various right-wing rebellions, the suppressed political parties, and certain elements in the armed forces, are weaker than the Nazis, not only in numbers and in mass support, but also in unity, discipline, and leadership.[25]

The assassination of the six Army generals by the September 30 Movement elicited the ruthlessness that I had not anticipated a year earlier and resulted in the death of large numbers of Communist cadres. Then, social tensions created in the countryside by Communist agrarian and other policies exploded in large-scale massacres triggered by the Army's anti-Communist mopping-up operations. Thus, contrary to my forecast, the PKI was destroyed as an overt organization and up to 300,000 persons were killed.

Aidit's change of strategy during the year 1963 may have been based on similarly erroneous assumptions. His Political Report to the First Plenum of the Seventh Central

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[25] Guy J. Pauker, Communist Prospects in Indonesia, The RAND Corporation, RM-4135-PR, November 1964, p. 22.

Committee presented on February 10, 1963, entitled "Dare, Dare, and Dare Again!", sounded the keynote for a new policy.[26] The strategy pursued by the PKI under Aidit's leadership between 1951 and 1963 had been to change slowly and cautiously the balance of power between political forces. In May 1953, he had stated:

> The PKI uses Marxism-Leninism as a constant guide in determining the character of its policy; it also bases its decisions on the existing balance in social forces. The PKI is obliged to continuously calculate the balance in the unstable social forces in Indonesia.[27]

After the failure of the PKI to obtain seats in a coalition cabinet, even though it had established itself as one of the country's four major parties and was willing to cooperate with the other three, the Communist leaders probably reviewed their strategy, which Aidit then explained to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Fifth Central Committee in July 1956 in these words:

> The PKI's work is not limited solely to the parliamentary struggle, but consists also, and primarily, in activity among the masses of workers, peasants, intelligentsia, and all other democratic masses. Basically, the PKI's activity is to change the balance of power between the imperialists, landlords, and other comprador

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[26] Significantly, this was the first PKI document published in English translation by the Foreign Languages Press in Peking, 1963, 91 pp.

[27] D. N. Aidit, "Menudju Indonesia Baru" ("Toward a New Indonesia") speech on May 23, 1953, to commemorate the thirty-third anniversary of the PKI, in Selected Works, Vol. I, 1959, JPRS Translation No. 6551, 1961, p. 88.

> bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the people on the other, by arousing, mobilizing and organizing the masses.[28]

During this period the PKI concentrated on signing up anybody who was willing to join, in the hope of creating a bandwagon effect. This is the strategy which I described as the road to power by acclamation, based on creating the impression of an irresistibly dynamic movement which also had the endorsement of the unchallenged national leader Sukarno. But after almost eight years this strategy had not yet succeeded, despite the fact that the PKI's major enemies among the political parties, namely the Masjumi and the PSI, had been banned by Sukarno in August 1960, and Indonesia had moved very close to the international Communist orbit.

Aidit and his associates were apparently under increasing attack from younger cadres who were beginning to lose confidence in the strategy of protracted struggle and were also viewing with suspicion the mingling of Politburo members with the "bourgeois establishment." This problem came to the surface in Aidit's remark at the First National Conference of the PKI, on July 3, 1964:

> The internal contradictions in the Party cannot be avoided but must be faced, taken care of and terminated. In settling in the right way the Party's internal contradictions, the skill and quality of the leadership increases. Bringing to an end the internal contradictions of the

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[28] D. N. Aidit, "Bersatulah Untuk Menjelesaikan Tuntutan Revolusi Agustus 1945" ("Unite to Complete the Demands of the 1945 August Revolution"), General Report to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the PKI, July 1956, in Selected Works, Vol. II, 1960, JPRS Translation No. 8886, 1961, p. 50.

> Party is an absolute condition for increasing the ability of the Party to terminate external contradictions.[29]

But Aidit and his senior comrades were themselves increasingly disenchanted with the Soviet Union, which had capitulated on Cuba in October 1962, had refused economic aid for the rapid development of Communist China, and had not been able to help the PKI achieve its domestic objectives despite massive military and economic aid to the Sukarno regime. The February 1963 Political Report reflected the growing impatience of the PKI leadership, which was under pressure from the more militant younger PKI cadres and probably also from its Chinese friends:

> Although the demand for the formation of a Gotong-Royong Cabinet with NASAKOM as the fulcrum[30] is scientific, objective, democratic, and patriotic, the Indonesian Communists must be fully conscious of the fact that the question of its formation is one of the balance of forces, and that there is no class that voluntarily wants to share power with another class. Not only is the reactionary bourgeoisie reluctant to share power with another class, but the national bourgeoisie too, unless compelled to do so, is reluctant to share power with the proletariat.[31]

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[29] D. N. Aidit, "Dengan Semangat Banteng Merah Mengkonsolidasi Organisasi Komunis Jang Besar" ("With the Spirit of the Red Buffalo Consolidate the Big Communist Organization"), in Harian Rakjat, July 6, 1964, p. 3.

[30] The concept of a Gotong Royong (Mutual Aid) Cabinet was launched by Sukarno on February 21, 1957, when he tried unsuccessfully to form a cabinet in which all four major parties would be represented. NASAKOM was an acronym later coined by Sukarno to signify the political cooperation of all three major ideological currents in Indonesia, namely Nationalism, Religion, and Communism.

[31] D. N. Aidit, Dare, Dare, and Dare Again!, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1963, p. 50.

VI. CHINESE INFLUENCES ON AIDIT

Although the conclusion that even the national bourgeoisie must be compelled to share power with the proletariat was expressed publicly in February 1963, marking the beginning of the PKI's new militancy, the policy of the Party seemed still to be vacillating a few months later when Aidit made several speeches in China, following visits to several other Communist countries, including the Soviet Union. In a report delivered to the Higher Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on September 2, 1963, he argued that

> ...the state power of the Republic of Indonesia is a contradiction between two opposing aspects: The first aspect is that which represents the interests of the people. The second aspect is that which represents the interest of the people's enemies. The first aspect is embodied in the progressive attitude and policy of President Sukarno which enjoys the support of the CPI and other sections of the people. The second aspect is embodied in the attitude and policy of the rightists and the diehards; they are the old established forces. Today the popular aspect has become the main aspect and plays a leading role in the state power of the Republic of Indonesia, meaning that it guides the course of the political development in the state power of the Republic of Indonesia.[32]

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[32] Aidit, The Indonesian Revolution, op. cit., p. 42. This English translation published in Peking uses "CPI" instead of the standard "PKI."

The impression conveyed by this passage is that Aidit assumed that the balance of power had tipped in favor of the PKI. Yet he obviously still had doubts and hesitations, and he expressed them in an obscure passage in which he claimed that "the antipopular aspect has ceased to be the main aspect," but "it is still the dominant aspect." What this could perhaps mean is that he believed that the anti-Communist forces no longer had real influence on the formulation of Sukarno's policies, but were still a dangerous obstruction blocking the PKI's road to power.

Two days later, on September 4, 1963, at a mass rally in Peking, Aidit stated that he expected the struggle for power in Indonesia to be a lengthy one:

> On the basis of an analysis of Indonesian society and of the Indonesian revolution, the Constitution of the CPI [sic] stresses that the Indonesian revolution is a protracted and complex one. To be able to guide the revolution, the CPI must carry the people's revolutionary struggle forward by using the tactic of advancing steadily, carefully and surely. In the course of the struggle, the CPI must consistently oppose two trends: capitulationism and adventurism.[33]

It would seem that while preparing his September 2 and 4 speeches Aidit was still hesitating between the peaceful and the violent road to power, a dilemma which -- as will be seen below -- was apparently solved during the following three weeks of his stay in China. On September 4 the main thrust of the PKI's strategy seemed yet to be in line with the Party's past policy, based on the concept of the two aspects of state power in Indonesia,

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[33] Ibid., p. 65.

the popular aspect and the anti-popular aspect:

> Indonesia must carry out the revolution from top to bottom and from bottom to top. By "from top to bottom" we mean that the CPI has to urge the state to adopt various revolutionary measures and carry out reforms in personnel and in state organs. By "from bottom to top" we mean that the Party has to arouse, organize and mobilize the people to realize these reforms. By these methods the Party is changing the balance of forces between imperialism, the bureaucrat-capitalists, compradors and landlords on the one hand and the people on the other.[34]

Aidit found it still necessary to argue, in intellectually rather unconvincing terms, that his policy was different from the Italian Communist Party's doctrine of "structural reform," which was viewed at that time in the Communist world as the epitome of gradualism and had occasioned the vigorous denunciation of the Italian Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti by the Communist Party of China.[35] He probably still felt rather defensive on this issue, particularly in China.

We know, from a statement made by the Italian Communist leader Giuliano Pajetta after a visit to Djakarta in April 1963 that he was surprised to find the views of the PKI to "differ markedly" from those of his own party. Pajetta confessed that he failed to understand the Indonesians' "prejudice against the 'peaceful paths.'"[36]

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[34] Ibid., p. 86.

[35] The Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1963.

[36] Giuliano Pajetta, article in Rinascita, Rome, June 8, 1963, pp. 14-15. JPRS, No. 22592, 1964, p. 13.

This is useful testimony, from a visitor who had probably lengthy doctrinal discussions with the PKI leaders. It corroborates the statement made to the February 1963 Plenum, which we discussed earlier. But altogether, the speeches in Peking on September 2 and 4 seem to express uncertainty about the future course the PKI should take, probably because the Communist leaders feared the reaction of the military. How Aidit was hoping to deal with this crucial problem is reflected in the following passage of his September 4 speech in which he contrasted the struggle against the Dutch with the present:

> Today there are no enemy armed forces in Indonesia; there are only the armed forces of the Republic of Indonesia which were born shortly after World War II in the anti-fascist struggle and the national democratic revolution. In building these forces, the working class and the CPI played an important role. They are not reactionary armed forces. It can be seen from their inception that they have been anti-fascist, democratic, and anti-imperialist in character. The duty of the CPI is, therefore, to closely unite the people and the armed forces, so that in any crisis the armed forces, or their greater part, will stand firmly on the side of the people and revolution....[37]

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[37] Aidit, The Indonesian Revolution, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

VII. ON COLLISION COURSE WITH THE ARMY

We have no way of knowing whether the words of Aidit's September 4, 1963, speech represented more than the expression of hope that the PKI and the Army would eventually join forces. But we do know that a year later Aidit initiated concrete steps to translate this thought into reality. The investigations and trials conducted by the Indonesian military authorities in connection with the September 30 Movement revealed the existence of a clandestine organization created by Aidit in November 1964, which was known to a few Communist leaders as the Special Bureau (Biro Chusus), to others as the Contact Board (Badan Penghubung), or as the Contact Bureau (Biro Penghubung).

This organization consisted of a small group of trusted cadres whose primary mission was to establish close personal relations with individual military officers, indoctrinate them patiently if they seemed friendly and willing to help the PKI, and use them eventually for Party purposes.

Officers were not invited to fill out membership forms and become card-holding Communists, as military personnel were not supposed to have Party affiliations. Furthermore, officers "managed" by members of the Special Bureau were not put in contact with each other ("horizontal organization"), but were only in touch with the PKI cadre who was assigned to maintain contact with them. When an officer was transferred from one locality to another, the Special Bureau arranged, through carefully guarded channels, that he be contacted by another PKI cadre.

The Central Special Bureau managed a number of military officers stationed in Djakarta. It also set up Regional Special Bureaus in the provinces.

This whole clandestine network was not linked organizationally with the rest of the PKI, but existed under the personal supervision of the Party Chairman, D. N. Audit, and reported only to him. Although it is not entirely clear how much other members of the PKI leadership knew about the Special Bureau, it would seem that even at the very top, among members of the Politburo, this information was strictly guarded on a need-to-know basis, following a division of duties in mid-1964 that left all military matters exclusively to Aidit.

In the provinces, the head of the Regional Special Bureau was responsible directly and exclusively to the Central Special Bureau and functioned outside the overt organizational structure of the PKI. The PKI structure itself consisted of 27 Greater Regional Committees (Comite Daerah Besar or CDB), responsible for major provinces or metropolitan areas, which were subdivided into Section Committees at the regency (Kabupaten) or city level. These, in turn, supervised Subsection Committees responsible for districts (Kabupaten), smaller towns, or urban sectors. Only the CDB First Secretary, as the highest provincial representative of the PKI, knew in some cases the name of the Special Bureau representative, but even the First Secretary was apparently unfamiliar with the details of the Regional Special Bureau's operations.

As head of the Special Bureau, Aidit appointed a trusted personal aide, one Kamarusaman bin Achmad Moebaidah,

known to participants in the September 30 Movement as Sjam. The first significant indications that the PKI was involved in the coup came from the interrogations of Lieutenant Colonel Untung and other conspirators, who stated that a representative of the PKI named Sjam participated in their planning sessions in September 1965.

Sjam was captured on March 9, 1967, and tried by an Extraordinary Military Tribunal in Bandung a year later. I attended his trial, and most of the information used here is derived from the statements made in my presence before the court and from the records of Sjam's preliminary investigation which I have studied. According to his statements in court, the Special Bureau had recruited about 40 to 50 PKI sympathizers in the Armed Forces in Djakarta, 80 to 100 in West Java, around 250 in Central Java, 200 in East Java, 30 to 40 in North Sumatra, and 30 in West Sumatra. All participants in the September 30 Movement were recruited through the Special Bureau and followed its instructions.

Sjam said that he was put in charge of the Special Bureau because, as early as 1957, Aidit had asked him to find a solution to the problem of how to deal with officers who wanted to be sympathizers or members of the PKI, despite the fact that there was a ban on military personnel joining any political party. The Special Bureau was established in 1964 as a way to solve the organizational problem of how to utilize pro-Communist officers.

The establishment of the Special Bureau was a major, covert, manifestation of the new militancy that became dominant among the leaders of the PKI in late 1963. As mentioned above, Aidit still seemed hesitant at the

time of his speeches in Peking on September 2 and 4. Then, during the following three weeks, which he must have spent in consultation with the Chinese leaders, something seems to have happened. At the end of his visit, speaking in Canton on September 25, 1963, Aidit stated that the PKI "must have confidence in its own strength" and announced that the PKI "will always be on the side of Marxism-Leninism and oppose revisionism."[38] This, in context, could only be interpreted as a firm commitment to support China, given in a form the PKI had previously avoided.

Yet, despite the increased militancy discernible in Aidit's speeches between September 4 and September 25, they were still very cautious statements compared with what he was to say in his Political Report to the Second Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee on December 23, 1963, at which time the PKI's new line was openly proclaimed. There are many clues indicating that Aidit discussed his doubts about the PKI's previous strategy with the Chinese leaders, came back strengthened in his belief that a new line was necessary, and proclaimed it after obtaining the agreement of his colleagues in the Politburo. For instance, the Partial Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty had been signed in Moscow on August 5, 1963, and Aidit had a chance to denounce it during his visit to China, where such a posture would have been warmly welcomed. Yet Aidit made no public mention of it in China, but then attacked it strongly in his December 1963 Report to the Second Plenum.

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[38] Ibid., pp. 129-130.

Aidit also openly attacked the Soviet Union for the first time. He warned that "it is a great mistake to think that the restoration of capitalism cannot take place in Socialist countries." He deplored the fact that "there are also Socialist countries whose state leaders are striving to eradicate or in the very least to gloss over the contradiction between Socialism and imperialism by speaking fine words about U.S. imperialism." He argued that "there should be no question about the Socialist countries assisting the national independence struggle because this should be something quite automatic. A country is not a genuine Socialist country if it does not genuinely assist the struggle for national independence." He denounced the viewpoint of "modern economism in the international Communist movement," which is "calling upon the people in the newly independent countries to halt their revolutionary struggle and to rely completely upon economic aid from the Socialist countries while sitting by and gazing in wonderment at the economic construction in those countries." He pleaded:

> ...between the victory of Socialism in one country and the victory of the world Socialist revolution there is an inseparable connection. The Socialist revolution that has already been victorious in one country must not be turned into a self-contained entity and cut off from the rest; it must be turned into an assistant or means in order to speed up the victories of revolutions in other countries.[39]

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[39] Quotations from D. N. Aidit, Set Afire the Banteng Spirit! Ever Forward, No Retreat!, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1964, pp. 80, 81, 92, 93, 104.

Beyond doubt, by December 1963 there was complete agreement between the leaders of the PKI and the Maoists concerning the Soviet Union. Aidit had chosen to become an enemy of the Kremlin, abandoning the previous posture of careful neutrality in the Sino-Soviet conflict.

The same militancy characterized Aidit's new attitude toward the Indonesian Army. In the December 1963 Report there were no kind words for the military, unlike the September statement previously quoted. This time Aidit denounced "the counter-revolutionary adventurers" in sharp words:

> They have long striven to bring about the downfall of what they call the "Sukarno regime." They have tried by means of coup d'état, by means of counter-revolutionary rebellion, by attempting to assassinate President Sukarno, by attempts to brand President Sukarno as "communist" so as to draw the more backward religious sections over to their side.[40]

It should be noted at this point that the September 30 Movement was created two years later by the PKI's Special Bureau by convincing a number of managed officers that the counter-revolutionaries were preparing a coup against Sukarno. Equally significant in Aidit's statement of December 1963 was the fact that he no longer seemed interested in cooperation with the military in the context of Indonesia's ambitious and aggressive foreign policy. The leaders of the Army had endeavored, throughout 1963, to make militant statements against Malaysia and against Western imperialism. Aidit dismissed all such statements contemptuously as part of a devious plot:

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[40] Ibid., p. 40.

> In public, the counter-revolutionary adventurers are fond of publishing "fiery" statements about "Malaysia" with the result that foreign observers who do not grasp the question frequently get all confused, and the gullible ones are easily deceived, because the words the adventurers used are the same as those used in statements made by the Communists and other revolutionaries. This confusion quickly disappears, after the real motive behind their "fiery" words is explained, namely fishing for limited military action by the British so as to arouse panic at home which they hope will present them with a good opportunity to put an end to the "Sukarno regime" or at the very least to make Bung Karno [i.e., Sukarno] their political captive, willing to sign whatever they present him with, and then finally establish good relations with "Malaysia" and the British as well as presenting their victory to the U.S.A.[41]

These statements suggest that, by December 1963, Aidit was consciously engaging the PKI on a collision course with the Army. The officers were no longer treated as acceptable partners in Indonesia's chauvinistic foreign policy. Indeed they were accused of being "imperialist agents," a charge which appeared again in the initial proclamation of the September 30 Movement.[42] The same defiant mood against his opponents prevailed throughout 1964 and culminated in Aidit's great strategic mistake on January 14, 1965, when he requested the arming of peasants and workers "in reply to the large-scale military build-up of the British imperialists in Malaysia."[43]

Even though, on the same day, Sukarno told foreign

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[41] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

[42] See above, pp. 17-18.

[43] Antara News Agency, January 14, 1965.

correspondents that he had rejected the demand, Aidit repeated it publicly at a meeting of the National Front on January 17:

> I have submitted a proposal to President Sukarno to arm immediately the workers and peasants, the pillars of the revolution. No less than 5 million organized workers and 10 million organized peasants are ready to take up arms. This is the only correct reply to the British and American aggression.[44]

In thus trying to acquire a paramilitary capability, the PKI was challenging a cardinal principle of the Army. From the early days of the struggle for independence, when a multitude of armed groups had been established by spontaneous social action, the Army had been hostile to irregular military formations, some of which were affiliated with political parties. Efforts to bring all these formations under the control of the General Staff led to the September 1948 Madiun rebellion, in which the Army suffered and inflicted heavy casualties at a time when the very existence of the Republic of Indonesia was in jeopardy. The memory of that violent episode was a crucial factor in the lasting hostility of the officer corps toward the PKI. The specter of new Communist paramilitary formations was bound to be totally unacceptable to the Army. In his State of the Union address on August 17, 1965, Sukarno noted "heated discussions" concerning this idea, which he now presented not as Aidit's but as his own:

> I feel gratified for all the support that has been given to my idea. We always have to set out

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[44] Harian Rakjat, January 19, 1965.

> from the facts. The facts are that NEKOLIM[45] are aiming the tip of their sword and the barrel of their gun at us. The facts are that the defense of the State demands a maximum of effort from us all while, according to Article 30 of our 1945 Constitution: "Every citizen shall have the right and the duty to participate in the defense of the State." After an even more thorough consideration of this question, I will take a decision on this matter in my capacity as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.[46]

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[45] NEKOLIM is an acronym for neocolonialism, colonialism, and imperialism.

[46] "Reach to the Stars: A Year of Self Reliance," Address by President Sukarno, August 17, 1965, Antara Special Edition, English translation, Djakarta, p. 26.

VIII. CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Aidit did not limit the PKI's militancy to a confrontation with the military. The agrarian policy proclaimed in December 1963 abandoned, for all practical purposes, the united front strategy followed since 1951 and launched an appeal for class war in the countryside:

> All talk about modernizing Indonesia and about completing the revolution is also nonsense so long as there is not the courage to implement radical land reform. Indonesia is an agrarian country where feudal survivals still predominate. It is for this reason that the Indonesian revolution is in essence an agrarian revolution, a revolution of the peasants.[47]

This analysis of the Indonesian situation, in line with Maoist doctrine, was no idle verbal exercise. The PKI, through its Indonesian Farmers' Front, which claimed at that time over seven million members, had already initiated in the countryside, especially in over-populated East and Central Java, the Unilateral Action Movement (Gerakan Aksi Sefihak), inciting the Javanese peasants to take the law into their own hands and implement the 1960 basic agrarian law and the law on crop-sharing agreements. Until then, the local authorities had paid lip service to the idea of agrarian reform, while actually siding with the existing vested interests. Now, in his December 1963 Report, Aidit stated that "revolutionaries must enthusiastically welcome and encourage unilateral actions taken by the peasants."[48]

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[47] Aidit, Set Afire the Banteng Spirit!, op. cit., p. 29.

[48] Ibid., p. 27.

Unilateral actions took such proportions that Acting President Dr. Johanes Leimena found it necessary, on June 15, 1964, to order the Department of Home Affairs to prevent such actions by seeking the best possible settlement of agrarian disputes through mutual consultations.[49] The Farmers' Front, in defiance of the Government's appeal, announced that it was planning more intensified and consolidated actions against the landlords, and demanded the dismissal of officials who took a tough attitude toward the peasants. The first National Conference of the PKI, held in Djakarta from July 3 to 5, 1964, adopted a special resolution supporting the unilateral actions of the peasants in strongest terms and condemning "the despicable slanders of the despotic landlords and their apologists who are against the basic agrarian law and the law on the crop-sharing agreement." It also requested the establishment of land reform courts that would include representatives of communist peasant organizations, and the release of arrested peasants.[50]

On July 10, 1964, a special court in Klaten, Central Java, opened the trial of a group of members of the Farmers' Front who were arrested after violent clashes with the police. President Sukarno, in his August 17, 1964, Independence Day address, while avoiding explicit endorsement of the Unilateral Action Movement (Aksi Sefihak), conveyed his sympathy for the Movement, expressed his concern with the fate of the peasants, and ordered the immediate completion of the basic agrarian law on Java, Madura, and Bali. On September 24, 1964, the Cabinet

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[49] Antara News Agency, June 24, 1965.

[50] Harian Rakjat, July 15, 1965.

Presidium created a committee to expedite agrarian affairs, consisting of Police Brigadier General Mudjoko and PKI Vice-Chairman Njoto, both Ministers attached to the Presidium, and R. Hermanses, Minister for Agrarian Affairs. The same day, the establishment of land reform courts that included peasant representatives was announced.

These efforts on the part of the Government did not stop unilateral actions in Java. Clashes between Farmers' Front members and local authorities continued throughout the last months of 1964. Particularly violent riots over the distribution of public forest lands involving 2,000 peasants led by the Farmers' Front took place at Indramaju, West Java, on October 15 and 16. Several policemen were injured and sixty-four peasants were held for trial.

By May 1965, the class struggle in the countryside seems to have worried Aidit. In his Political Report to the Fourth Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee in May 1965, he remarked that "in some places Farmers' Front cadres, because of their desire to increase peasants' actions, have acted impulsively." And although he noted with obvious satisfaction that the Farmers' Front now had a membership of "about nine million peasants," he warned that "the peasant movement must proceed in a framework of strict discipline."[51]

If Aidit had already decided, by May 1965, to eliminate the anti-Communist leadership of the Army, he may have considered it undesirable to intensify further the revolutionary situation in the countryside, as these

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[51] D. N. Aidit, "Perhebat Ofensif Revolusioner Disegala Bidang!" ("Intensify the Revolutionary Offensive on All Fronts!"), Harian Rakjat, May 12, 13, 14, 15, 1965, JPRS Translation No. 31,451, 1965, pp. 26, 59.

actions increased the risk that the PKI's enemies might combine to crush the Party. In other words, if the September 30 Movement was already taking shape in Aidit's mind as a preventive measure against future anti-Communist moves by the military, it made sense to keep the PKI's enemies from closing ranks prematurely.

But the decision to stop "unilateral actions" came too late. The PKI was soon to suffer the consequences. In my opinion, by disrupting the harmony (rukun)[52] of the Indonesian village community, the Farmers' Front unilateral actions set the stage for the gruesome massacre of hundreds of thousands of Communists in the aftermath of the September 30 Movement.[53]

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[52] On this concept see Hildred Geertz, The Javanese Family: A Study of Kinship and Socialization, The Free Press, New York, 1961, pp. 47-49.

[53] I first stated this hypothesis in "Toward a New Order in Indonesia," Foreign Affairs, New York, April 1967, p. 504, and developed it further in "Political Consequences of Rural Development Programs in Indonesia," Pacific Affairs, Vancouver, Fall 1968.

IX. THE COUP THAT FAILED

The detailed story of the events that led to the destruction of the PKI does not belong here. Some details are still missing and may never be established. But in broad outlines this is what happened: In May 1965, rumors circulated in PKI and Indonesian intelligence circles that a Council of Generals (Dewan Djenderal) was planning a coup against Sukarno. The origin of these rumors is not easy to establish, though there are various speculations. But it was an open secret at the time that the Commander of the Army, Lieutenant General A. Yani, and his informal "brain trust," consisting of Major General Suprapto, Major General S. Parman, Major General Harjono, and Brigadier General Sukendro, were discussing "contingency plans" to prevent chaos should Sukarno die suddenly.

For several years President Sukarno's health and age had been the central preoccupation of all those concerned with the politics of the "post-Sukarno period."[54] After the resignation of Vice-President Hatta in December 1956, there was no clear line of legitimate succession to the presidency. This situation encouraged innumerable ambitions and generated endless political maneuvers.

Early in August 1965, Sukarno had a brief illness which made Aidit rush back from a visit to Peking, bringing with him two Chinese doctors who had previously treated Sukarno's

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[54] I had already noted, in early 1962, that "private political discussions in Indonesia today center on the more distant future, the so-called 'post-Sukarno period.'" See "The Soviet Challenge in Indonesia," Foreign Affairs, New York, July, 1962, p. 8.

chronic kidney condition. The doctors apparently informed Aidit that Sukarno might soon die or be permanently incapacitated. From the investigations and trials of Communist leaders in connection with the September 30 Movement, we know that the political implications of this medical assessment were discussed by the Politburo of the PKI, which was already in a very militant state of mind. As Sudisman told the Extraordinary Military Tribunal in open court, the Politburo, on July 5, 1967, following the Fourth Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee, May 1965, had proceeded to effectuate the decision to "step up to the utmost" the revolutionary situation. Thus, on August 28, when Aidit introduced the issue of Sukarno's health and its possible consequences for the PKI, the Politburo unanimously approved a pre-emptive military operation against the Council of Generals, and the formation of a Revolutionary Council that would lead to a change of Cabinet.

Interrogation by the judges brought out the facts that Sudisman had no information about this Council of Generals other than what Aidit had told the Politburo, that the plans for the September 30 Movement remained unchanged even after Sukarno had recovered from his early August illness, and that, while Sudisman accepted full responsibility as a member of the Politburo who had participated in the crucial August 28 decision, he, personally, was not involved in the actual planning of the military operations, which was exclusively Aidit's responsibility.[55]

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[55] Mahkamah Militer Luar Biasa, "Berkas: Berita Atjara Persidangan Perkara Sudisman" (Extraordinary Military Tribunal, "File: Records of Sessions in the Case of Sudisman," Vol. II, Typescript, Djakarta, 1967, pp. 34-35, 68.

The PKI leaders were probably genuinely afraid, and in my opinion rightly so, that if Sukarno died before the political balance of forces had been changed, the Army would re-establish martial law, take charge of the government, and set back or even ban the PKI. Worrying, like the PKI, about the "post-Sukarno period," the Army General Staff had obviously made political plans. The officer corps had always considered themselves the custodians of their new nation, and Sukarno's policies had created a succession crisis in that the country lacked legitimate procedures for the replacement of the President in case of sudden death or incapacity.

These contingency plans of the Army, about which there is little concrete information, were turned into the May 1965 rumor that a Council of Generals was planning a coup <u>against</u> Sukarno. The legitimate hierarchy of the Army was made to appear as a conspiratorial junta, and the contingency plans of a group of senior officers who had not violated their oath of loyalty to the Commander-in-Chief were made to seem a plot against him.

In October 1965, events were to disprove these malicious rumors. If the Army leaders had actually planned to overthrow Sukarno it would have been much easier for the survivors to carry out this plan after October 1 when public opinion would have supported their action. But in fact no action was taken against Sukarno until March 1966, and his rule was only terminated in March 1967, after he had made defiant efforts to protect the PKI and to obstruct the Army's security operations.

Any explanation of the role of the so-called Council of Generals in prompting Aidit to organize the September 30

Movement hinges on the question of what the chairman of the PKI really believed at the time. If the rumor that such a Council of Generals was ready to depose Sukarno was launched by others, Aidit may have believed it, panicked, and organized the September 30 Movement as a counter-move, after his return from Peking in August.

But I am inclined to believe that Aidit was preparing his own offensive against the Army leadership before the rumors about a Council of Generals began to spread in late May 1965, which suggests that those rumors may have been actually initiated by him, as part of a scenario that would also have taken advantage of Sukarno's next health failure in order to maximize the PKI's chances of obtaining the support of the officers managed by the Special Bureau that he had created in November 1964.

In this context, there is an intriguing statement made by Aidit in his Political Report to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, May 11, 1965. The Report, delivered on the eve of the grandiose celebration of the forty-fifth anniversary of the PKI, included the following passage:

> With the strength of the national front based on Nasakom we succeeded in delivering heavy blows to the enemies of the people, and the masses are further convinced that the enemies can certainly be beaten. However, life itself proves in a definite manner that the enemy still has a power we cannot trifle with. It is, therefore, the duty of all revolutionary people, Communists in particular, to hold firm to the principles of national unity based on Nasakom and <u>to determine in a better manner the smallest possible target at a given moment while maintaining the broadest possible front. Finding the</u>

> smallest possible target means a concentration of attacks on the most obstinate enemies of the revolution. [Emphasis supplied.][56]

The smallest possible target was, logically, the top leadership of the Army, which opposed a Nasakom Cabinet and which was capable of doing serious harm to the PKI, especially after Sukarno's death. If the plan to eliminate the Army generals existed already in Aidit's mind when he addressed the Central Committe in these terms in May 1965, then Sukarno's brief illness in August 1965 and the rumors about a Council of Generals were not causative factors that precipitated an improvised PKI action, but parts of a predetermined scenario. We may, of course, never know with certainty whether Aidit panicked and moved hastily, or acted in cold blood but bungled the operation.

My own impression is that the latter explanation is the correct one. I am particularly intrigued by a macabre detail which suggests that Aidit was already carrying the plans for the September 30 Movement in his head when he gave his Political Report on May 11, 1965. He ended his statement, which lasted for seven hours and twenty-three minutes,[57] by quoting a verse written by Central Committee member and Head of its Cultural Affairs Department, Bahua Harahap: "Nobody intends to turn back, though death is awaiting."[58] This was the last political report Aidit

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[56] Aidit, "Intensify the Revolutionary Offensive," op. cit., p. 4.

[57] Harian Rakjat, May 12, 1965.

[58] Harian Rakjat, May 15, 1965, p. 3. The Indonesian words are: Tak seorang berniat pulang walau mati menanti! Dr. Walter Slote of Columbia University in a personal communication interprets this statement as suggesting that Aidit expected subconsciously the failure of his plans.

ever made to the Central Committee of the PKI. The Party had indeed embarked on a road of no return. After the failure of the September 30 Movement, Aidit fled to Central Java on a plane provided by the Commander of the Air Force, Omar Dani. He then wandered around Central Java until November 22, 1965, when he was captured and summarily executed by the Army. His death was never officially announced.[59]

Njoto, the Second Deputy Chairman of the PKI, was captured and killed in early December 1965. Lukman, the First Deputy Chairman of the PKI, was killed in May 1966. Politburo member Sakirman was killed in October 1966, and Politburo member Rewang, in July 1968. Politburo members Njono and Sudisman were tried by the Extraordinary Military Tribunal, sentenced to death, and executed in October 1968. Candidate Politburo member Peris Pardede may have been executed soon after he was sentenced to death. Candidate Politburo member Anwar Sanusi also was arrested. Only Politburo member Jusuf Adjitorop escaped, having been in Peking since 1964 as Head of the Delegation of the Central Committee of the PKI to the Communist Party of China.[60] This means that only one out of the ten men who were Politburo members or candidate members in May 1965 escaped.

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[59] An alleged confession by Aidit after his capture was published by the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun in early 1966. For details see John Hughes, Indonesian Upheaval, David McKay Company, Inc., New York, 1967, pp. 167-172.

[60] On December 26, 1967, Jusuf Adjitorop sent a letter of congratulation to Chairman Mao on his 74th birthday. He addressed him as "our most distinguished and beloved leader." See Indonesian Tribune, Tirana, Albania, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 44.

The Central Committee had been expanded by the First National Conference, held in July 1964, to fifty members and five candidate members.[61] If the ten members of the Central Committee who were also on the Politburo are included in the count, it appears that, as of July 1968, at least ten members of the Central Committee were dead and at least nineteen were under arrest. At most, twenty-six, or less than half, may have escaped the dragnet of the Army's security operations. Not a single Central Committee member's name other than Jusuf Adjitorop has been mentioned in the propaganda emanating from Peking. It would therefore appear that Communist China has not assisted any Communist leaders in escaping from Indonesia.

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[61] See Harian Rakjat, July 8, 1964, and May 14, 1965, for the last official changes in the governing bodies of the PKI. The current status of PKI Central Committee members was estimated by the author from a variety of reliable Indonesian sources.

X. THE PKI UNDERGROUND

At the third and fourth sessions of his trial, on July 6, 1967, Sudisman admitted that after the failure of the September 30 Movement he met six times with Sujono Pradigdo, Head of the Central Verification Committee of the PKI, who was later arrested, and with Sukadi, Deputy Secretary of the Djakarta Raya Greater Regional Committee. They planned the clandestine rebuilding of the Party, on the basis of three-man groups. Their discussions started before the PKI had been formally banned on March 12, 1966, but continued thereafter. Sudisman told the court that those two men were the only ones with whom he could meet, and that it was difficult to hold a meeting of more than three men at one time.

In June 1966 they examined the situation of the Party and concluded that "subjectivism" was beginning to prevail among their comrades, who "feeling comfortable and secure refused to think about other comrades and did not conduct Party work actively." They also decided that in their struggle they should "not have any illusions about Bung Karno but be politically independent" and that the PKI must be rebuilt, "which is difficult to accomplish because of the security roundup conducted by the government."[62]

In trying to reorganize itself, the underground PKI is not only harassed by the Army but also divided on doctrinal grounds. Survivors of the official leadership of the PKI, speaking for the old Politburo of the Party,

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[62] Extraordinary Military Tribunal, "Case of Sudisman," op. cit., pp. 65, 103, 104.

circulated statements in Java in 1966 characterized by the old independent spirit of the PKI. A group of PKI refugees, led by Politburo member Jusuf Adjitorop, keeps issuing declarations from Peking. The latest major public pronouncement of that group, which calls itself "the Delegation of the Central Committee of the PKI," is dated May 23, 1968, commemorating the 48th anniversary of the founding of the Party. It praises "the Indonesian Marxist-Leninists" for

> the unfolding of guerrilla warfare, by establishing rural revolutionary bases, by arousing the peasant masses to undertake agrarian revolution, and by persevering in protracted armed struggle to encircle the cities from the countryside and eventually seize the cities and win national liberation.

Unlike the statements issued by Sudisman in the Chinese underground in 1966, those of the PKI refugees in Peking (and perhaps also those of the leaders who replaced Sudisman in Java) are characterized by outspoken adulation of Mao. The May 1968 statement contains the following passage:

> From their own experience, the Indonesian Marxist-Leninists regard Mao Tse-tung's thought as the sole guiding ideology of the PKI in building itself into a Marxist-Leninist party capable of leading the Indonesian revolution. In its May 23, 1967, statement the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PKI stressed: "The Indonesian Marxist-Leninists unhesitatingly recognize Mao Tse-tung's thought as the peak of Marxism-Leninism in the present era, and are determined to study and use it as an effective weapon in the struggle for the liberation of Indonesia, which inevitably will have to follow the road of people's war as shown by Comrade Mao Tse-tung."[63]

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[63] "Solidly United Under the Great Red Banner of Mao Tse-tung's Thought, the Communist Party of Indonesia is

There is also a third group, distinctly pro-Soviet, which appealed in 1967 for a return to the united front program of 1954 and attacked the pro-Chinese party leaders. I do not know whether its statements discussed below were written in Indonesia or abroad, and the leaders of this group have not been identified.

Of all the various statements issued, the three documents circulated in 1966 in Java in the name of the Politburo of the PKI are likely to be of lasting significance. All analyzed the Party's past mistakes and weaknesses. The first was dated May 23rd, to commemorate the forty-sixth anniversary of the PKI and the second was issued on the occasion of the twenty-first anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence on August 17. The third and most important statement, published in September, was entitled "Build the PKI Along the Marxist-Leninist Line to Lead People's Democratic Revolution in Indonesia (Self-Criticism of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PKI)." We know, from his July 1967 trial, that the third statement was written by Sudisman, who, until he was captured in December 1966, acted as the de facto leader of the Party, being at that time the ranking [illegible] member at liberty to direct the Communist underground.

The three statements were first published abroad in English translation in the Indonesian Tribune printed in Tirana, Albania.[64] The August statement was then reproduced

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Leading the Indonesian People to March Onward on the Road of People's War!" Statement of the Delegation of the CC of PKI, in Indonesian Tribune, Vol. II, N. 4-5, 1968, p. 3.

[64]The May and August statements in Vol. I., No. 1, November 1966, and the September statement in Vol. I, No. 3,

in March 1967 in People's Democracy, the weekly of the pro-Chinese Communist Party of India CPI(M), published in Calcutta. Curiously, Peking did not give these documents circulation until July 1967, at which time they were broadcast by the New China News Agency, featured in the Peking Review, and discussed editorially in Hongqi (Red Flag).

Another analysis of the September 30 Movement has been circulated by "The Marxist-Leninist Group of the PKI," which, despite its name, is clearly a pro-Soviet group. The earliest abridged version that has come to my attention was printed in New Delhi in March 1967, in Main Stream, the weekly publication of the pro-Soviet Communist Party of India. A full English version appeared in November 1967, in the Information Bulletin of the World Marxist Review (Problems of Peace and Socialism), edited in Prague under Soviet direction and published in Toronto.

As was to be expected, these statements have a polemical purpose in the context of the Sino-Soviet doctrinal debate. The pro-Soviet group claims that the Chinese point of view "was instrumental in paving the theoretical way for the gamble known as the September Movement."[65] The pro-Chinese groups retort that the PKI's downfall was caused by weaknesses resulting from Soviet revisionist doctrine. It should be noted that all these statements have been issued

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January 1967. I have seen in Djakarta the original Indonesian text of the September statement, which circulated as a stenciled pamphlet. It was not identified as an issue of Mimbar Rakjat, the clandestine PKI journal in which, according to Sudisman, he published the "Self-Criticism." See Extraordinary Military Tribunal, "Case of Sudisman," op. cit., p. 100.

[65] Information Bulletin, World Marxist Review Publishers, Toronto, 1967, No. 106 (18), p. 58.

anonymously. The various factions are obviously competing for supremacy in the Indonesian underground and prefer to let the surviving cadres believe that they represent the whole Party.

In "Self-Criticism of the Political Bureau" Sudisman accused "the PKI leadership," meaning Aidit, of "adventurism," and wrote: "Violating organizational rules they had easily involved themselves in the September 30 Movement that was not based on the high consciousness and conviction of the masses." Sudisman meant obviously that Aidit acted without the consent of the official policy-making organs of the Party and misjudged the militancy of the rank-and-file. He also condemned:

> . . . the mistakes in the organizational field, in particular those concerning the style of work which gave the Party leadership the power to build their own organizational channel beyond the control of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee.[66]

This was clearly a reference to the Special Bureau set up by Aidit under the leadership of Sjam. At his trial, Sudisman admitted publicly that the Special Bureau was directly under Aidit and that its functions "were never mentioned because its nature was special." He also stated that he did not know exactly what Sjam's functions were, either in general or in the September 30 Movement, but knew that he was very close to Aidit.[67] Sudisman, who acted with

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[66] Indonesian Tribune, Vol. I, No. 3, January 1967, pp. 6, 23.

[67] Extraordinary Military Tribunal, "Case of Sudisman," op. cit., pp. 22, 36.

great dignity at his trial, accepting collective responsibility as one of the top leaders of the PKI, had good reasons to criticize Aidit if, as he stated in the "Self-Criticism," the Politburo had not been fully informed about Aidit's plans.

Some observers have dismissed Sudisman's confessions and those of other defendants before the Extraordinary Military Tribunal as worthless products of a "show trial." In my opinion nothing could be further from the truth. Sudisman's public statements in court confirmed the "Self-Criticism," which he had written at a time when he was still free to speak his mind and had no way of knowing whether he would be captured and, if so, whether, unlike his comrades, he would survive and be permitted to testify publicly.

Sudisman obviously used his trial for the same purpose for which he had written the "Self-Criticism," namely to give the remnants of the PKI an explanation of why the Party had failed and to establish a correct line for the future. When asked by one of the judges to state his political objectives, Sudisman answered that they were to establish people's democracy, a first stage toward socialism, and then communism, through an armed revolution of peasants under the leadership of the working class. He then explained that "conducted peacefully, the people's democratic revolution would take the form of democratic general elections in which the people could vote directly, secretly, and freely." But "now that the PKI has been banned in Indonesia, adoption of peaceful means is no longer possible and consequently the people's democratic revolution will have to be conducted through an armed agrarian movement led by the working class."

He then stated the three principles (the term he used was TRIPANDJI, i.e., Three Banners) that should guide the PKI in the future, namely: (1) creation of a Marxist-Leninist Party free from opportunism and modern revisionism; (2) armed revolution conducted by the peasants under the leadership of the working class; and (3) a united front under the leadership of the working class.[68]

Exactly the same policy guidelines were given in the "Self-Criticism,"[69] which is still playing a major role in the Communist underground of Indonesia as Sudisman's political testament. After a lengthy and bitter denunciation of the many errors and weaknesses of the group that led the PKI from 1951 to 1965, Sudisman told the survivors that now "the Party has to work under completely illegal conditions and the organizational structure of the Party must, therefore, be adjusted according to the new conditions." He then warned that "so long as the ideology of subjectivism is not completely eradicated from the Party, or worse still, if it is still to be found among the Party leadership, then our Party will not be able to avoid other mistakes." To combat and liquidate subjectivism (or, as we would say, "wishful thinking"), which in Sudisman's opinion was the main cause of the PKI's fall, he urged the next generation of Communists to be better prepared ideologically:

> The Party must educate its members to apply the Marxist-Leninist method in analyzing the political situation and in evaluating the forces of the existing classes, so that subjective analysis and evaluation can be avoided. The Party must

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[68] Ibid., pp. 37-38.

[69] See Indonesian Tribune, op. cit., Vol. I, No. 3, p. 28.

> draw the attention of the members to the importance of investigation and to the study of social and economic conditions, in order to be able to define the tactics of struggle and the corresponding method of work. The Party must help the members to understand that without an investigation of the actual conditions they will get bogged down in phantasy.[70]

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[70] Ibid., p. 26.

XI. THE FUTURE OF THE PKI

Events since Sudisman's arrest in December 1966 suggest that, even after three major setbacks in 1926, 1948, and 1965, Indonesian Communists remain incapable of learning from experience. A new Politburo, probably self-appointed on the basis of Article 70 of the PKI Constitution concerning emergency situations, took over in 1967. It included Rewang of the old Politburo, Oloan Hutabea, former Rector of the highest party school, the Aliarcham Academy, Tjugito of the Central Committee, Munir, former chairman of the Communist Federation of Labor Unions SOBSI, and Suripto (Iskandar Subekti), a member of the Special Bureau and a covert member of the Central Committee. This group proceeded to rebuild the underground PKI in accordance with the Three Banners principles formulated by Sudisman.

Details on these covert activities are neither clear nor easy to obtain, but it would seem that the Greater Regional Committees (CDB) of the legal PKI, which had jurisdiction over provinces as large as East or Central Java, have been replaced in the new underground by Regional Bureaus (Biro Daerah or BIRDA) responsible for areas equivalent to the smaller administrative entities called residencies.

Each Regional Bureau is responsible for the organization of armed struggle in its territory. It creates revolutionary bases (Basis Revolusi or BASREV) in the countryside, operating through rural Project Committees (Komite Projec or KOMPRO), which are paramilitary structures. Each KOMPRO sets up guerrilla training centers (Sekolah Perlawanan Rakjat or SPR) and forms regional guerrilla units (Detasemen

Gerilja or DETGA) and village guerrillas (Gerilja Desa or GERDA). The pattern seems to follow that of the Viet Cong guerrilla organization in South Vietnam.

In urban areas the new organizational structure is based on the City Trio (Trio Kota or TRIKO), responsible for underground PKI activities in the cities on lines similar to those of the old overt Party, but not responsible for guerrilla activities. The TRIKO does not establish guerrilla training centers and controls no guerrilla units, which shows that the emphasis of the new PKI's armed struggle is clearly rural.

Apparently the new leaders of the PKI underground decided to establish a major revolutionary base in East Java, where the population was considered particularly friendly to the Communists. A sparsely populated strip of forested hills south of the town of Blitar, running about 100 Km along the Indian Ocean coast, was chosen probably because access by land was rendered difficult by very poor roads, while at sea strong currents and heavy surf impeded navigation. The area was criss-crossed by Viet-Cong style underground caves and tunnels. The new Politburo leaders Tjugito, Rewang, and Hutabea decided to use the South Blitar area as their headquarters from which to direct the rebuilding of the PKI.

Although there seems to have been agreement among the new PKI leaders on the necessity of preparing for armed struggle along Maoist lines, the old incapacity for sustained discipline manifested itself again. While some of the leaders argued that armed struggle be undertaken only after the PKI's underground structure was rebuilt on a strong mass basis, others engaged in isolated terroristic

attacks on the Army and on Moslem civilians who had been involved in the anti-Communist massacres of early 1966. This brought the South Blitar area to the attention of the East Java Army Command and resulted in security operations which culminated in the June-July 1968 killing of Hutabea and Rewang, the capture of Tjugito, and the destruction of the South Blitar guerrilla base. Altogether about 2,000 members and leaders of the PKI underground were killed during the summer months of 1968, leaving the Party again adrift.[71]

The epitaph on the latest period of the PKI's stormy history was offered by Radio Moscow in a broadcast in Mandarin to Southeast Asia on September 19, 1968. After deploring the destruction of the Communist underground organization in East Java by the Indonesian Army, the Russian commentator related that

> in accordance with Mao Tse-tung's instructions, a group of Indonesian splittists in Peking announced the formation of a new PKI based on Mao Tse-tung's thought in the spring of 1967. This new PKI accepted Mao Tse-tung's adventurist strategy of so-called people's war, founded a party which was alien to the people, and attempted to besiege the city from the countryside.

With biting sarcasm, Radio Moscow then asked:

> What about the weapons of the Indonesian insurgents who were ordered by the agents of the Maoist splittist clique within the PKI to rise up in struggle and take over the regime? After the destruction of this underground organization it was revealed that their arms amounted to forty locally manufactured, second-rate firearms.

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[71] See The New York Times, July 12 and October 29, 1968.

As noted earlier, the Chinese Communists do not seem to have made any efforts after the failure of the September 30 Movement to rescue the leaders of the PKI. If it is also true, as the Russians inform us, that the PKI underground of 1968, although guided by "Mao's thought," received no material support from its Chinese patrons, it is doubtful that Peking will retain in the long run a decisive voice in the affairs of Indonesian Communism.

This leaves us with the intriguing but currently unanswerable question of whether the Russians will find new ways to assert influence over the future PKI, assuming that this ill-starred movement has a future. The appeal of Communism in Indonesia will be weak in the period ahead unless the present regime fails abysmally in responding to the basic needs of the long-suffering Indonesian people.

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10. ABSTRACT

This historical analysis of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) focuses on its attempted coup of October 1965. One of the most formidable political organizations in Asia, PKI counted 20,000,000 supporters in 1965, after pursuing for 14 years a policy of collaboration with the government. The violence that erupted on October 1, 1965, with the assasination of six Army generals, climaxed the Party leadership's growing impatience with gradualism and heralded the Party's demise in Indonesia. Current evidence suggests that Party Chairman D. N. Aidit lost faith in Soviet "revisionism" and embraced Chinese Communism in 1963, after which he embarked the party on a militant course that was bound to collide with the Army, the only other significant political force in the country. Aidit engineered the October assasinations with secretly recruited collaborationist officers. Army reprisal was swift and comprehensive. Not only Aidit and his assistants, but also PKI cadres throughout Indonesia and hundreds of thousands of followers were killed in the attempted coup's aftermath. Driven underground, PKI continues to be harassed by the Army. It is questionable whether either Chinese or Soviet Communism will again be influential.

11. KEY WORDS

Counterinsurgency and insurgency
Communism
Indonesia
Asia
Politics
International relations
China