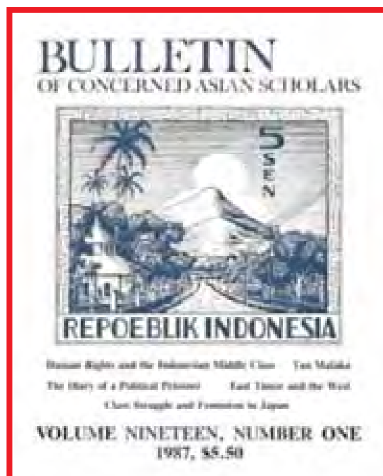

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS

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BCAS/*Critical Asian Studies*
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CCAS Statement of Purpose

Critical Asian Studies *continues to be inspired by the statement of purpose formulated in 1969 by its parent organization, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS). CCAS ceased to exist as an organization in 1979, but the BCAS board decided in 1993 that the CCAS Statement of Purpose should be published in our journal at least once a year.*

We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy. Those in the field of Asian studies bear responsibility for the consequences of their research and the political posture of their profession. We are concerned about the present unwillingness of specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asian policy committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia. We reject the legitimacy of this aim, and attempt to change this policy. We recognize that the present structure of the profession has often perverted scholarship and alienated many people in the field.

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression, and imperialism. We realize that to be students of other peoples, we must first understand our relations to them.

CCAS wishes to create alternatives to the prevailing trends in scholarship on Asia, which too often spring from a parochial cultural perspective and serve selfish interests and expansionism. Our organization is designed to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research.

Passed, 28–30 March 1969
Boston, Massachusetts

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS

Human Rights and the Indonesian Middle Class **Tan Malaka**

The Diary of a Political Prisoner **East Timor and the West**

Class Struggle and Feminism in Japan

VOLUME NINETEEN, NUMBER ONE
1987, $5.50

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An Introduction to the Articles on Indonesia

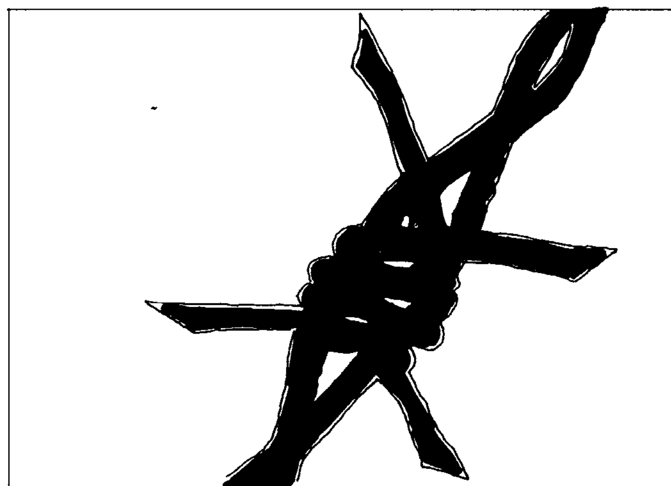
by Robert Cribb

In May 1987, general elections will be held in Indonesia. These will be the fifth such elections since the country's independence in 1945, and the contesting parties will be the government electoral organization, GOLKAR, which convincingly won the last elections, the largely Muslim PPP (Unity Development party), and the small Christian and nationalist PDI (Indonesian Democratic party). After the previous elections in 1982, the Indonesian government made the claim that the proceedings had been "direct, general, free and secret," and indeed it was difficult to find more than incidental evidence of fraud or manipulation in the conduct of the poll itself. However, this attempt by "Pancasila Democracy" to claim kinship with the Western democratic tradition studiously ignored the context of political restriction which has operated in Indonesia for the last three decades. Since such claims are likely to be revised after the coming elections to suggest that the power of the New Order government of President Suharto rests on the active consent of the people, the editors of the *Bulletin* have thought it appropriate to devote this issue to a closer examination of the recent political history of Indonesia.

One of the principal aims of this issue is to map the extent of political restriction in Indonesia. Dwight King does this in a general way, while Pandu Nusa describes his own experiences as one who had sought to change the substance of Indonesian politics. Torben Retboll discusses the experience of the East Timorese, a people on the outer edge of the archipelago whose political inclinations did not coincide with those of Jakarta authorities. Political restriction and repression seeks to stifle a well-established tradition of political activism, aspects of which are described by Helen Jarvis in her biography of Tan Malaka.

Where is Indonesia headed? It is probably safe to predict that GOLKAR will win the 1987 elections with a vote of 70 percent or more and that President Suharto will be reelected the following year for another five year term. Indonesia today is rarely international news, and this seems likely to continue. The government has weathered the initial shock of the collapse of oil prices, and it seems likely that the lid of political restriction and repression will remain on the political pot. It is Dwight King, however, who points out the major growing contradiction within the New Order, that between the emerging factions of the Indonesian middle class, who have profited in various ways from the economic policies of the New Order, and the New Order state itself. While Indonesia's infrastructure was weak and its capital resources meager, the Indonesian state played an essential role in sustaining favored local businesses, first by providing infrastructure but more importantly by providing protection and preferential treatment, at the price of channelling some of the profits to the state officials who made it all possible. However, the evidence increasingly is that sections of the favored Indonesian middle class see this relationship as at least diminishing in usefulness. If this is so, then middle-class pressure on the regime, of the kind described by King, is likely to persist even in the face of continued repression. Whether such pressure can lead to a major change in the nature of the regime remains to be seen.

December, 1986



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Human Rights Practices and the Indonesian Middle Class

by Dwight Y. King*

> *During the New Order we have often witnessed or read in the newspapers or at least heard from various circles about KOPKAMTIB actions such as banning or ordering coverage of a story in the mass media through only a telephone call; carrying out arrests, detention, and interrogation against citizens without regard to the proper procedures delineated in law; inhumane treatment during questioning; carrying out executions performed without regard to legal procedures, more commonly known as "mysterious shootings"; undertaking "political screening" of citizens to determine their loyalty to the government as in the case of prospective nominees in the General Elections; depriving citizens of their civil rights without trial, such as forbidding signatories to the Petition of 50 to leave the country and depriving them of the ability to earn a living by instructing all agencies and state banks not to honor their requests; the arrest and detention of religious teachers and so forth. All of this has been done with the excuse that the individuals involved are suspected of engaging in extremist or other subversive acts.*
>
> —*Lt. Gen. (Ret.) H.R. Dharsono, January 1986*[1]

This indictment of the human rights practices of President (Ret. General) Suharto's New Order comes from one of its founders, but it is representative of the views of a wide range of persons in the middle class who believe that Suharto has systematically betrayed both the ideals he proclaimed when he took power and the ideals on which the Indonesian state was founded. While substantial progress has been made toward the realization of economic rights, including reduction in the percentage of people below the poverty line,[2] respect for other types of human rights has deteriorated during the 1980s. Deprivation of rights has become more systemic, and there has been a marked increase in the *scope* or number of different groups whose rights have been violated, although the *scale* or sheer numbers of political prisoners and political killings has probably not yet returned to the level of the late 1960s during the aftermath of the aborted coup and the initial years of the New Order. At that time the scope was narrower and violations of rights were suffered mainly by persons who were alleged to have been involved directly or indirectly with the Indonesian Communist party (PKI). This article first examines the trends since independence in order to support my contention that a broadening of human rights abuse has occurred. Second, the analysis focuses on the growing unrest among middle-class groups over abuse of rights.

The Human Rights Movement and the Indonesian Elite

In recent years there has been an increase in political and scholarly interest in human rights.[3] Because of the complexity

*The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of John A. MacDougall in the research for this article and his helpful comments, as well as those of Daniel S. Lev and Lela Noble, on an earlier draft of this paper which was presented at the meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, March 1986.

1. H.R. Dharsono, "Menuntut Janji Orde Baru" (Demanding the Promise of the New Order), final defense statement before the Central Jakarta Court, 3 January 1986. Translation printed in *Indonesia Reports* (hereafter *I.R.*), No. 17, August 1986.

2. The World Bank estimates that 44 percent of the rural and 26 percent of the urban population were below the poverty line in 1980, down from 59 and 51 percent, respectively, in 1970. If these percentages are applied to population estimates for those years, the absolute number dropped to about 60 million from about 65 million in 1970. However, poverty probably worsened in the early 1980s due to slowing of investment and cuts in subsidies. This judgement would seem to be consistent with recently announced findings of researchers at Indonesia's Department of Agriculture. They reported that the real incomes of rice farmers were unchanged in the decade 1974–84, despite dramatic increases in production, and had declined in 1985. *Kompas*, 14 November 1985, cited in *I.R.*, No. 14 (March 1986), p. 28.

3. For an excellent review of five recent books, see Robert C. Johansen, "Human Rights in the 1980s: Revolutionary Growth or Unanticipated Ero-

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The picture on the front cover is a drawing of an early Indonesian stamp. This drawing and many others in this issue are by Hans Borkent of Leiden, the Netherlands, who has been generously sharing his fine drawings with the Bulletin *since 1983. In fact, we have used his sketches so extensively in our advertisements and in issues of the* Bulletin *that they've become "the* Bulletin *look"—and for this we are tremendously grateful.*

The editors would like to express their deep gratitude to Robert Cribb, who served as guest editor for this special issue on Indonesia. He found and helped edit most of the articles and gathered many of the photos, maps, and other graphics.

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From Philip Hanson Hiss, Bali (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1941), p.3.

Rice Fields in Bali

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of the subject, any discussion should begin with at least some minimal delineation of what types of rights are going to be addressed. A well-known source utilizes three categories.[4] First, rights pertaining to the integrity of the person, including freedom from torture and other degrading treatment such as arbitrary arrest, are often given priority. A second category is civil and political rights, including freedom of speech, movement, and assembly, and freedom to participate in government. A third category is economic rights, usually considered to include fulfillment of basic human needs (food, shelter, health, and education). The focus of this article is on the first category, although the three types are interrelated, with the connections between integrity of the person and political and civil rights being especially strong.

New Order authorities, part of Indonesia's military and bureaucratic elite, find themselves in a world already shaped by the human rights movement. They are compelled to fight on its ground, for example by using such terminology as Pancasila "democracy" and "social and economic rights," and by supporting enactment of nominal safeguards of human rights. Despite this nominal consensus on human rights, their reservations are apparent. Their spokesmen emphasize social rights or the subordination of individual to collective rights defined by governmental authorities, and they claim that certain theoretically desirable rights cannot be afforded under present circumstances. Positing a trade-off between the rights of the person and civil and political rights on the one hand and economic rights on the other, they stress that at the present time the New Order must give priority to economic development.[5] But implicit in their arguments about priorities is recognition of the universality of human rights. In other words, they find that they are unable to justify rights abuse by appealing to a unique Javanese cultural tradition with a fundamentally different view of the relationship between the individual and the state.

Other segments of the Indonesian elite disagree with the New Order priority on collective and economic rights. Speaking in the context of a wave of arrests, detentions, and trials precipitated by the bombings of several branches of Bank Central Asia and the Tanjung Priok incident, Sabam Sirait, the secretary-general of the Indonesian Democratic party (PDI), said respect for basic human rights should be the main indicator for evaluating the success or failure of national development. A couple of days later, Albert Hasibuan, the general chairman of the predominant party GOLKAR's Institute for Legal Services and Information, agreed, and he added that there were many cases of the authorities abusing people's rights while implementing development programs. Both seem to hold implicitly that integrity of the person and civil and political rights should not be subordinated to economic rights. A third public voice was that of S.A.E. Nababan, the chairman of the Indonesian Council of Churches, who said that the first duty of the church is to safeguard basic human rights. After that came cooperation with the government and private groups

GOLKAR campaign poster. The tree has eight descending branches, while the right-hand sheath has seventeen pods, and the left-hand one has forty-five. This represents 17 August 1945, Indonesia's Proclamation Day.

to eradicate poverty. In this view, basic human rights and economic rights are clearly separate matters, with the former having priority. Nor do these members of the elite suggest that individual rights ought to be subordinated to collective rights as defined by governmental authorities. Thus the case for a different view of human rights generally among the Indonesian elite cannot be sustained.[6]

Trends since Independence

In the years immediately after the Republic achieved international recognition in late 1949, the policies and practices of authorities reflected relatively high respect for the integrity of the person. The new (1950) constitution included a charter of rights based on the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. In August 1951 a few thousand Communists were arrested and detained without trial for a few months on an unsubstantiated charge of plotting a coup d'état. Nonetheless, according to Amnesty International (AI), "there

sion?," *World Politics* 35 (January 1983), pp. 286–314.

4. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, various years.

5. Jusuf Wanandi, "Human Rights: An Indonesian View," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 December 1977, pp. 22–24.

6. *I.R.*, 15 December 1984, pp. 4, 10, 11, and 15.

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was virtually no political imprisonment in Indonesia."[7]

Sukarno declared martial law in 1957 and brought back the 1945 Constitution which omits any charter of rights. It was during this Guided Democracy period that serious abuses began, largely as a result of the disappearance of institutional controls. The bureaucracy, including the judicial bureaucracy, became attached to executive authority. The 1945 Constitution was open to widely divergent interpretations, as is currently evident in the debate between Suharto and the Petition of Fifty opposition group. Without internal bureaucratic controls, abuse of power became first easy and then very attractive. External controls were by and large simply demolished as the political party system and press weakened. When local rebellions occurred in several regions in the late 1950s, several thousand people were arrested and detained for political reasons. Although most were released under a general amnesty in the early 1960s, a number of government critics and political opposition leaders were kept in prison without trial. The death penalty was handed down by courts on only three occasions and implemented only in the case of the three men convicted of an attempted assassination of President Sukarno in 1957 that killed eleven bystanders.

The anti-subversion law and KOPKAMTIB indicate that under the New Order, law and legal institutions have been used more to justify abuse of human rights than to protect them. Recent trials of Muslim activists and moderate oppositionists have shown legal propriety to be a facade, and legal institutions, lacking autonomy in cases with political overtones, no longer have much legitimacy. Legal reform without prior political change is unlikely to correct this weakness. From the point of view of the regime, however, courts serve useful functions of intimidation and symbolic reassurance for middle-class citizens and foreign observers that a legal process is in place.

Human rights violations have been much greater during the military-dominated Suharto regime (economic rights excepted as mentioned above). The New Order swept aside the patrimonial sloppiness of bureaucratic action under Guided Democracy in favor of the more consistent application of power adumbrated in the colonial period.[8] The first task was destruction of the strongest contending political force, the Indonesian Communist party (PKI). Human rights concern focused on massacres of hundreds of thousands of party members and others in 1965–66, and the detention and treatment of about one-and-a-half million persons accused of involvement in subversive activities and/or of having past membership, association, or sympathy with the party or its mass organizations during Guided Democracy when these organizations were still legal. Less than 2,000 of these prisoners, or about six per 10,000, ever had their cases examined in any court or judicial process, and most spent several years—many more than a decade—in detention under appalling circumstances. In its 1977 report on Indonesia, AI described the arbitrary nature of arrest, detention, and classification; the total military control in all matters relating to political arrest, interrogation, and imprisonment; and the almost unlimited powers of individual military officers over the prisoners in their jurisdiction, including the power to decide whether or not to use torture in interrogation.

By the end of 1979 and due partly to international pressure, detainees in the less serious classifications (categories B and C) were released, yet they continue to suffer a wide variety of other abuses.[9] Many were "released" by being transmigrated to distant islands which they have not been allowed to leave. Others have been subject to town or house arrest for a year or more. Nearly all have been systematically denied employment, whether in government or private firms. Their families have also been victimized by being denied employment or deprived of financial support, often even after release of the detainee. Ever since 1966, a "Certificate of Noninvolvement" has been required for virtually all employment, admission to public education, obtaining a passport, etc. This has been denied also to family members. Despite statements of government officials in 1975 that certificates were no longer required for private employment, they continue to be required in practice. Investigations, screenings, detentions, denials of government services and contracts, and dismissals from employment in the public sector and in vital industries continue to the present day.

After the "release" of Category B and C prisoners, human rights advocates continued to work for bringing to trial about 2,000 remaining Category A prisoners, who have been accused of the most serious connection with the aborted coup. Lacking sufficient evidence, the government reclassified the majority and "released" all but about 200 of them. AI contends that many of the latter are being detained for their nonviolent political beliefs rather than for any direct involvement in the coup attempt.[10] Many may not have received a fair

7. *Indonesia*, (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1977), p. 12.

8. Benedict Anderson, "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Journal of Asian Studies* 42 (May 1983), pp. 477–496.

9. According to figures released by the Department of Home Affairs, 1,458,700 detainees have been released. Home Affairs Instruction 32/1981 prohibits them from positions, such as traditional puppeteers, which have direct contact with large numbers of people. They are disenfranchised, prohibited from membership in any mass social or political organization and from speaking in public, and they must carry identity cards that have special marks signifying their ex-prisoner status. "Statement of Amnesty International's Concerns in Indonesia," *I.R.*, No. 10, September 1985, Human Rights Supplement. In December 1985 a government official announced that formal guidance for supervision of the behavior and attitudes of "former 30 September Movement/PKI detainees and criminals" had been issued down to the neighborhood and village level. *Sinar Harapan*, 3 December 1985, cited in *I.R.*, No. 15 (April 1986), p. 19.

10. Ibid.

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trial and may have experienced arbitrary application of rules regarding sentencing, parole, and remission, and approximately twenty-eight are under sentence of death. Four were suddenly executed in mid-1985, giving rise to international protest, including a resolution by the European Parliament.

Without countervailing external pressure, the outlook for human rights and political development in Indonesia is bleak indeed. For example, the United States could make several changes in its policy toward Indonesia. First, there is need for better monitoring of the human rights situation by U.S. intelligence and for more information sharing among U.S. government agencies and between the U.S. and the Australian government, since the latter has better information at the present time. The information currently being reported by nongovernmental agencies (such as AI, TAPOL, and churches) and the media (e.g. Indonesia Publications) needs to be taken more seriously. The U.S. could also actively support further internationalization of human rights monitoring—for example, the covening of an international commission to investigate the human rights situation thoroughly at the local level, especially in East Timor and Irian Jaya.

In addition to suspected Communists, several hundred others, mainly government critics and radical Muslims, were detained without trial for extended periods in the 1970s. The number was highest in connection with the Malari Affair of 1974 and the general elections of 1977.[11] There was also mounting concern with the human rights situation in East Timor, which was forcefully annexed by Indonesia in 1976. Foreign aid workers and Indonesian officials estimated that some 100,000 East Timorese died between August 1975 and mid-1979, "most from starvation and disease brought on by disruption and permitted by Jakarta neglect."[12] A massive international aid program was launched. Allegations of physical mistreatment and disappearance have probably been most

"'Beware of the PKI!' warns General Amir Machmud, chairman of those great bastions of Indonesia's Pancasila Democracy, its Parliament and Consultative Assembly."*

numerous during the periods of fiercest fighting between Indonesian and Fretilin forces (1976–79, 1983–present). Concerns were particularly expressed about the prisoners in Dili Prison and the approximately 4,000 supporters of the dissident Fretilin organization who were detained on Atauro Island.

The Social Diversity of Rights Violations in the 1980s

Once they clearly dominated politics and government, and having institutionalized the political role of the military to an unprecedented degree, New Order authorities began to resort more than ever before to systematic and widespread violence against all critics and real and imagined political opponents. As noted above, violations of rights during the initial years of the New Order were suffered mainly by persons alleged to have been involved directly or indirectly in the attempted coup. More recently, however, there has been a marked increase in the diversity of the social groups or sectors of Indonesian society whose rights have been deliberately violated by New Order authorities, although the total number of political prisoners is probably lower.

The search for suspected Communists has been unrelenting since 1965 and may have intensified. For example, security authorities recently ordered the firing of 1,600 oil workers, accusing them of past ties with the long-banned PKI or a banned Communist-affiliated oil workers' union. According to the minister of manpower, Admiral (Ret.) Sudomo, this was part of a larger sacking that would total 6,000 oil industry

11. The Malari Affair refers to extensive rioting that broke out in Jakarta on 15 January during which at least thirteen people were killed and 770 arrested. It began with student demonstrations against the visit to Jakarta of Japanese prime minister Tanaka and subsequently involved large numbers of people apparently discontent with government economic policy and Chinese dominance of the economy.

12. Hamish McDonald, *Suharto's Indonesia* (Fontana, 1980), p. 215.

*From *TAPOL Bulletin*, No. 78, December 1986.

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*Andi Mappetahang Fatwa, a well-known Muslim preacher and political activist, leaving court after his first hearing. As one of the most outspoken critics of the government in recent years, Fatwa has endured constant harassment since the late 1970s and many physical assaults. Fatwa used the occasion of his trial in August 1985 to explain his views on a range of political, social, and religious matters and was sentenced to eighteen years. (*TAPOL Bulletin, *No. 71, September 1985 and No. 73, January 1986.)*

workers. Executives from foreign oil companies said they were puzzled that the government waited nearly twenty years to order the alleged Communist sympathizers fired. In another recent operation, 144 Central Java veterans were stripped of their status as "honored veterans of the war of independence" because of alleged links with the PKI more than twenty years ago. Another 104 veterans are facing similar action because of alleged former links to the PKI.[13] Perhaps the sudden execution in mid-1985 of the four prisoners fifteen to twenty years after their conviction (mentioned above) also was intended to underscore the regime's resolve.

Beginning about 1983 there has been a country-wide campaign of covert, summary execution of criminals. Indonesian human rights groups estimated that up to 4,000 were killed in 1983. The killing has continued since then at a reduced rate, perhaps in response to expressions of concern by foreign governments. Almost all of those killed were included on lists of criminals maintained by government security forces. Several high government officials acknowledged the role of security elements in this anti-crime campaign, labelled as "mysterious killings" by the media.

Economic rights, or the meeting of basic human needs, are usually the primary concern of poor majorities everywhere, and the New Order has attempted to build legitimacy by attending to economic rights alone. Some of the middle-class groups, however, have begun to argue that empowerment of the poor, not simply meeting their material needs but allowing them to share in the planning and decision-making about their lives and communities, is a necessary precondition for sustainable development and protection of human rights. In short, all rights are cut from the same cloth, and economic rights can no longer be separated from the exercise of civil and political rights. Such thinking is subversive in the view of New Order elites, because it implies a fundamental shift away from the all-controlling, paternalistic mode of governance to a facilitative mode with a more participatory political process and, perhaps, less stability.

Another target group includes Muslim activists, preachers, and teachers. In each of the last three years, about 500 of these have been in detention without trial.[14] Amnesty International considers many of the 700 alleged Komando Jihad activists arrested since 1977, at least a dozen Muslim preachers and missionaries charged in connection with the 1984 Tanjung Priok incident, and at least twenty-eight distributors of pamphlets and cassettes which challenged the official interpretation of the incident, to be "prisoners of conscience." Since the incident at Priok, surveillance and harassment of Muslim preachers and teachers has broadened and intensified. Only those holding permits from the government may speak publicly. There have been new reports virtually every month that another Muslim has been prosecuted, convicted of subversion, and typically sentenced to six years in prison. It is apparent that New Order authorities have used the Priok incident as a pretext for the arrest of nonviolent Muslim critics of the government.[15]

13. *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 11 November 1985; *I.R.*, No. 17 (August 1986), p. 32.

14. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, various years.

15. "As soon as a religious lecturer utters words of truth derived from the Qur'an and based on the plain facts of everyday life, or a prominent figure or

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Overlapping with but distinguishable from the Muslim activists is the "moderate opposition," composed of retired military officers and elder statesmen willing to engage in public criticism of the government's policies. During the past year three of these, M. Sanusi, A.M. Fatwa, and H.R. Dharsono, have been convicted of subversion and given ten- to nineteen-year prison sentences. Their trials were a farce, as about half of the defense witnesses were disallowed, prosecution witnesses often retracted testimony that they claimed had been given under intimidation or torture, there were glaring inconsistencies and factual errors in the testimony of some prosecution witnesses, and the judges presented their lengthy verdicts too quickly for them to have adequately considered the defense. In the view of an Indonesian newspaper editor, the message the regime wanted to get across by prosecuting such a venerated public figure as Dharsono, a former commander of the Army's Siliwangi Division and a former secretary-general of ASEAN, was: "They can break anybody at any time for any reason, and no one in this society has either the power or, really, the will to do anything about it."[16]

All formally organized social groups have been affected by the regime's push to legalize tighter and wider state control of society. The presentation of five controversial political bills to the Representative Assembly (DPR) in mid-1984 generated stinging rebukes, especially from devout Muslims and the moderate opposition, and touched off a wave of political violence. One bill, now the Law on Social Organizations, legalizes government intervention in virtually all affairs of all organizations and obliges them to accept the state ideology, Pancasila, as their sole, basic principle. For reformist Muslims who seriously try to implement their faith in this world, the law takes away religious freedom. "Step by step these [Muslim] purists have had to give ground . . . But never before have Muslims been forced to enshrine the state creed—to the exclusion of Islam itself—in the organizational charters of their strictly religious fellowships."[17]

Severe and extensive violations have been perpetrated against some cultural minorities, especially Timorese, Melanesians, and Chinese. Ever since the resumption of fighting between Fretilin and Indonesian forces in August 1983, reports of atrocities have again streamed out of East Timor. In its August 1985 statement to the U.N. Special Committee on Decolonization, AI decried the killing of noncombatant civilians, the disappearance of prisoners, and continuation of arbitrary arrest and detention. Specifically mentioned was the reprisal killing of some 200 villagers in 1983 and the killing of about 100 men in one incident in 1984. There are currently about 1,200 detainees on Atauro Island and hundreds of those reportedly released have been redetained elsewhere (Paragua, Cailaco, Bunuk, and Dare). At least fifty Timorese are currently in prison without charge or trial. Forty-three of the 199 prisoners who have been tried and convicted are serving their sentences in prisons near Jakarta, making visits from family and friends virtually impossible. Indonesian forces, currently about 10,000 strong or the same level as during the 1976 invasion, continue to impose serious restrictions on access to the territory and the flow of information out of it. In a recent letter to the Indonesian government, the apostolic administrator of Dili, Msgr. Belo, attested to the increased level of hostility and continued violations of human rights, especially the right of a nation to its own identity and self-determination.[18]

In Irian Jaya, resistance to the Indonesian administration, some of it organized in the Free Papua Movement (OPM), and subsequent operations by the Indonesian military have led to the exodus of more than 11,000 people across the border into Papua New Guinea since February 1984. Since then, there are reports of forced deportations and widespread arrests, torture, and deaths in detention in Irian Jaya. At least eighty deaths by starvation and sickness occurred in refugee camps in a few months after the PNG government, under pressure from Indonesia, withdrew assistance in mid-1984.[19] There are reports of widespread arrests, torture, and deaths in detention in Irian Jaya since February 1984. Several alleged members or supporters of OPM who sought refuge or were arrested across the border in PNG and who were subsequently deported may have been tortured or killed in custody by Indonesian security officials.[20] The Indonesian and PNG governments have established a voluntary repatriation program, but representatives of impartial organizations have seldom been allowed to monitor

community leader expresses views based on the Constitution and its implementation, he is immediately arrested, detained and tried for 'holding a secret meeting' in violation of Law No. 5/1963 or as a 'subversive' in violation of Law No. 11/1963 so long as the authorities consider the matter as contrary to its will and preferences." H.R. Dharsono, "Menuntut Janji Orde Baru."

16. Quoted by L. Kaye in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 January 1986.

17. L. Kaye, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 June 1985.

18. "After nine years of occupation by the Indonesian government of this territory, which it considers to be an integral part of the Indonesian nation, the war which they would have us believe to be a civil war goes on and continues to grow, which is witnessed by the constant arrival of Indonesian troops together with heavy war material, the deployment of more than ten military helicopters for operational purposes, and of several air force combat aircraft. In view of the permanent insecurity of the population in many regions of East Timor, the continuous exodus of the Timorese people, forced migrations to resettlement camps, and the absence of freedom of circulation, we think that the moment has come to put the following questions:

"Is all this merely brought about by a stubborn minority, or does it reveal something deeper about the demand for basic human rights of the people?

"The church believes that the people of East Timor feel that fundamental human rights have been violated. Among these rights is the right of the Timorese people to choose and direct their own future. This means in fact the right to govern one's life according to one's own identity.

"The Indonesian government proceeds from the assumption that the people of East Timor have already exercised their right to self-determination. However, as the necessary conditions for this have not yet been created, the Church considers that here resides one of the causes behind the situation of anguish experienced by the people of East Timor over the last nine years. A war that continues for nine years cannot be imputed to the blind obstinacy of a minority.

"If that were so, what would then be the explanation of the arrests, disappearances, and the deportation of thousands of civilians during these nine years? On the other hand, if the majority of the Timorese people have already chosen their future, why then do they continue to be persecuted and eliminated?" Reprinted in translation in *I.R.*, No. 7, Human Rights Supplement, 25 May 1985. For the most credible recent report on political prisons and prisoners in East Timor, see the reprint in translation of a report by the Portuguese human rights group in *I.R.*, No. 14, Human Rights Supplement, March 1986.

19. Brian Brunton, "Refugees, Human Rights, and Irian Jaya: A Critique of Policy," *I.R.*, No. 1, Human Rights Supplement, 15 November 1984.

20. "Statement of AI's Concerns in Indonesia," *I.R.*, No. 10; *I.R.*, Nos. 3, 5, and 16, Human Rights Supplement, January and March 1985 and June 1986.

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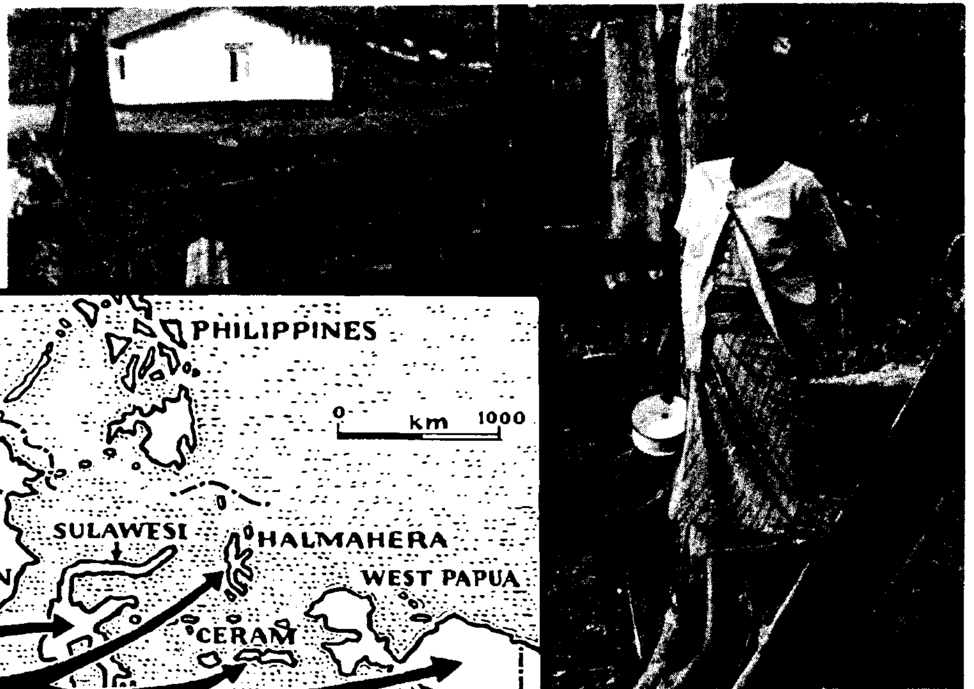
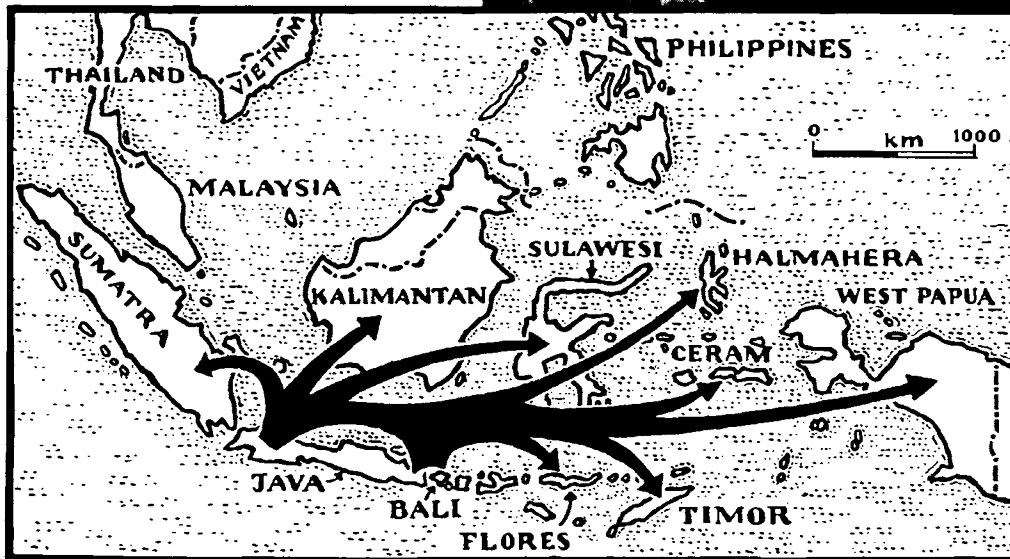
"Members of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) near Wissel Lakes. Tribal Papuans are engaged in an unusual struggle with the Indonesian security forces in defense of their lands and their right to self determination." (The Ecologist: Journal of the Post Industrial Age, *Vol. 16, No. 2/3, 1986, p. 99.)*





"A transmigrant from Java surveys her new home, a newly cleared site near Rimbo-Bujung, Sumatra. The newspapers are full of tales of families returning home to Java. The government admits to 2,000 people having left their homes during the period of the 3rd Five-Year Plan. Sixty transmigration sites are in need of 'rehabilitation.'"

"The Transmigration program involves the mass movement of millions of landless poor from the central Indonesian islands of Java, Madwa, Bali, and Lombok to the less densely populated islands." (The Ecologist: Journal of the Post Industrial Age, *Vol. 16, No. 2/3, 1986, pp. 73 and 59.)*

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the return of refugees to ensure that their repatriation was indeed voluntary and that they were not subject to ill-treatment by Indonesian security forces upon their arrival in Irian Jaya. Areas of military operations have been closed off completely from international scrutiny, even more so than in East Timor where the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) has access to political prisoners.

The Indonesian government's transmigration program has increased support for the resistance as it takes what is considered communal land by the indigenous people and threatens to fundamentally change the demographic characteristics and hence the cultural identity of the majority population of Irian Jaya. Transmigration of about 82,000 so far has been accompanied by "spontaneous" transmigration of more than 100,000. The government intends to increase the number to between 500,000 and 600,000 by 1989 or the end of the present five-year plan. The indigenous Melanesian population is currently about 1.2 million. By the year 2000, demographers expect well over half the population to be non-Irianese, most of the newcomers having been shipped in from overcrowded Java and Bali.

At least 1,500 Chinese are currently detained at several locations, pending their deportation, for illegally reentering Indonesia. These are mainly persons who returned to Indonesia after leaving for China in protest against Government Regulation No. 10 of 1959, which barred Chinese traders from the rural areas, or in flight from the political tumult of late 1965. By a presidential order in 1982, these mostly stateless persons will be moved to a single facility that is being built on West Sumba, far away from their families and friends.

Reactions of the Middle Class

Human rights abuse by the New Order has grown with the expansion of middle-class groups, always harder to control than other strata in the social structure. It has not been the peasant majorities or the urban poor who have been the main targets of oppression and abuse. Restoration of political stability and the unprecedented prosperity of the oil boom in the 1970s has enabled the emergent urban, middle-class professionals (including religionists), intellectuals, and commercial interests to flourish and begin to seriously challenge the ideological assumptions and political prerogatives of the New Order elite.[21] They have become more politically aware, more assertive, and many have become more critical of the New Order and its policies.

One aspect of the ideologies being developed by emergent middle-class groups that is particularly difficult for the New Order to tolerate is the linkage posited between economic and other rights. Economic rights, or the meeting of basic human needs, are usually the primary concern of poor majorities everywhere, and the New Order has attempted to build legitimacy by attending to economic rights alone. Some of the middle-class groups, however, have begun to argue that empowerment of the poor, not simply meeting their material needs but allowing them to share in the planning and decision-making about their lives and communities, is a necessary precondition for sustainable development and protection of human rights. In short, all rights are cut from the same cloth, and economic rights can no longer be separated from the exercise of civil and political rights.[22] In the view of New Order elites, such thinking is subversive because it implies a fundamental shift away from the all-controlling, paternalistic mode of governance to a facilitative mode with a more participatory political process and, perhaps, less stability.

Another aspect is strong support for constitutionalism and the rule of law. Particularly irritating to New Order critics is the way the regime utilizes the presumed authority of the Law on Subversive Activities and the Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (KOPKAMTIB) to mask political interest and naked coercion. They provide a small group of New Order officials with absolute power, enabling them to ignore whatever protections may be offered by ordinary laws and the judicial system. For example, all persons arrested, interrogated, and detained in connection with the events in Tanjung Priok, the Bank Central Asia bombings, and public criticism of the government under religious auspices were in the custody of KOPKAMTIB, and those brought to trial were charged under the anti-subversion law (UU No. 11/PNPS/1963).

The anti-subversion decree was promulgated in the latter part of the Sukarno period and confirmed in the early years of the New Order. The comprehensiveness and generality of its provisions enable the authorities to invoke it in an extremely wide range of circumstances, to use virtually anything as evidence of infraction, and to impose the maximum sentence of death. Implementation of the anti-subversion law has been the responsibility primarily of KOPKAMTIB. Established by executive decree on 10 October 1965 and subsequently confirmed by an executive-controlled DPR, this military agency has virtually unlimited powers to arrest, interrogate, and indefinitely detain persons thought to jeopardize national security, broadly defined.[23] These special arrest and detention powers supersede a new Criminal Procedures Code (KUHAP) that began to be implemented in 1982. In other words, despite some protections offered by KUHAP (habeas corpus, bail

21. "In terms of occupation and status, wealth and power, the Indonesian middle class is amorphous: civil servants (including teachers and academics), professionals such as engineers, doctors, lawyers, journalists, airline pilots, and business executives, other 'white collar' workers, and, of course, employers. Lifestyle and attitudes, however, provide the underlying coherence of an urban middle-class culture. It is most evident in Jakarta but, being diffused throughout the country by the powerful media of education, television, and magazines, it is becoming the national culture." H.W. Dick, "The Rise of a Middle Class and the Changing Concept of Equity in Indonesia: An Interpretation," *Indonesia* 39 (April 1985), pp. 71–92.

22. Expressions of this line of thinking frequently appear in *Prisma* (Jakarta). See, for example, the June 1983 issue of the English edition on the role of voluntary associations in development or the April 1983 issue of the Indonesian edition on the same topic. See also the public aide memoire resulting from the second Inter Non-Governmental Organization Conference on IGGI Matters (INGI), *I.R.*, No. 16, Business and Economy Supplement, June 1986.

23. One instance reported in the 1984 State Department report illustrates, I think, the minimal limitations on KOPKAMTIB's powers. The minister of justice ordered the release of sixty-nine vagrants detained in Jakarta, claiming KOPKAMTIB had no authority to arrest and detain persons whose offenses were, at worst, misdemeanors. I doubt that it could have happened by order of any lesser official or outside of Jakarta where the press is even more domesticated and foreign eyes fewer.

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bonding, legal counsel), in all cases of suspected subversion, sabotage, secession, or corruption, these protections are superseded by KOPKAMTIB's powers. In these cases, prisoners are held entirely within a military system of administration. Only if and when a case was brought to trial was it transferred to the regular mostly civilian criminal justice system. And these cases are extremely rare: as mentioned above, less than six per 10,000 persons suspected in connection with the 1965 attempted coup.

The anti-subversion law and KOPKAMTIB indicate that under the New Order, law and legal institutions have been used more to justify abuse of human rights than to protect them. Recent trials of Muslim activists and moderate oppositionists have shown legal propriety to be a facade, and legal institutions, lacking autonomy in cases with political overtones, no longer have much legitimacy. Legal reform without prior political change is unlikely to correct this weakness. From the point of view of the regime, however, courts serve useful functions of intimidation and symbolic reassurance for middle-class citizens and foreign observers that a legal process is in place.

At the same time, the law has increasingly become the base of ideological protest against New Order abuses. The legal basis of the anti-subversion law has been questioned frequently, as has the continued existence of KOPKAMTIB now twenty years after it was created to "restore" order.[24] Moreover, human rights have become a central element in the evolving ideologies of middle-class groups, ironically the product of economic growth encouraged by the New Order itself. The Legal Aid Institute of Indonesia is an obvious example. Its lawyers have played an important part in defending people against abuses of power and in developing ideological positions against abusive elites.[25] They seem to be establishing

24. In the recent trial of H.A.M. Fatwa, defense attorneys argued:

1. The anti-subversion law lost its legal basis after Decision No.I/MPRS/1960 and Decision No.II/MPRS/1960 were repealed with Decision No.V/MPR/1973 and Decision No.XXXVIII/MPRS/1968, respectively.

2. The anti-subversion law continues to represent law, but it does not fulfill the requirements for every piece of law in the Republic of Indonesia as a legal state based on Part IIA, sub 3, Memorandum DPR-GR dated 9 June 1966, and thus it must be considered not to have validity any longer, and for this reason it must be set aside.

3. The government and the DPR have not yet formulated new laws about preventing subversive activities as required by section 2, Law No. 5/PNPS/1969.

4. Since by statutory scheme (i.e. Criminal Procedures code now valid) subversion is a political matter outside the jurisdiction of regular courts, and district courts only have authority to try general criminal and civil cases, by definition the Central Jakarta District Court does not have authority to try a case from which it has been removed by law.

During the subsequent trial of H.R. Dharsono, other members of the dissident "Group of 50" petitioned the representative assembly (DPR) to repeal the anti-subversion law. They argued that the law was introduced as an emergency law [against regional separatists] and that it had lost its reason for existence. They contended that judges trying Dharsono had told his lawyers, "The Council of Judges does not reject the fact, as put forward by the defense team, that historically the anti-subversion law was created in emergency conditions by presidential decree which by nature was temporary . . ." *Australian Age*, 18 October 1985.

Most recently, Wem Kaunang, former general chairman of the Indonesian Catholic University Students Association (PMKRI), attacked the anti-subversion law as follows: "The law can easily be used to manipulate national politics. It is strange that such a law which holds out harsh punishment for those 'proved to be subversive' has never been reviewed by the maker of law, the DPR. The legal justification for preserving the status quo of power with such a law pointed at the political community represents political injustice and favors any regime in power . . . The law places the government in a practically inviolable position . . . People can no longer be fooled easily." *I.R.*, 15 January 1985, p. 20.

25. Despite a cutoff of government funding (and the new Law on Social Organizations that prohibits receiving contributions from abroad), the Jakarta branch of the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) reports that they receive about eight to twelve new cases each day, so that each of their fifteen public defenders have been handling about 100 cases per year. And despite the prospect of measly salaries and well-publicized difficulties faced by Indonesia's corps of human rights lawyers, there were 300 applicants for ten new positions (nationally).

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essentially local variants of liberalism against the authoritarianism of the New Order. And despite government- and self-censorship, the Indonesian language press remains an important source of information on human rights.

Religionists, especially, reacted strongly to the major push by the New Order to legalize tighter and wider state control of society. Among five controversial political bills presented to the representative assembly (DPR) in mid-1984 was one for controlling all associations or formally organized groups. The bill and then the law for controlling all associations or formally organized groups generated stinging rebukes, especially from Muslim purists and the moderate opposition, and touched off a wave of political violence (e.g. the Tanjung Priok incident and countless bombings and arsons). Moh. Natsir, a former prime minister, general chairman of the modernist Islamic party Masjumi, and currently head of the Indonesian Islamic Missionary Council, argued that "the five political bills marked the culmination point of the New Order and were bringing everyone, without exception, to a crossroads in Indonesian history."[26]

Another type of reaction has been that the law turns Pancasila against itself, or that enforcing Pancasila in this way is a contradiction in terms. This idea has been expressed by Gen. (Ret.) A.H. Nasution:

> Pancasila actually carries within itself harmony between diversity and unity. One cannot occur without the other . . . [S]tressing unity by making diversity disappear will bring us to the regimentation of state, national, and social life, narrowing the room for initiative, creativity, and dynamism. For that reason, this establishment of a sole principle by eliminating the principles of various aspirations in the life of social and religious organizations, in my opinion, is contrary to the harmony which is carried within Pancasila. So long as diversity of motivations and aspirations is not aimed at changing the principles and nature of the Republican state proclaimed in 1945, then the parties involved have to be given the freedom of association, assembly, and expression guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution.[27]

Thus he finds the law in conflict not only with religious belief, but also with the Pancasila and the Constitution.

Conclusion

External actors played crucial roles that facilitated the consolidation of power initially in the New Order and helped to maintain it ever since through provision of capital, technology, military aid and training, diplomatic support, and strategic protection. These actors include the governments belonging to the aid consortium: the Intergovernmental Group for Indonesia (IGGI), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and multinational corporations (MNCs) invested in Indonesia. Currently, these actors combined are lending the Indonesian government about $6 billion annually. Apparently some of them are now troubled by the increasing human rights violations and other excesses (e.g. corruption and excessive economic regulation) of the New Order.[28]

If these actors want Indonesian middle-class groups to play a larger role in economic development, more competition in the economy, and the New Order to broaden its base of (domestic) political support, they will need to assist the Indonesian middle class in regaining its rights and in limiting oppression by the New Order. Without countervailing external pressure, the outlook for human rights and political development in Indonesia is bleak indeed. For example, the United States could make several changes in its policy toward Indonesia. First, there is need for better monitoring of the human rights situation by U.S. intelligence and for more information sharing among U.S. government agencies and between the U.S. and the Australian government, since the latter has better information at the present time. The information currently being reported by nongovernmental agencies (such as AI, TAPOL, and churches) and the media (e.g. Indonesia Publications) needs to be taken more seriously. The U.S. could also actively support further internationalization of human rights monitoring—for example, the covening of an international commission to investigate the human rights situation thoroughly at the local level, especially in East Timor and Irian Jaya. Despite the New Order's long record of abuses, there have not been nearly as many investigations as in the Philippines by professional, nongovernmental human rights analysts, nor has there ever been anything comparable to the International Mission of Lawyers to Malaysia.

There is need for public protestations and stronger sanctions. If the U.S. refrained from more than token gestures of displeasure during the Carter Administration on grounds that the program for release of prisoners detained in 1965–67 was a sign of improvement,[29] there have been no such improvements in the last few years to justify toleration of the deteriorating human rights situation. Stronger sanctions could involve termination of the concessional military assistance (including arms sales credits and training assistance) which has been a means of expressing support for the New Order. U.S. military aid, amounting to about $34 million in 1985, is currently helping to supply about twenty battalions of Indonesian forces deployed in East Timor and several battalions in Irian Jaya. With regard to economic assistance, the U.S. could cast a dissenting vote or at least abstain on such questionable World Bank loans as those financing the transmigration program and the family planning program for Catholic East Timor. ★

Kompas, 6 January and 20 February 1986. Cited in *I.R.*, No. 16, June 1986, and No. 17, August 1986.

26. *I.R.* (November 1984), p. 5. Natsir also wrote: "What is being called the principle for an organization, or for that matter an individual, is the formulation of ideals, fundamental motivations, sources of strength for enduring suffering, a grasp of life to be carried till death. For anyone who already has a principle in this sense, it is no easy matter to change it around, like changing clothes in the morning to go to work, and in the early evening to rest and sleep. A principle is not a technical matter, and human beings are not robots. A principle is not merely a matter of thought. It goes deeper than that. It is a matter of conscience, of religious belief." (*I.R.*, No. 8, Politics Supplement, June 1985.)

27. Ibid.

28. A sense of Congress resolution protesting continued rights violations in East Timor was introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Tony P. Hall in December 1985. And thirty-four members of the House sent a letter on East Timor to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar asking for a U.N. investigation into the human rights situation in East Timor. Both documents are reprinted in *I.R.*, Human Rights Supplement, November 1985. For the latest barrages against New Order corruption, see David Jenkins, "After Marcos, Now for the Suharto Billions," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 April 1986, and Steven Jones and Raphael Pura, "Jakarta's Policies Help Suharto Kin to Prosper," *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, 1 December 1986.

29. Robert Pringle, *Indonesia and the Philippines* (New York: Columbia University, 1980).

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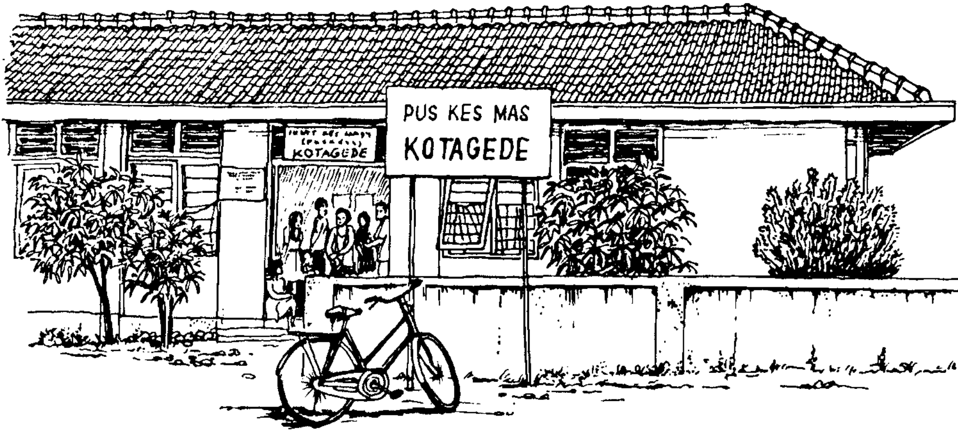

Sketches of Indonesia

by Hans Borkent

HANS '82

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The Path of Suffering: The Report of a Political Prisoner on His Journey through Various Prison Camps in Indonesia

by Pandu Nusa

Introduction

In June 1965 the Indonesian Communist party (PKI) was the largest Marxist party in the non-Communist world. A year later it had been destroyed, wiped out by military and religious groups on the grounds of its implication—still unproven—in the shadowy 30th September Affair of 1965, in which six leading conservative and pro-Western generals were killed. Not only were the party's leaders killed or jailed, but appalling massacres of party members and sympathizers took place, especially in the countryside. Of those who were not killed, some fled abroad or went underground, but large numbers—perhaps one-and-a-half million, though no definite figures are available—were rounded up and detained, generally without trial; many were held for a decade or longer. Even after the release of prisoners began in 1975, they have generally been reluctant to relate their experiences for fear of attracting the attention of the authorities, and few personal accounts of the experiences of the detainees have thus appeared.

The present work, written by Pandu Nusa, who is now living in the Netherlands, was first published in stencil form in Dutch by the Indonesia Committee of the Communist party of the Netherlands in 1983. The narrative is unpolished and at times unclear, but this translation of it is published here as an important record of the experiences of political prisoners under the Suharto regime. Annotations have been added by the editor.

The Editors

Nusa Kambangan, Transit Island

During the Dutch colonial period Nusa Kambangan was known as a notorious place of exile. The name alone would send chills up and down Indonesian spines. The island, which lies off the south coast of Central Java, was known for the inhuman treatment meted out to the prisoners sent there for forced labor. It was impossible to escape by swimming across the narrow strait of Java, for the coastline was crawling with crocodiles. These days, more than ever, Nusa Kambangan has become an island of terror. The island was used as a transit camp for the political prisoners who were dispatched in the 1970s to the distant island of Buru in the Moluccas.

Nusa Kambangan, literally "Floating Island," is thirty kilometers long and 3.5 kilometers wide. On it are nine prisons dating from colonial times. In order to give these prisons a somewhat friendlier sound, the Suharto regime refers to them as "Lembaga Pemasyarakatan," or "Institution for Restoring Social Awareness," making them sound like a kind of educational colony. However, under the New Order, as Suharto likes to call his regime, Nusa Kambangan is used principally to lock up members and sympathizers of the Indonesian Communist party, the PKI. After the massive arrests by the junta, more than ten thousand people from the Cilacap region were the first to be sent there. There were still criminal prisoners on the island, and they were used as helpers for the guards and were stirred up by the commandant against the political prisoners. The criminal prisoners were permitted to mistreat and even kill the political prisoners if they did not carry out their orders.

On 2 February 1966 the leaders of the numerous democratic organizations in Central Java were deported to Nusa Kambangan. By that time 12,000 people from Cilacap had already died there. The new arrivals found their graves all over the island, on the slopes of the hills and along the coasts. The survivors were starving and had little more than skin over their bones. Anyone who arrived on the island faced the fact that death was only a matter of time. Every day some died and had to be buried at once, but sometimes so many died that it was impossible to bury them all. A man might dig a grave and then himself die the following day. The causes of most deaths amongst the political prisoners were shortages of food and the brutal maltreatment they received. This situation changed only with the arrival of political prisoners who had been in the armed forces. They organized resistance groups and fought back, which at least made the assistants of the guards afraid.

In 1970 the status of the political prisoners was changed. It was announced that they were in transit to the island of Buru, where they would be sent to clear the land. Nusa Kambangan

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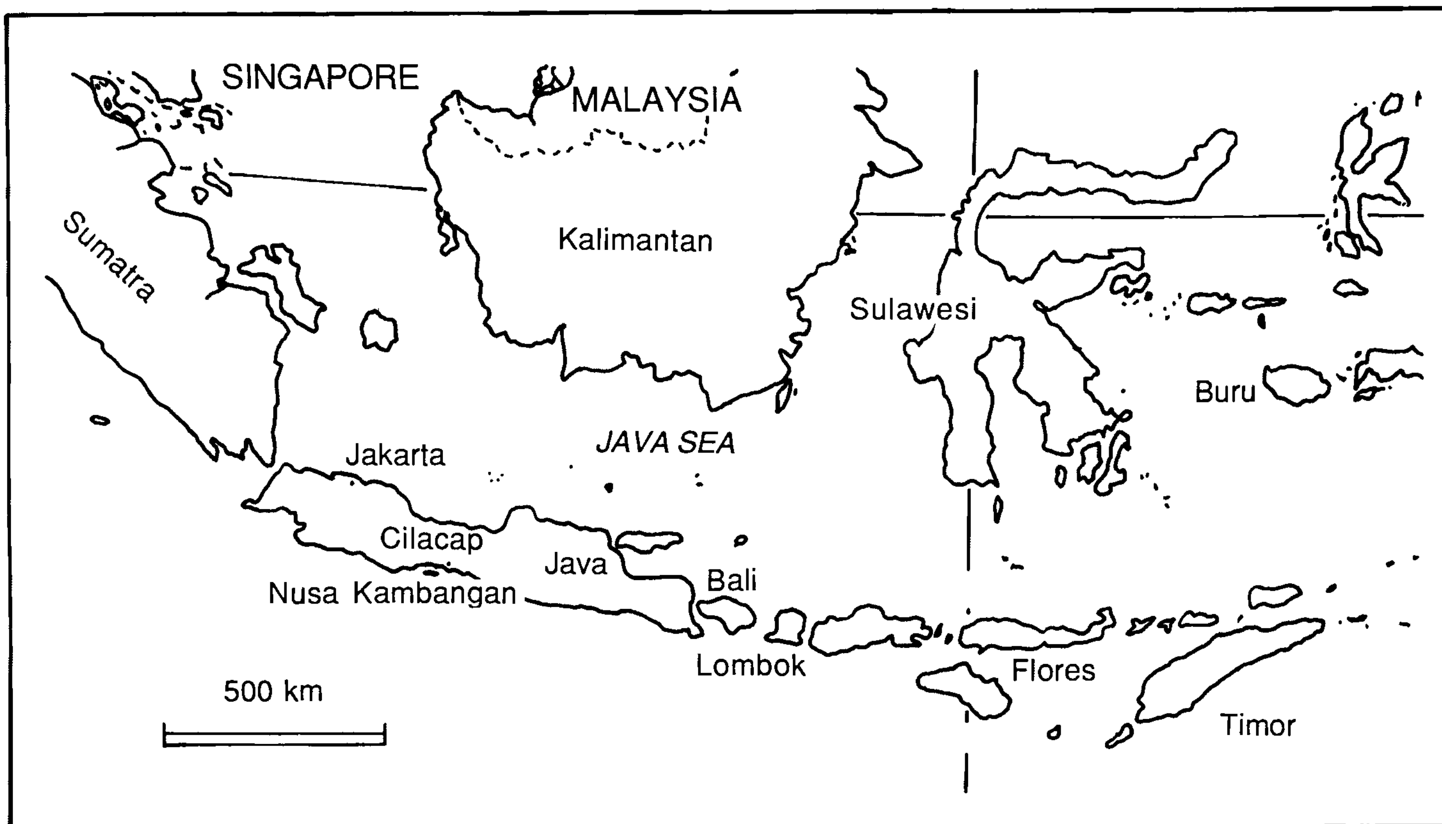

became the transit camp for the whole of Java. The training program to give the prisoners the technical skills necessary to clear and cultivate land lasted for a month, and as soon as the training began they no longer had to stay in their cells. And finally they were put aboard a boat bound for Buru.

They were deceived from the start. At first they were told that the training was part of a program to prepare them to return to free society, and many of them still believed this as they travelled to Buru.

On Nusa Kambangan, the training consisted of cultivating dry rice fields. The harvest was appropriated by a supervisor appointed by the military or else disappeared directly in the military apparatus. If the prisoners did not take care to keep back a part of the production for themselves, then they died of hunger, although they had grown sufficient rice and other crops to feed themselves.

Nusa Kambangan is a limestone island with coral beds, and there is much good building timber on the island. The unpaid workforce abundantly provided by the prisoners was extensively used in the exploitation of these resources. The products of the sawmill were sold outside the island, as was coral stone, which was used to make calcium. The island [facilities were] in poor condition before the arrival of the prisoners. Buildings and roads were not maintained. But these, too, benefited from the presence of the prisoners. First of all the official residences had to be renovated and made more attractive. The residence of the director was transformed into a real palace. Next, thanks to the quick hands of the prisoners, came a playing field, an assembly hall, and a mosque. Other political prisoners had to work as house servants. Every prison official on Nusa Kambangan, from top to bottom, was entitled to a prisoner as a house servant. Their duties included fetching water for the bath and the kitchen, cooking, cutting grass for the animals, and playing nursemaid to the children of the officials. Every official in fact had at least two prisoners as house servants, and the higher officials had more; some had ten. The prisoners were obliged to do every kind of work, light and heavy, even down to washing underclothes.

To Buru

The departure for Buru was kept secret. Nonetheless the news leaked out and all the prisoners were aware of the coming departure. There were various reactions to the report. Most accepted it as another consequence of their political struggle. Others fainted when they heard the news. Sometimes the family of a prisoner would try to avert the departure of their son or husband by bribery. This trade in human flesh sometimes succeeded.

The first ship left in 1969 and a second the following year. The first ship was an old army boat which sprang a leak in the Bali Straits and almost met disaster. After 1971 the prisoners were transported in a cattle ship.

Before the departure, each prisoner was given a number on his prison uniform. The prisoners were then embarked, allocated to different parts of the ship, and counted according to these numbers. Then they were told to lay their sleeping mats on the deck, but the space was so small that the mats would not fit. The unluckiest were those who had a place near the WC. They had to put up with seven days of stifling, nauseating stench. After the ship, the *Laut Anakan* (Child of the Sea), had left the gulf behind Nusa Kambangan, it was in the Indian Ocean, and the waves were so strong that many

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Amnesty International photo, courtesy of Robert Cribb

Prisoners working on Buru

were seasick. The food was sufficient, compared with that on Nusa Kambangan, but being seasick we were not terribly interested in it.

On arrival in Namlea, the harbor of Buru, we were transferred to motorboats and brought to shore. The prisoners were not taken directly from the harbor to the camp, but rather to a transit camp three kilometers from Namlea. We were forced to run the entire distance at full pace, which was exhausting, especially since we had not yet recovered from our seasickness. It was the intention of the authorities to hold the prisoners three to six days in the transit camp in order to prepare them for future work.

During the stay in the transit camp an Auxiliary Command Organization was set up. This was composed of prisoners who had to help carry out the instructions of the unit commander. A "General Instructor" was appointed, who was regarded as the lieutenant of the unit commander in day-to-day affairs. The "Barrack Heads" were the lieutenants of the General Instructor. Much was expected of the General Instructor; he was often someone with higher education, or at least someone whom the commander had previously known. If there were difficulties finding someone suitable as instructor, the prisoner with the lowest number was simply appointed to the post.

The situation in the transit barracks was understandably far from stable. Mentally the prisoners had to get used to many things, and there was much whispered speculation over what the future might hold for them. They talked about the possibility of escaping, and the danger of being recaptured or even killed. In general one can say, however, that treatment in the transit camp was fairly normal; the food supply was sufficient, and the other needs of the prisoners were also met. Discipline, on the other hand,was tough, and the prisoners expected that this would also be the case in their new place of residence. The journey there, tens of kilometers long, was made by motor boat. Each unit consisted of five hundred prisoners, under the guard of a platoon of soldiers called Tonwal, belonging to the Pattimura Division of the army. A full, well-armed battalion of this division was stationed on the island.

The boats glided peacefully up the Waiapur River. To the left and right, the forest came down to the water's edge. It was thick, dark forest, with hardly any human beings to be seen. This is understandable, because Buru has an area of 1,000 square kilometers and only 35,000 inhabitants. The boat could go only as far as a place called Air Menditih (which means "boiling water"), and from there the prisoners had to proceed on foot. The track was a narrow footpath and very marshy. They had to cross many rivers. The first contingent, which arrived in 1969, had a very difficult time. They had to build their own barracks because there was nothing at all there when they arrived. We had to camp overnight several times on the way, and the journey was made more difficult by the fact that the prisoners were carrying much baggage. They had brought with them mats, pillows, clothes, food utensils, and so on, anything they could get their hands on. This was despite the fact that they had been told they could not bring certain things and that everything would be provided. They did not believe that since they had been deceived too often before.

The prisoners were given all sorts of orders during the journey. The soldiers wanted to be carried over rivers and over muddy spots. The prisoners were in no position to refuse, and they realized that the intention was to break their morale. On

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arrival, the first thing they had to do was clean up the camp, both the residences of the guards and their own shelters. The weeds which thrived around the barracks and in the yards had to be pulled up by hand.

From Bivouac to Agriculture

When we arrived at this place on Buru where we would have to live—for how long we knew not—we were surrounded by forest. Our first task was to build roads. The narrow footpaths had to be widened and bridges thrown over the rivers. This was necessary to make the rapid transport of soldiers to the camp possible, so as to be able to suppress any trouble as quickly as possible. The building of roads began with the clearing of the forest. Besides the pulling up of tiny weeds, the hardest work was the rooting out of huge trees, big enough to build an oceangoing prau. This heavy work had to be done by prisoners who were weakened by long periods in prison without any physical exercise. The food which the prisoners were given during this period, moreover, was not only of low nutritional value, but was insufficient in quantity as well. Everyone was under psychological pressure and had already suffered much. Only 5 percent of those sent to Buru had been farmers. Most were intellectuals and activists from the mass movements. Amongst them were also craftsmen. For most of them, clearing forests was particularly hard work. Those who had been on Nusa Kambangan since 1966 certainly had some experience, but not those who had sat in cells for four to six years, though it was certainly a relief to breathe fresh air again and to move about in natural surroundings.

The official rice ration was 500 grams per day, but this was never maintained. A "good" commander gave 400 grams. If someone turned up too late at parade, the whole unit was blamed and was punished with a reduction of the ration. It could be reduced to 150 grams per person. According to the plan, food was to be provided for half a year, following which the prisoners would have to produce their own food. As a result of corruption in the command organization, this period was reduced to four months, and the command organization consumed the rest.

In general, the prisoners were determined folk who did not lose hope in the face of their fate. They knew that the heavy work and meager food could have fatal consequences, and each group sought its own way to avoid them. Some, for instance, went secretly into the forest to collect edible plants, though Buru is unfortunately a poor island. Still, palm trees provided sago, and this supplement was of great importance in the first months, while the rice paddies and other fields had still produced nothing. The official rations were never supplemented, except with salt. It was forbidden to catch fish in the rivers near the camp, because that would distract people from their work. Salt, too, is expensive on Buru and is difficult to obtain, and because the sea in the Moluccas has a low salt content there is no rock salt to be harvested. Entering the forests was also forbidden, and any comrade who was caught there was punished along with his entire group. No one was free from this psychological pressure. The authorities tried to break the spirit of the prisoners in order to prevent resistance. Every "mistake" had to be punished in military fashion: those being punished were made to walk on hands and knees, to sprint, to run bent over, or, in the case of collective punishment, to have fist fights with one another.

While we were clearing the ground, we began work at six in the morning. This meant appearing for parade at 5:00 A.M. The morning shift lasted till 1:00 P.M. and was followed by a break of one-and-a-half hours. From 2:30 P.M. we worked through until dusk at 6:00 P.M. Work was supervised by Tonwal soldiers. There were no breaks, so we toiled for ten-and-a-half hours a day. And then we worked after hours on building a theater for ourselves. The soil on Buru had never been worked by man before; it was virgin ground. The greatest enemy was the weeds. No sooner was the ground clear than the weeds shot up again. The trees were cut by hand; we left the trunks in the ground and burnt them out. When we were ready to plant the rice, the question arose of how we would get water from the river, which lay lower than the rice fields. We had to lay irrigation channels kilometers long to solve the problem. Another problem was that the soldiers and other personnel had no technical expertise. It often happened that they disagreed with what we wanted to do, and this resulted many times in useless work being done. There were disagreements, for instance, over the correct time between first harvest and second planting, and over the correct dosage of fertilizer. It sometimes even happened that good work was condemned as bad and was even regarded as sabotage to be punished. We were told it was wrong, for instance, that we placed the rice plants some distance apart when we transplanted the seedlings. The supervising soldier, who did not know the first thing about rice planting, became angry and punished us. On another occasion, a man who was following the Javanese custom of singing as he guided the buffalo while ploughing was accused of sabotage and was punished. It sounds like a joke, but it was bitter reality.

On 2 February 1966 the leaders of the numerous democratic organizations in Central Java were deported to Nusa Kambangan. By that time 12,000 people from Cilacap had already died there. The new arrivals found their graves all over the island, on the slopes of the hills and along the coasts. The survivors were starving and had little more than skin over their bones. Anyone who arrived on the island faced the fact that death was only a matter of time. Every day some died and had to be buried at once, but sometimes so many died that it was impossible to bury them all. A man might dig a grave and then himself die the following day.

A Prison within a Prison

Many of the political prisoners had had mistaken ideas about the life they would lead on Buru. They had the naive belief that although they would be exiled to this remote island, they would nonetheless be able to live there as free citizens. It

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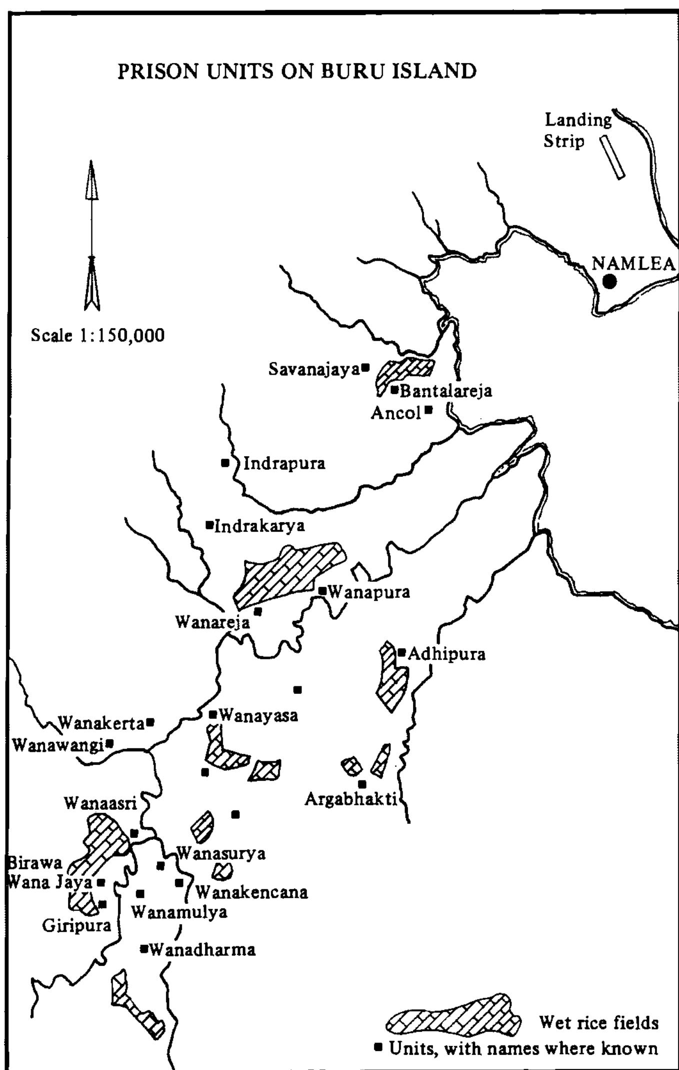

courtesy of Robert Cribb

turned out very different. From the start, every unit was surrounded with barbed wire and placed under guard. Long before the arrival of the political prisoners, the local inhabitants had been told that they were notorious and dangerous criminals. The locals took this information with a grain of salt, it is true, because they were equally afraid of those who were passing out this information. These gentlemen were already guilty of repeatedly confiscating property and raping women and girls. When they first came into contact with the political prisoners, however, the local inhabitants were nonetheless still rather hesitant. If they happened to meet a prisoner on one of the narrow paths, they would disappear into the forest. But because we maintained a friendly attitude towards them, they soon developed a different idea of these "notorious criminals." After further contact, the attitude of the Burunese towards us changed completely. They helped us a great deal and gave us newcomers advice on where to find palm trees in the forest, where to get rattan for building our barracks, and in what pools we could catch plenty of fish. This assistance made our lives somewhat easier. The authorities therefore forbade the prisoners to visit the villages. One day, when a patrol entered a village looking for us, the inhabitants hid us in their huts, and even the children helped to conceal us.

Initially, each unit had an "Officer of Justice" over it. After some years the Officer of Justice was given responsibility for several units. His task was to interrogate prisoners who were mistrusted or who had done something which the military did not like. Besides this legal apparatus, there were secret informers who were recruited from within the barracks to eat, sleep, and work with the prisoners. These informers were used from 1969 to 1976, a year before the first unexpected releases finally took place. They took on this shameful work in order to get lighter work or extra food. Disciplinary measures were also taken against prisoners who were disobedient. By disobedience was meant:

- not working hard enough in carrying out the work schedule of the unit commander;
- having, in the eyes of the soldiers, too much influence with the other prisoners, and thus being a focus for gatherings and groups;
- talking about politics with fellow prisoners or with the villagers;
- any sign that the prisoners were organizing themselves and so might be able to cause disruptions;
- any suspicion of action against the authorities.

Prisoners who were placed in the "disobedient" category were organized in separate groups, were given special quarters, and were allocated work which was easier to supervise. They thus formed the Regu Khusus or Special Group. Whenever a commander reported "disobedience," the prisoners involved were sent to this separate camp for the courageous. It was given the name Unit Ancol.[1] Prior to being sent there, however, the prisoner was beaten up in his own unit.

Entering the forests was also forbidden, and any comrade who was caught there was punished along with his entire group. No one was free from this psychological pressure. The authorities tried to break the spirit of the prisoners in order to prevent resistance. Every "mistake" had to be punished in military fashion: those being punished were made to walk on hands and knees, to sprint, to run bent over, or, in the case of collective punishment, to have fist fights with one another.

The daily regime in Unit Ancol was stricter. In the other sectors, prisoners who were sick or whose family members in camp had died could generally get leave, though they were still under guard. But in Unit Ancol this was never permitted. The Ancol prisoners were allowed to move around only in their own quarters.

1. This name is ironically intended. Ancol is a popular beach resort and recreation area on the bay of Jakarta.

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photo by Evert Vermeer Stichting, courtesy of Robert Cribb*

Political prisoners returning to their barracks from forced labor

In 1977, the year of the first releases, the Buru camp had the "honor" of receiving distinguished visitors. Government figures, unaccompanied by journalists, visited the camp now and then, including the Ancol section. Only if there were journalists, especially foreign ones, or representatives of the Red Cross was the Unit Ancol camp left off the itinerary. One might think that the prisoners on Buru were not interrogated because they were in exile, but that was not the case. There were repeated interrogations by teams from the Moluccas. Sometimes these interrogations were accompanied by physical abuse, at times so terrible that the prisoners could stand it no longer and attempted to commit suicide. Some of them succeeded in their attempt. Sometimes prisoners were also sent to Jakarta for interrogation. Psychological tests were also done to observe changes in the mental state of the prisoners.

Three Months with No Rice and No Salt

Just as on Nusa Kambangan, we were not allowed to pluck the fruits of our labors. The husking of rice took place therefore both legally and illegally. Illegal pounding took place at some risk in the forest. This was necessary for sheer physical survival, but it took place under threat of massive punishment. The commandant described these activities as "preparation for rebellion," but the prisoners only did it because the rice ration was insufficient. Once it was discovered that Unit Ten had been concealing harvested rice in the forest, although it was located not far from a tribe which demanded human heads as bride-price. The discovery of the secret rice store was punished on a massive scale. We had to spend the night crawling all over the field, and by the morning the whole field was trampled bare. We hid the rice deep in the forest, where the guards would not easily find it, or in the swamp. At the same time we made sure that the rice supply in the barracks themselves was always too small to attract the attention of the guards. In the forest, too, we never pounded more than a small amount of rice at any one time, and we kept it in bamboo containers. These containers could then be brought into the kitchen at the same time as the firewood. According to the official regulations, anyone who was doing hard work should get 750 grams of rice per day. This was necessary because there were no side dishes. But with a ration as small as that, it was impossible to eat three times a day; thus

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rice was "stolen." We had to get our three meals a day without attracting attention, so this is what we did. We had breakfast at four in the morning, before sunrise, our midday meal in the break after the morning's work, and our evening meal after sunset. We began cooking the rice at night when the guards were not doing their rounds. When it was ready, we woke our friends for a silent breakfast; this needed discipline, for a small infringement of our own rules could have serious consequences. When the dry fields produced cassava and other second crops, the food ration was increased, but it was still too little. We never got sufficient nutrition, and the menu was always exactly the same, with no variation: rice with salt, a few vegetables and nothing else.

When the group returned, the commander reported that this prisoner had attempted to steal a weapon from the guards. The prisoner was beaten up on the spot, although nothing had in fact happened in the forest. Then, as a result of the false accusation, all the prisoners in Ancol had to stand on parade. The commander read a number of names from a list. One by one those whose names had been called out had to raise their hands and step forward. They were shot forthwith, without blindfold. Some did not die immediately and lay bathed in blood. The prisoners trembled with fear as they waited for death, and their hatred for this inhumanity grew.

The island of Buru has no volcanic or limestone hills, and this was probably why our experiment at drying cassava failed.[2] After three months the cassava had been eaten up by woodworms. This also happened with the nuts and beans which we dried and kept in a closed tin with wood ash. It was thus impossible to keep food very long. Moreover, our rice and other fields were too close to the forest and suffered from plagues of insects. In 1973 and 1974, the *wereng*[3] destroyed practically our entire harvest. We had only enough supplies to last us two months, and the situation was critical. Meanwhile the government had reduced the ration still further, making the situation even worse. Our rice harvest had been lost to the plague of insects, but those insects in green uniforms,[4] a species without any human feeling, did nothing to arrange food for us. For three months we had not a single grain of rice.

In order to overcome the food shortage, we contacted the Burunese and asked their permission to cut sago palms. Because of our good relations with them, the village head gave his verbal permission. Thirty-five friends went on behalf of the unit to cut the trees and pound the sago. While they were working in the swamps, they were bitten by malarial mosquitoes. (According to the camp doctor, about 95 percent of the population of Buru was infected with malaria.) Sago flour is the staple food of the Burunese; they make a delicious dish called "papeda" from it, and if they did not eat papeda at least once a day they felt hungry. For them, papeda was Food! For us it was the reverse: even if we ate sago, we felt hungry without rice. Papeda was eaten on Buru without sugar, and sugar was worth its weight in gold to the prisoners. If we could drink tea with sugar once a week, it was like a party. We ate the sago with salt and sometimes a few vegetables, but for three months we also received no salt. We had no money nor anything else which we would exchange for salt. Three months without salt is misery.

Terror on Buru

Reactionaries always try to weaken the people's movement by provocations and abuse of power. Although the political prisoners had little strength left after their long stay in prison, the provocations continued on Buru. By provocations I mean actions designed to provoke anger which, if we succumbed to it, could have fatal consequences. One such incident took place in 1972, when a prisoner, from sheer anger, killed his platoon commander with a penknife. The military guards behaved like royalty and acted with complete arbitrariness. They would take, for instance, a ring from someone's hand, a tool or piece of handicraft that a prisoner had made himself, a pet bird which had been captured with difficulty in the wild, or a beloved fighting cock. Whatever it might be, if the soldier wanted it, the prisoner had to give it up, without any compensation, or else face difficulties. The soldiers thus abused the power which their military strength gave them. Such incidents led to resentment amongst the prisoners which grew to simple hatred. Most prisoners tried to conceal their hatred, but the prisoner who killed his platoon commander was not able to control himself. After the commander had taken his beloved fighting cock, he could not restrain his anger and demonstrated his hate with a single thrust of his penknife. The consequences were terrible. Eleven prisoners were shot dead, and to reinforce the example even people from a neighboring unit were punished. The accused, on the other hand, was not killed but was crippled for life by the systematic beating of his vertebrae.

Another provocation took place in Ancol. The guard duties there were in the hands of a battalion from the notorious Hasanuddin Division, feared for their frequent cruelties. A group of prisoners was instructed to go into the forest to collect firewood for the kitchen. One of the prisoners who was particularly disliked by the commander was also sent. When the group returned, the commander reported that this prisoner had attempted to steal a weapon from the guards. The prisoner was beaten up on the spot, although nothing had in fact happened in the forest. Then, as a result of the false accusation, all the prisoners in Ancol had to stand on parade. The commander read a number of names from a list. One by one those whose names had been called out had to raise their hands and step

2. It is not clear why the absence of volcanic or limestone hills should have caused these difficulties.

3. The *wereng* is a rice-hopper, swarms of which have devastated rice crops in many parts of Indonesia from time to time.

4. This refers to the green uniforms of the soldiers.

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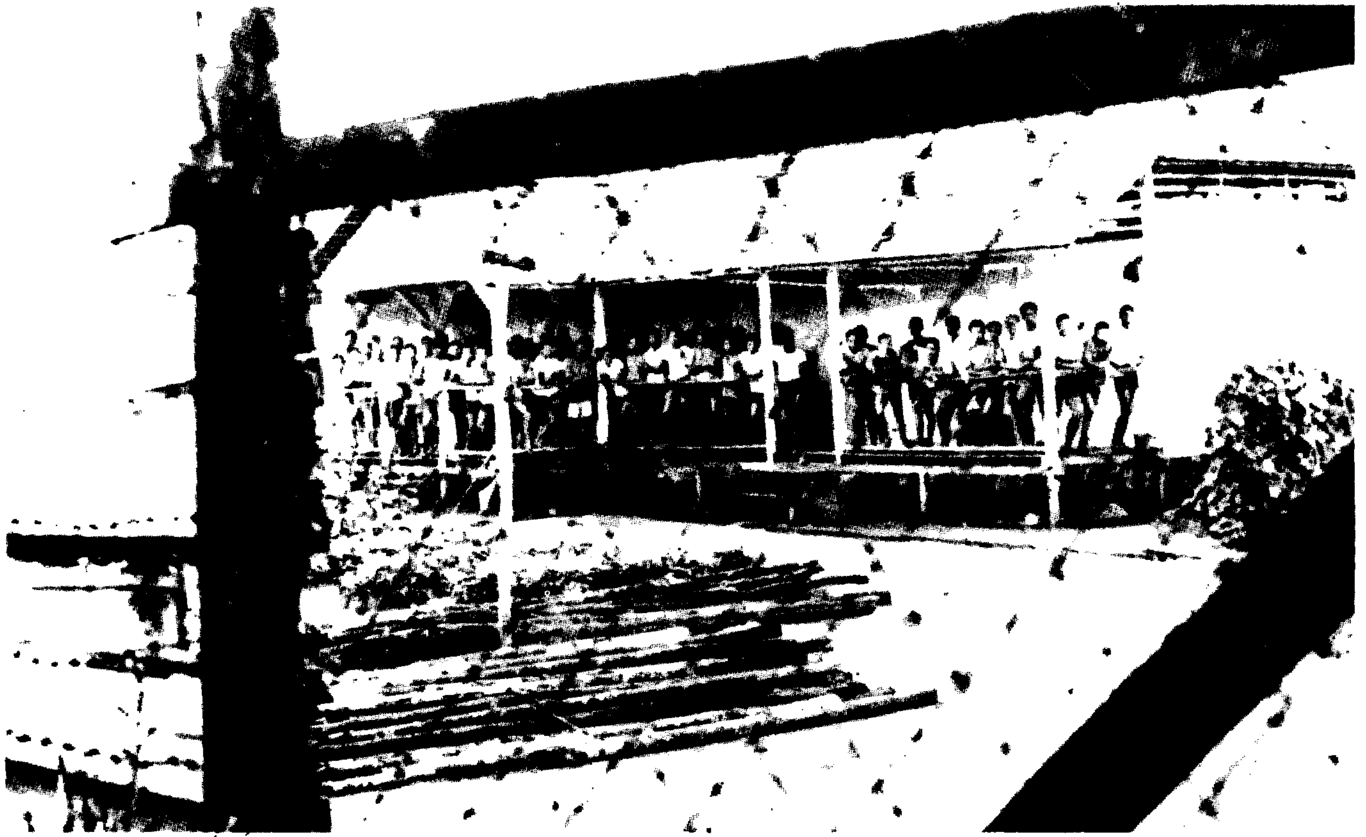

Amnesty International photo, courtesy of Robert Cribb

Indonesian political prisoners in a camp on Kalimantan

forward. They were shot forthwith, without blindfold. Some did not die immediately and lay bathed in blood. The prisoners trembled with fear as they waited for death, and their hatred for this inhumanity grew. Anything that the soldiers did was permitted. After all the names on the list had been read out, the survivors were told to go back to their barracks. The bodies remained out in the open for the whole night. The few who were still alive were allowed to bleed to death. The soldiers of the platoon organized a party that night, playing guitars, singing, and drinking to celebrate their triumph. Everyone could see the bodies lying out there on the assembly grounds, but the commander did not care. The only one disturbed by it all was the camp pastor, and it was he who arranged to have the bodies buried, according to their religions.

An even more serious provocation took place in Unit Eleven. The army battalion based there also belonged to the Hasanuddin Division, and it was also attached to camp headquarters on Buru. The soldiers in this battalion were particularly heavily involved in trade, even to the extent of competing with one another. They traded timber, and the competition was so strong that they did not hesitate to murder a competitor. The provocation took place in a subtle way. Sometimes one of the guards would give a prisoner a newspaper, saying that no one should find out. The guard would try to win the trust of the prisoner by giving him encouraging news, such as information about the activities of the Komitee Indonesie in Holland or of Amnesty International on behalf of the prisoners. And the prisoner would gradually come to trust the guard. Then, at a certain moment, the guard would pass a report that in three days a ship sailing under the flag of the People's Republic of China would arrive off the north coast of Buru to pick up the prisoners. Anyone who wanted to escape would thus have a chance of getting away. The report went from mouth to mouth through the barracks, and it was said that anyone who wanted to escape would have to leave for the north coast before sunset. Because many people regarded the soldier who had given the news as a comrade, they believed the story, and forty-eight prisoners tried to make their escape in this way. During the escape there was shooting and one guard was killed, although not by the prisoners. That night all the prisoners had to assemble on the football field, after which they were permitted to return to the barracks. No work was done on the following day. Meanwhile, it had become clear that a number of prisoners had escaped. There were interrogations throughout the following day, and twenty-two of the remaining prisoners were arrested. Nothing more was ever heard of those who escaped. They were murdered or died in the forest.

Second-class Citizen

Finally the regime was forced to release the political prisoners. When we on Buru at last came up for release, however, the regime still wanted to humiliate us and keep us under control for the rest of our lives. We did not like this, of course, but we promised one another that we would not lose our self-respect, even if we signed the declaration which the government put before us. This declaration contained, as it were, an affirmation of "loyalty" to the regime. It included clauses stating that we would no longer follow communist theory and that we would neither claim compensation for nor

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make complaints about our treatment while in detention. The prisoners were forced to sign the declaration, although the declaration itself stated that the signing was voluntary. The prisoners had no choice, and they well knew it, though it later turned out that a few had in fact refused to sign.

Most prisoners tried to conceal their hatred, but the prisoner who killed his platoon commander was not able to control himself. After the commander had taken his beloved fighting cock, he could not restrain his anger and demonstrated his hate with a single thrust of his penknife. The consequences were terrible. Eleven prisoners were shot dead, and to reinforce the example even people from a neighboring unit were punished. The accused, on the other hand, was not killed but was crippled for life by the systematic beating of his vertebrae.

Once we were released from detention, however, it quickly became clear that we remained exposed to arbitrary and unjust treatment. Many of us were not given identity cards, and when we did get one it bore the annotation E.T., for Eks-Tahanan, or ex-prisoner. We had to get permission to travel in our own country. We were all required to report regularly to village heads, to the police, and to the local military commander. Former prisoners were forbidden to hold offices in neighborhood associations, companies, and indeed any kind of organization, even if they were elected by majority vote. Every time a prisoner was summoned to appear before the authorities, he had to provide a passport photo and a biography. And at election time, many of the former prisoners were not given the right to vote, for what it was worth. In some cases even their relatives lost their rights to vote.

Nonetheless, it is encouraging that in general the prisoners were well received by their neighbors and fellow citizens. In daily life there was no discrimination against the former prisoners. In fact people criticized the authorities' treatment of the former prisoners and pointed out that the authorities should also adhere to the rules of the Pancasila.[5] The authorities for their part rejected such criticism out of hand as coming from ''communistic elements.'' Criticism of the government, however, was even heard in the provincial assemblies, a sign that people were no longer totally afraid to offer criticism.

The government agency which had responsibility for issuing certificates of ''non-involvement in the 30 September Movement'' has now been officially disbanded. Formerly, every citizen had to have one of these certificates in order to apply for work, and the ex-prisoners were of course given no such certificate. The police now issue a certificate of ''good conduct'' which confirms that one has not been involved in any criminal activity, but ex-prisoners are not entitled to this either, although they are now officially permitted to work for private firms. In practice, though, former prisoners have little chance of getting work with private firms, because the employer has to write a report on each allocation of duty made to the former prisoner. With the high level of unemployment, employers prefer to give work to people who do not bring such difficulties with them.

Difficulties also arise when children of former prisoners want to undertake higher education, for example in the Military Academy or in the training courses for civil servants. The selection procedure for these institutions is strictly geared to excluding the children of ex-prisoners from higher education. In May 1983 the security organization KOPKAMTIB[6] issued a regulation stating that all ex-political prisoners were formally permitted to resume their original professions, except in essential industries and in the civil service, but that they must seek a work permit which would be valid for two years and could then be renewed. This regulation seems reasonable, but in practice it has also been restrictive, for it has created a kind of centralization of control and supervision over the former prisoners by the security forces and the central government. Previously if, say, someone who'd been a doctor wanted to reopen his practice, he had to proceed through the Ministry of Health; now he has to go through the local security apparatus, and this has opened all sorts of opportunities for corruption by bribery. This corruption is not, however, limited to the security services: many former prisoners have made fruitless efforts to recover their right to a pension and have been sucked dry by crooked lawyers. In Semarang there is one lawyer in particular who has extorted [money] from dozens of pension claimants. Each of these former government officials has had to pay him Rp 10,000 and hand over documents to him. If the case is won, then the lawyer gets 50 percent of the pension. In similar ways, tens of thousands of former government officials have been duped because the Suharto government took away their rights.

The above examples demonstrate that the former prisoners who sat in detention without trial for all those years are being treated after their release as second class citizens. Fortunately there are also lawyers who are willing to act on behalf of the ex-prisoners and to resist the violation of their rights. ★

5. The Pancasila is the current national ideology of Indonesia. Although highly general in its formulation, it is the philosophical basis of the modern Indonesian corporate state. Official interpretations of Pancasila often stress its high moral character.

6. KOPKAMTIB, the Command for the Restoration of Security and Order, was established in 1966 to coordinate the suppression of the PKI and to prevent its resurgence. It exists as a special command structure within the military, and since it is not provided for in the constitution, it is assumed to be free of the constitutional constraints which operate on other government institutions.

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The East Timor Conflict and Western Response

by Torben Retboll*

East Timor is a former Portuguese colony that was invaded and occupied by its neighbor Indonesia in December 1975. Since then the native population has been fighting the occupation under the leadership of Fretilin, the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, and to this day the struggle continues.

The aggressor, Indonesia, is in many ways a peculiar country: In the first place, it claims to be a democracy, yet the ruling party GOLKAR always wins about 60 percent of the votes while the two opposition parties may share the rest. Secondly, although there is legal opposition, it may conduct only very limited electoral campaigns, and it is forbidden to work for a change of government. Thirdly, there is freedom of the press, but if newspapers publish direct or even indirect criticism of the government and particularly of President Suharto, they risk being closed down for an indeterminate period of time. Fourthly, Indonesia claims to favor negotiations and peaceful means in its foreign policy relations, yet it has used military force to take over West Papua in the 1960s and East Timor in the 1970s. Some people even suspect that Indonesia is planning to take over Papua New Guinea in a similar way during the 1980s.[1]

The Struggle against Indonesian Occupation

In July 1976 East Timor was annexed as Indonesia's twenty-seventh province. At first, though, Suharto did not control much of this province; his forces held only the biggest towns and the main roads between them, which amounted to only 20 percent of the country and 10 percent of the population. Transport from one town to another was not safe unless under armed escort, and even then safety could not be guaranteed. In March 1977, sixteen months after the invasion, a U.S. State Department spokesman estimated that only 200,000 of the 650,000 people could "be considered [to be] in areas under Indonesian administration." And since the U.S. supports Jakarta, this spokesman was not likely to exaggerate in favor of Fretilin. In that year, however, the U.S. supplied Indonesia with military equipment that was much more efficient and suitable for the counter-insurgency warfare they were carrying out. As Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong have put it in their recent and valuable book:

> Indeed 1978 was the most difficult year in the liberation struggle of the Maubere people. [Maubere is a common name, held in contempt in colonial days; Fretilin adopted it as the name for the people of East Timor, thus turning contempt into pride.] The deliberate campaign of starvation, the relentless aerial bombardments, the destruction of the agricultural system brought untold suffering for the Timorese people. Despite the resistance movement's successes in the early stages of the encirclement and annihiliation campaign, which thwarted the Indonesian advance in the west for a while, the steady onslaught from land, sea, and air brought most of the country under Indonesian military control.[2]

*This article is a short, revised version of a paper presented at the symposium "The 21st Century—The Asian Century?" organized by the Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research in West Berlin, 15–17 June 1985. I would like to thank Carmel Budiardjo, Noam Chomsky, and Hannu Reime for assistance and inspiration.

1. Previous issues of the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* with articles on East Timor are: vol. 7, no. 3 (1975); vol. 11., no. 2 (1979); and vol. 15, no. 2 (1983).

2. Carmel Budiardjo & Liem Soei Liong, *The War against East Timor* (London: Zed Books, 1984), p. 34.

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photo by Jill Jolliffe

Early Fretilin leaders. Rosa Muki Bonaparte (second from left), the secretary of the Popular Organization of Timorese Women, was executed by Indonesian troops during the invasion of Dili. Nicolau Lobato (third from left), the newly sworn in prime minister of the Democratic Republic of East Timor and second president of Fretilin, was killed in 1978, with his wife and sixteen-year-old brother killed earlier in the struggle. Mari Alkatiri (on the left) was the Fretilin National Political Commissioner, and Mau Laka (on the right) was a Fretilin Central Committee member.

In that year, too, Fretilin lost its president, Xavier do Amaral, and its minister of information, Alarico Fernandes, both of whom surrendered to the Indonesians; as well as the new president, Nicolau Lobato, who was killed in battle in December 1978. In a press conference the Indonesian general Yusuf announced that the "rebel forces" in East Timor had ceased to exist. Although the Indonesian military continued to make similar claims, subsequent events proved them wrong.

Almost miraculously, Fretilin was able to reorganize and reconstitute its forces under the leadership of José Alexandro Gusmão, known as Xanana. In June 1980 they attacked Indonesia's television transmitter in Dili and several military targets in an operation that rattled Indonesian authorities since they had considered Dili a secure area.[3] Even more astounding, in March 1983 the Indonesian commander in East Timor, Colonel Purwanto, entered into official negotiations with Xanana, who demanded the unconditional withdrawal of Indonesian troops and a U.N.-supervised provision for self-determination. A ceasefire was put into effect. It was not, however, to last very long, for in that same month General Benny Murdani, who had been responsible for planning and commanding the 1975 invasion, became commander-in-chief of Indonesia's armed forces, and he favored a rather different approach. In June 1983, after news of the talks had broken in the international press, Purwanto was sacked, and Murdani sent a confidential warning to Xanana: "Don't think that you can entangle yourself. Do not think that you can receive assistance from other countries. There is no country on this globe that can help you. Our own army is prepared to destroy you if you are not willing to be co-operative with our Republic. We are preparing an operation—*Operasi Persatuan* (Operation Unity)—which will come into force in August."

In July facilities that had been given to the International Red Cross to undertake relief activities were withdrawn, making it impossible for the agency to continue the main aspects of their work in East Timor, and in that same month Murdani visited East Timor together with four top-level generals.

3. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 20 June 1980, p. 8.

*Jill Jolliffe, *East Timor: Nationalism and Colonialism* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1978), p. 269.

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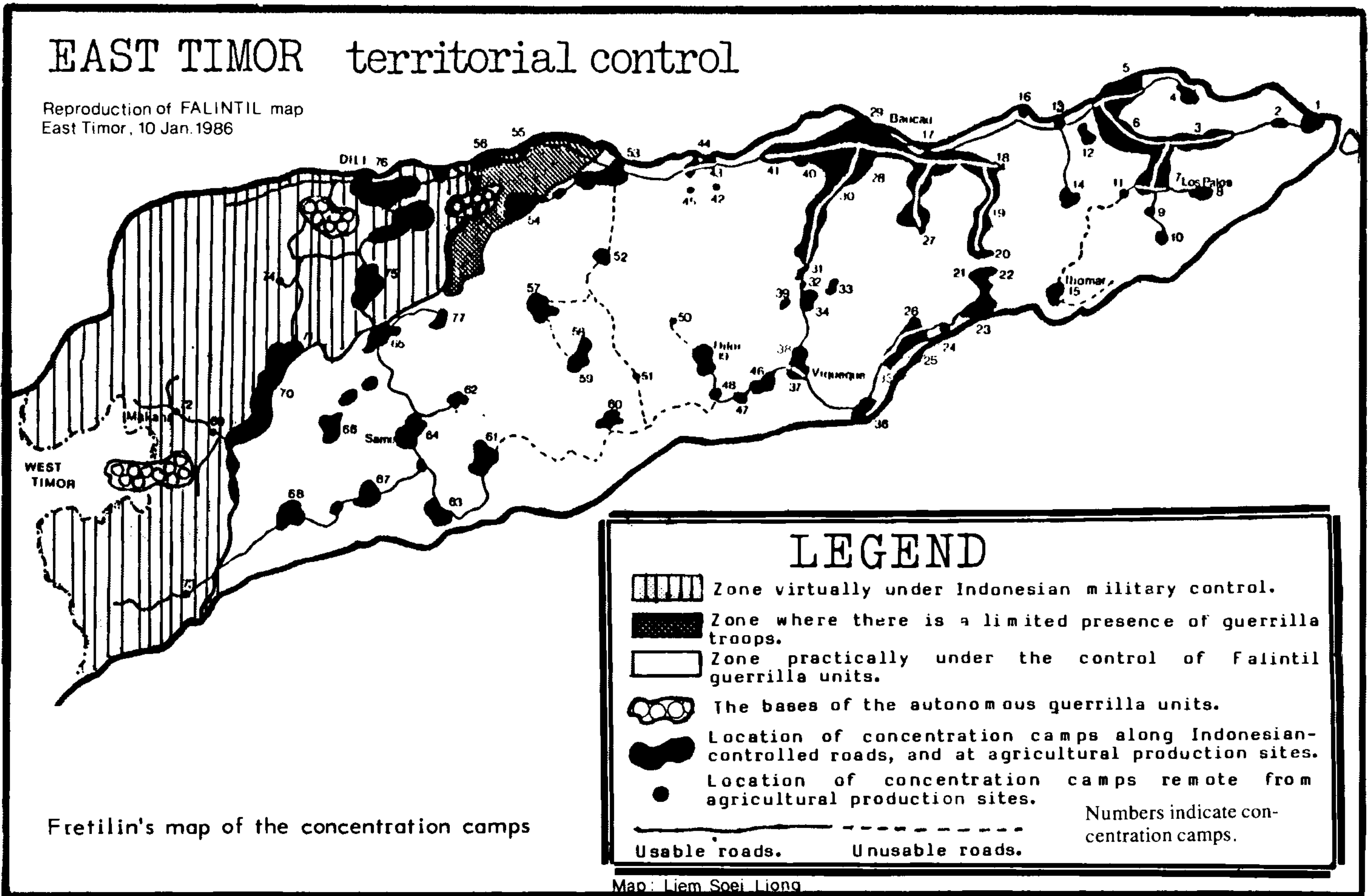

From TAPOL Bulletin *No. 76, July 1986*

Something dramatic was certainly about to happen, and so it did: On 16 August 1983 Murdani made a public threat to wipe out the Fretilin resistance if they ignored his call to surrender: "This time, no more fooling around. We are going to hit them without mercy," he said, adding, "If this call goes unheeded, the government will use its armed forces and all its arsenal to clean up the remnants of Fretilin rebels." And soon a new military offensive swept the hills and mountains of East Timor.[4]

But in spite of repeated Indonesian propaganda claims, the existence and efficiency of the resistance movement are incontrovertible facts. Beginning in 1983 Fretilin reestablished contact with the outside world and a wealth of written material and pictures were smuggled out of the country. In May 1985 Abilio Araujo, leader of Fretilin's external delegation, told a news conference in Lisbon that a guerrilla radio began transmitting from East Timor in January that year. He said the radio, smuggled into the former colony in 1984, had a range of 1,600 kilometers and could reach Australia and neighboring nations. He also distributed texts of broadcasts which he said were made earlier that year over the radio. The texts detailed Fretilin attacks since August 1983 and accused Indonesian forces of killing, torturing, and imprisoning civilians.[5] And quite apart from Fretilin's own claims, its successes are documented by secret as well as public statements from the invaders themselves. In addition to what we have already noted, let us here single out two recent examples:

1. In December 1982 Fretilin captured a set of secret instructions on counter-insurgency operations issued to the Indonesian troops in 1982. In one of these documents, dealing with the interrogation of prisoners, we find the following candid reflections:

> Hopefully, interrogation accompanied by the use of violence will not take place except in certain circumstances when the person being interrogated is having difficulty telling the truth (is evasive).
>
> If it proves necessary to use violence, make sure there are no people around . . . to see what is happening, so as not to arouse people's antipathy . . . Avoid taking photographs showing torture in progress (people being photographed at times when they are being subjected to electric current, when they have been stripped naked, etc.). Remember not to have such photographic documentation developed outside, . . . which could then be made available to the public by irresponsible elements.
>
> It is better to make attractive photographs, such as shots taken while eating together with the prisoner, or shaking hands with those who have just come down from the bush, showing them in front of a house, and so on. If such photos are circulated in the

4. Budiardjo & Liong, p. 47; *The Age*, Melbourne, 18 August 1983, printed in my book *East Timor: The Struggle Continues*, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs: Copenhagen 1984 (hereafter cited as my 1984 book), pp. 158–159.

5. Reuters, Lisbon, 28 May 1985; not printed in any European newspaper that I have seen. But the story was picked up by the Australian press, see *East Timor News*, no. 83–85, 1985, Post Office Box A 716, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia; on the radio link see further below.

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bush, this is a classic way of assuredly undermining their morale and fighting spirits. And if such photos are shown to the priests, this can draw the church into supporting operations to restore security.

No wonder, then, that Indonesian officials denied outright the authenticity of these revealing documents when they were made publicly available in the West. But the documents have been authenticated by Amnesty International as well as TAPOL in London, the British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia.[6]

2. In December 1984 Murdani gave an interview to Reuters in which he admitted that resistance fighters and their supporters in the bush totalled about 10,000 people and that they "never fight in one group . . . [but] in splinters." He also admitted that the war could not be ended in one or two years: "I'm not saying there's no end in sight but it will take some time to resolve," adding that Indonesian troops were being ambushed "once in a while," that "some of our weapons, ammo, gets into their hands"; that Indonesia had more than 7,000 troops in East Timor, and that Indonesian air force jets were carrying out bombing runs though this "did not happen regularly." Although the interview was given to a foreign news agency, it was clearly directed at critics within the army who had become impatient with Murdani's inability to crush the resistance in East Timor despite all the blustering threats he had made. He concentrated on trying to explain why it was taking so long to defeat Fretilin and claimed, quoting U.S. general Westmoreland's dictum, that Indonesia must struggle to win "the hearts and minds of the people."[7] However, what Indonesia has done in East Timor is not exactly what it takes to win "the hearts and minds of the people." Let us now review some of the results of Jakarta's aggression.

Violations of Human Rights

East Timor has suffered tremendously since the Indonesian invasion of 1975. Though there are no reliable statistics, numerous people have lost their lives as a result of war, starvation, and disease; and for those living, fundamental human rights have been violated on a scale that surpasses the abuses of most dictatorships. In 1977 the then foreign minister of Indonesia, Adam Malik, estimated the number killed as "50,000 or 80,000." But, he added soothingly, "What does this mean if compared with 600,000 who want to join Indonesia? Then what is the big fuss? It is possible that they may have been killed by the Australians and not us. Who knows? It was war."[8]

Since the late 1970s the figure for the number killed that is most widely accepted is 200,000, a figure that was confirmed in 1983 by Msgr. Martinhu da Costa Lopes, the former bishop of Dili. Using official Indonesian figures, we find a loss of about 158,000. Using church figures, the decline is anything between 199,000 and 329,000. Be that as it may, the new offensive launched by Indonesia in August 1983 means that the figure of 200,000 will soon have to be revised upwards, making East Timor the country that has suffered the second-largest number of deaths in all wars currently raging worldwide, after the Kampuchea conflict, according to the Washington-based Center for Defense Information, headed by Rear Admiral Gene R. LaRocque (retired) of the U.S. Navy.[9]

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Amnesty International (AI) is one of several nongovernmental organizations that have followed the East Timor issue closely during recent years. In early 1985 it submitted a formal complaint on the continuing human rights violations in East Timor to the 41st session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission. Noting that there was little evidence of improvement over the past year, AI specifically complained about four types of human rights abuses:

1. *Limitations on access*, including stringent restrictions on access by international observers and attempts to impose an embargo on information from East Timor. Timorese leaving to join relatives abroad are routinely warned not to reveal anything that would discredit the Indonesian occupation forces at the risk of reprisals against relatives who remain behind.

2. *Detention and resettlement*. Hard facts on the number of detainees is not included except for a figure of 1,500 still being held on Atauro Island. AI disputes Indonesia's claims about Atauro prisoners returning to the main island, saying that many persons sent back to the main island have not been allowed to return to their homes but have instead been placed

6. Budiardjo & Liong, pp. 236–237; the complete set of nine documents is translated into English in this book, pp. 167–244.

7. Reuters, Jakarta, December 17, 1984, partly printed in *Jakarta Post*, December 18, 1984; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 67, January 1985, published by the British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia, 8 a Treport Street, London SW18 2BP, England.

8. See my book *East Timor, Indonesia and the Western Democracies*, Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1980 (hereafter cited as my 1980 book), p. 12.

9. Budiardjo & Liong, pp. 49–51; Jim Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed* (Milton, Queensland: Jacaranda Press), pp. 320–323.

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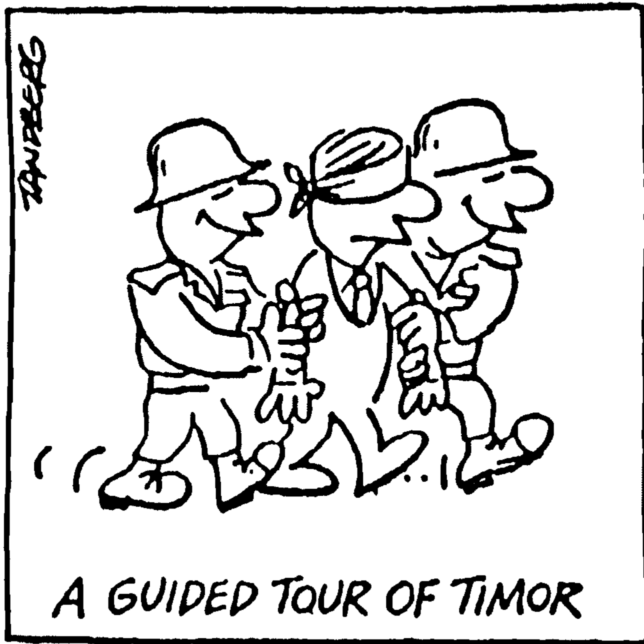

From TAPOL Bulletin *No. 78, December 1986*

in "resettlement villages," sometimes near their place of origin, sometimes far away, where they continue to face severe restrictions on freedom of movement.

3. *Torture*. Amnesty reiterates its complaint about the extensive use of torture by Indonesian troops. Despite Indonesian attempts to cast doubt on the authenticity of military documents issued by the Indonesian army and captured by Fretilin in 1982, which contain guidelines regarding the use of torture, AI confirms its conviction that the documents are genuine. This is reinforced by the receipt of firsthand evidence that torture has been persistently practiced in East Timor. It lists three places in Dili where torture takes place and says that some people reported to have been held in these centers have since "disappeared" and some are feared dead.

4. *Extrajudicial executions*. The AI submission refers to the massacre in Kraras village in August 1983, shortly after the latest Indonesian offensive began, in which as many as 200 people may have been killed. Of those who fled to the mountains to escape the killings, several were reported to have been captured and executed. Other massacres recorded by Amnesty are: the massacre of some 100 men captured near the village of Hau Ba in the western sector in March 1984, and killings of a number of people near Ainaro in March 1984 and in Baucau in May 1984 of people suspected of being in contact with Fretilin. In the summer of 1985 AI launched a worldwide campaign on the East Timor issue.[10]

Foreign Visitors

Even a rare foreign visitor who is given a carefully guided tour may occasionally catch a glimpse of the grim reality and record some of the absurd conditions under which he/she is working. For almost two years after the invasion, the country was closed to the foreign press, a sure sign of Indonesian failure, but in the summer of 1977, Richard Carleton of the British *Observer* became the first independent reporter to travel in East Timor, where an eyewitness gave him (in secret) a gruesome account of the 1975 invasion: "I saw at least 150 people lined up on the wharf and shot. It took about forty minutes. As each shot was fired, a body fell into the water and they all eventually floated out to sea." Carleton explains that the "helicopters supplied to transport me were under instructions to fly above 3,000 feet, beyond the range of small-arms fire," adding that "everywhere the Indonesians took me they had three guards always within earshot and two concentric circles of 'civil defence' troops surrounding me. They claimed that this was not to restrict my movements but rather to protect me." And Carleton is no Fretilin spokesman, as is clear from his concluding paragraph where he states that "despite the brutality of the annexation, Timor may be better off in the long term within Indonesia for the territory is economically non-viable and dependent on aid."[11]

In early 1980 Henry Kamm, the well-known *New York Times* reporter, who is quite sympathetic to the Jakarta government, explained that he had waited for two years for permission to visit and was allowed only limited freedom in travel to the interior. Major Benny Mandalika of the Indonesian military intelligence from Jakarta was always present, took notes during the interviews not only with ordinary people but also with Indonesian officials of Timorese origin, and often peered openly at the notes Kamm was taking. Explaining his actions when challenged, Mandalika said: "I must stay with you so you get the right information. My boss told me to go with you wherever you go. If you interview the man in the street you may get the wrong information."[12]

Two years later, Rod Nordland of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* had a similar experience: but "despite almost perpetual close monitoring by Indonesian military and civil officials," he said, "it was still possible to see obvious signs of large-scale malnutrition and disease, as well as overt oppression." It was possible for him to meet independently with Timorese in and out of government, with clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in the mostly Catholic province, and with average Timorese from many walks of life. While many of the scores of Timorese interviewed were frankly fearful of talking, dozens did so nonetheless, saying as one did: "Please tell the world so they can help the Timorese people." At least six of those interviewed, he later learned, were summoned afterwards to military headquarters and interrogated about what they had said, often for many hours.

Nordland also met with the apostolic administrator, Msgr. Martinhu da Costa Lopes, widely known as the bishop who hesitated to use the term "famine" about East Timor conditions. He preferred to say that more than half of the population in those districts where more than 100,000 people lived had "insufficient food to maintain life," adding that hunger and malnutrition were endemic throughout the country. Other clergymen stated the case more strongly: "If you quote me as saying this, I'll be killed," said one who was recently in the eastern part of the province. "Famine is always

10. Amnesty International, *East Timor: Violations of Human Rights*, London: AI Publications, 1985.

11. *The Observer*, 31 July 1977, printed in my 1980 book pp. 69–71.

12. *New York Times*, 28 January 1980.

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a relative term, and there is hunger and malnutrition all over the country, but it is truly a famine in this region [of Baucau and Viqueque]."

On a trip to a resettlement village called Saburia, about thirty miles south of the capital, Nordland looked into one of the corrugated tin houses the Indonesian authorities had built for people resettled from the mountains: Bernardo, fifty-six, who lives with his wife and his ten-year-old son, sat on the bare dirt floor of his house, which was devoid of possessions of any kind. There was also no sign of food in the house. Asked how the harvest had been, he surveyed the circle of officials and, after a long pause, said: "There is not enough to eat." In the next house, Thomas Ferreria, the family spokesman,was asked through an interpreter about his family's condition.

"Tell him," Major Marsidik warned Ferreria in Indonesian, "that it is okay here."

Ferreria did as he was told.

"So even though the crops are bad, you have enough food for the whole family?" he was asked, in English.

"Tell him you have enough until the next rainy season," said Marsidik in Indonesian.

"We have enough until the next rainy season," Ferreria said.

One day, Nordland sneaked away from his guides and went to the Lahane neighborhood of Dili, where hundreds of families have been forced to live in temporary huts along the steep banks of a mountain stream. He made a depressing discovery: of twenty-two children under the age of twelve, whose body weights and measurements were taken with no officials present, eighteen were chronically malnourished, according to standards adopted by the U.N. World Health Organization.

One evening, a young Timorese man fell quickly into step with Nordland on Dili's Rua Antonio de Carvalho: "We are not allowed to speak to foreigners," he said, "but I just want to tell you. Before, we had Portuguese colonialism. Now, we have Indonesian colonialism." Nordland's report from East Timor and other parts of Southeast Asia won him the George Polk Award for Journalism in 1983. It did not, however, win him another invitation from the Indonesians![13]

The London-based Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR) is one group which did not make it to East Timor. In February 1982 they published a pamphlet on the conflict which was quoted with approval in the London *Times* of 24 February 1982. Two months later, the Indonesian embassy in London responded by inviting the CIIR to send a delegation to East Timor. CIIR accepted the offer and began making preparations to fund a visit for several British visitors accompanied by a translator. This visit was to take place in July the following year. In April 1983 CIIR gave the embassy a list of the names of the people who had agreed to visit East Timor and set out the schedule for a visit beginning on 25 July. Collectively the group had technical experience of health care, agriculture, and government; personal knowledge of both East Timor and Indonesia; and the ability to communicate in Bahasa Indonesian, Portuguese, and three local languages. But when July arrived, the CIIR was informed by the embassy that they could not arrange a visit for them, owing to the lack of time. Instead, the embassy suggested, they might visit in October 1983, but this was impossible to accept because several members of the group already had other engagements at that period. Commented Robert Archer of the CIIR:

> We feel it should be made quite clear that shortage of time cannot be a good reason for not confirming our visit. The Indonesian authorities have had fourteen months' warning of a visit which they invited us to make in the first place. Nor is the group politically contentious. Refusal to confirm this invitation must support the view of those who believe that the Indonesian government does not want independent, well-prepared visits to East Timor, especially by people who know the country, have technical skills, and speak the local languages. We regret greatly that on this occasion the Indonesian authorities still seem able to engage only in one-way dialogue.[14]

Undaunted, the CIIR went ahead and published a new edition of their pamphlet in March 1985, a brief but accurate account of the conflict, based on a wide range of sources but—for obvious reasons—not on personal observations.

An intriguing situation, as Noam Chomsky has rightly pointed out: The world body being denounced for its inefficiency with regard to human rights and peace by a former U.N. ambassador who is actually boasting about his "success" in helping to cause a massacre that he compares to the consequences of Nazi aggression, not to speak of the far larger number of victims in the subsequent period.

In February 1985 a five-person delegation from the West German Parliament, led by Social Democrat Hans-Ulrich Klose, visited East Timor, the first group of West European parliamentarians to do so. The delegation included two Social Democrats, two Christian Democrats,and a Liberal. Deputy Klose, who is in charge of human rights affairs for the Social Democratic party, told the press he met prisoners on Atauro Island who had been detained for five years without having access to any legal aid or to any state authority. The delegation called on the Indonesian government to dissolve the Atauro prison camp as soon as possible and to allow all the detainees there to return to their places of origin without delay. "Generally speaking, the whole island appears to be under arrest," Klose stated, calling on the Indonesian government to allow free access to the international community and the foreign press so as to enable people to assess the situation for themselves.[15]

13. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 May 1982, printed in my 1984 book pp. 60–78; on the church see further below.

14. Robert Archer, personal communication, 22 July 1983.

15. *Der Spiegel*, 29 April 1985; *Aktuelt*, Denmark, 14 May 1985; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 68, March 1985.

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One month later, three more reporters were allowed in: Peter Millership of Reuters, Steven Jones of the *Wall Street Journal*,and Ghafur Fadyl of the Associated Press. The trip was timed to coincide with the forty-first session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva, so that the Indonesian delegation there could argue that foreign observers were indeed being allowed in. However, they were not allowed to see anything for themselves, as Steven Jones explained in his report: "We are here on this government-sponsored visit to see that peace has returned to the eastern end of the island and that prosperity lies on the horizon." As always, the Indonesians stage-managed the trip, preventing the journalists from seeing anything of value: "Reporters flitting from place to place by helicopter are unable to gauge accurately the level of fighting," Jones complained. "Although Indonesia says there are 7,000 soldiers in East Timor, few of them are visible. The armed police officers who meet us at every stop are said to be there to foil would-be kidnappers. And although the journalists are aware that there is a military air base near Baucau, our pilots fly us out to sea when we leave the town, precluding even a glimpse of the airfield. A priest in one village says that two armored troop carriers that usually rumble over village roads have been hidden from view."[16] And so the pattern continues. But let us now turn to the international perspectives.

But in spite of repeated Indonesian propaganda claims, the existence and efficiency of the resistance movement are incontrovertible facts. Beginning in 1983 Fretilin reestablished contact with the outside world and a wealth of written material and pictures were smuggled out of the country . . . texts [distributed by the leader of Fretilin's external delegation] detailed Fretilin attacks since August 1983 and accused Indonesian forces of killing, torturing, and imprisoning civilians. And quite apart from Fretilin's own claims, its successes are documented by secret as well as public statements from the invaders themselves.

The Western Democracies: The United States and Britain

Responsibility for what has happened to East Timor lies primarily with the Indonesian military regime, but also with the Western democracies which have constantly and increasingly provided military, economic, and diplomatic support for Jakarta, and with the Western press that (with few exceptions) covered up the issue for four years and since then has reported the story from time to time while still generally ignoring the crucial role of the Western countries. Several Western governments knew of Indonesia's plans long before the invasion but did nothing to stop it; on the contrary, they seemed to give Indonesia the green light. In July 1975, for instance, the British ambassador to Jakarta wrote that "the people of Portuguese Timor are in no condition to exercise the right of self-determination." He continued:

> Though it still remains in our interest to steer clear of becoming involved in [the] future, developments in Lisbon now seem to argue in favour of greater sympathy towards Indonesia, should the Indonesian government feel forced to take strong action by the deteriorating situation in Portuguese Timor. Certainly, as seen from here, it is in Britain's interest that Indonesia should absorb the territory as soon and as unobtrusively as possible. If it comes to the crunch and there is a row in the United Nations, we should keep our heads down and avoid siding against the Indonesians.

Similarly, the Australian ambassador to Jakarta reported in August 1975 that he had spoken with his American colleague and that "his present attitude is that the U.S. should . . . allow events to take their course. His somewhat cynical comment to me was that if the Indonesians were going to intervene, they [i.e. the U.S.] would hope that they would do so 'effectively, quickly, and not use our equipment'." All this, of course, was hidden from the public.[17]

The invasion itself began immediately after President Ford and Henry Kissinger had concluded an official visit to Jakarta. When asked to comment afterwards, Ford smiled and said: "We'll talk about that later," while Kissinger, for his part, told a reporter that "the United States understands Indonesia's position on the question" of East Timor. These frank reactions were reported in the *Los Angeles Times* (7 December 1975), the *Boston Globe* (8 December 1975) and the *Christian Science Monitor* (28 January 1976), but apart from these references, further mention of them appears to have been effectively suppressed in the media.[18]

One month later, in January 1976, a State Department official declared that "in terms of the bilateral relations between the U.S. and Indonesia, we are more or less condoning the incursion into East Timor," adding that "the United States wants to keep its relations with Indonesia close and friendly. We regard Indonesia as a friendly, non-aligned nation—a nation we do a lot of business with."[19] And this line of reasoning has been followed by all succeeding presidents, including the alleged human rights crusader, Jimmy Carter, whose vice-president, Walter Mondale, travelled to Jakarta in May 1978 to finalize details of the sale of sixteen A-4 Skyhawk aircraft to Indonesia. Even as the war was raging in East Timor, Mondale felt able to commend the rulers of Indonesia on their human

16. *International Herald Tribune*, 9-10 March 1985; Reuters, Dili, 17 March 1985; *TAPOL Bulletin*, No. 68, March 1985; on the U.N., see further below.

17. George Munster & Richard Walsh, *Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1968–1975* (Hong Kong, 1980), chapter 6; the book was banned by the Australian authorities; see my article in the *BCAS*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1983; see also Munster & Walsh, *Secrets of State: A Detailed Assessment of the Book They Banned* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1982).

18. Noam Chomsky & Edward Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, (Boston: South End Press, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 156 & 394.

19. *The Australian*, 22 January 1976, printed in my 1980 book pp. 85–86.

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rights record because they had finally decided to release tens of thousands of political prisoners (*tapols*) held for nearly thirteen years without trial. "Warplanes have been bartered for political prisoners," wrote the *TAPOL Bulletin* in June 1978, while "Indonesia's embattled democratic opposition has been forgotten" and "East Timor is ignored."[20]

The current U.S. president, Ronald Reagan, professes to be very concerned with military rule (as in Poland), violations of human rights (as in Nicaragua), and invasions of foreign countries (as by the USSR in Afghanistan). On 23 December 1981, for instance, he made a moving Christmas speech, broadcast on nationwide radio and television, in which he said: "Make no mistake, their crime will cost them dearly," and asked: "How can they possibly justify using naked force to crush a people who ask for nothing more than the right to lead their own lives in freedom and dignity?" Indeed a relevant question, not only for Poland, which Reagan was discussing here, but much more for East Timor. However, when President Suharto arrived in Washington for an official visit ten months later, Reagan chose a rather different set of words.

At the arrival ceremony on 12 October 1982, Reagan assured Suharto that "your views on world affairs carry special authority and add special meaning to our discussions today. Your viewpoints and wise counsel will be greatly appreciated." He further stated that "I know of the great strides made by Indonesia in nation building under your leadership," adding that "no nation in our era has shown itself more firmly committed to preserving its own independence than Indonesia, and yet, no nation has pursued that goal in a more responsible manner." Talking about the two countries, Reagan claimed that "both strive for world peace" and that "the United States regards Indonesia as an important force for peace, stability, and progress." Finally, the president promised that "the United States will also continue to provide appropriate development and food assistance in the framework of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI). I am proud to say that this consortium has had wholehearted American backing since its founding."

Not much concern here that Suharto is the president of a military regime that violates human rights and invades foreign countries. The victims of the death squads in West Papua and in East Timor did not figure in Reagan's public speech. At a press briefing later that same day, an administration official refused to say whether such victims were discussed in his private talk with Suharto and grew irritated when pressed on the subject. He repeatedly refused to say anything other than "our policy is to rely on quiet diplomacy—this is an issue we do not bring up in public." After the briefing, a reporter shouted at the official: "Sixteen questions and no answers!" The official responded dryly: "That's what I'm paid for," which is at least an honest answer, although it will hardly bring much comfort to Suharto's victims.[21]

From The Washington Post, *1 May 1986, courtesy of Torben Retboll*

The United Kingdom, as a former world power, has not been far behind in this matter. Although the British government does not officially condone Indonesia's annexation of East Timor and has often—though not in the U.N.—declared its support for the right of the people to determine their own future free from outside pressure, it nevertheless stepped up its delivery of weapons, Hawk ground-attack aircraft, and other military equipment following the commencement of Indonesia's war against East Timor in 1975. Since 1983 several ministers and senior officers of the British armed forces have visited Jakarta. And Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's official visit to Indonesia in April 1985 came hard on the heels of a series of arms deals which had made Britain Indonesia's major source of war equipment in Western Europe. Other sources are West Germany (submarines), Holland (corvettes), and Belgium (patrol boats). During 1984 British companies concluded deals to supply three refitted naval frigates to the Indonesian navy, to add another five Hawks to the two squadrons already delivered, and to start delivery of 100 million pounds worth of Rapier missiles manufactured by British Aerospace. This Rapier contract was the largest British arms deal in 1984. In a

20. *New York Times*, May 14, 1978; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 28, June 1978.

21. See my 1984 book pp. 97–112 with further references. During a trip to the Far East Ronald Reagan met with President Suharto in Bali, Indonesia, in late April and early May 1986. The official theme of this trip was the "winds of freedom," but one American and two Australian reporters were expelled from Indonesia just prior to the President's arrival in Bali, and obviously this was not so good for the "freedom" theme. The expulsion and the visit was an occasion for much reporting and comment in the U.S. media; see, for example, Arnold Kohen, the *New York Times*, Mary McGrory, the *Washington Post*, and Jill Jolliffe, the *Christian Science Monitor*, all 29 April, as well as Martinhu da Costa Lopes, the *Boston Globe*, 30 April; there were also editorials in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Miami Herald*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, all 1 May, as well as the *Boston Globe* and *Newsday*, both 2 May.

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From the Philadelphia Inquirer, *2 May 1986, courtesy of Torben Retboll*

press release commenting on the Thatcher visit, TAPOL stated that "it is inexcusable for the British prime minister to turn a blind eye to the numerous human rights violations being perpetrated by Indonesia's military rulers, while boosting the sale of military hardware to Indonesia's armed forces which are responsible for so much bloodshed."[22]

Australia

As a result of geographical proximity and history, there has been much interest in the East Timor issue in Australia, and it is the only Western country where the press has covered the topic regularly since April 1974. But even if there was much sympathy for the people of East Timor, there was always the strategic and economic importance of Indonesia to consider, and this fact was clearly demonstrated well in advance of the Indonesian invasion. On 16 October 1975 five journalists—two Australians, two British, and one New Zealander—were killed in Balibo, a small town in East Timor near the Indonesian border. They were killed by Indonesian troops advancing into the territory in order to destabilize the Fretilin administration and to prepare for the later, full-scale invasion that was launched on 7 December. But the Australian government did not really want the truth to become public knowledge, because this would hurt Indonesia whose official stance was that their troops had never crossed the border and had no intention of ever doing so.

The Australian ambassador in Jakarta thus explained the case in a secret cable to Canberra, dated 29 October 1975, and later leaked to the press: "Although we know it is not true, the formal position of the Indonesian government is still that there is no Indonesian military intervention in East Timor. If the minister said or implied in public the Indonesian government was lying, we would invite a hurt and angry reaction." The ambassador's advice was taken, and Australia failed to protest to Indonesia, but the spectre of the five dead reporters continues to haunt public debate in the country. In July 1979, for instance, the Australian weekly *The National Times* devoted ten full pages to a special report by Hamish McDonald on the killing, and in October 1981, following reports of a new Indonesian offensive, *The Australian* returned to the case in an editorial calling for "quick action on East Timor." The paper said:

> When [five] Australian journalists were murdered [in October 1975] in circumstances which the most charitable would have to have found suspicious, the best we seemed able to manage was a half apologetic mumble. It is time Australia stopped playing the role of Pontius Pilate. It is time we spoke up as loudly on nearby Indonesian colonialism as we do on the misdeeds of the distant Soviets and South Africans.

When former Australian diplomat Sir Keith Shann said of the five that "they asked for it and they got it," reaction was immediate and widespread. Critics included parliamentarians; Jim Dunn, Australian consul in East Timor 1962–64; Shirley Shackleton, widow of one of the journalists; Ranald MacDonald, chairman of the Australian section of the International Press Institute; and many others. In his recent book, Jim Dunn states that "the killing of the newsmen was probably the worst and most wanton act of its kind in the history of Australian journalism, and yet, incredibly, it evoked not a formal word of protest to Indonesia." As a matter of fact, it was later revealed that Canberra had known the truth all along because they were monitoring the Indonesian army's secret radio traffic. It was, in other words, a deliberate cover-up. And to Indonesia, Canberra's silence was a clear message: it was a green light for an outright invasion of East Timor.[23]

22. *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 27, April 1978, nos. 66–68, November 1984–March 1985; TAPOL Press Releases, April 2 & 15, 1985; *Financial Times*, 3 January 1985.

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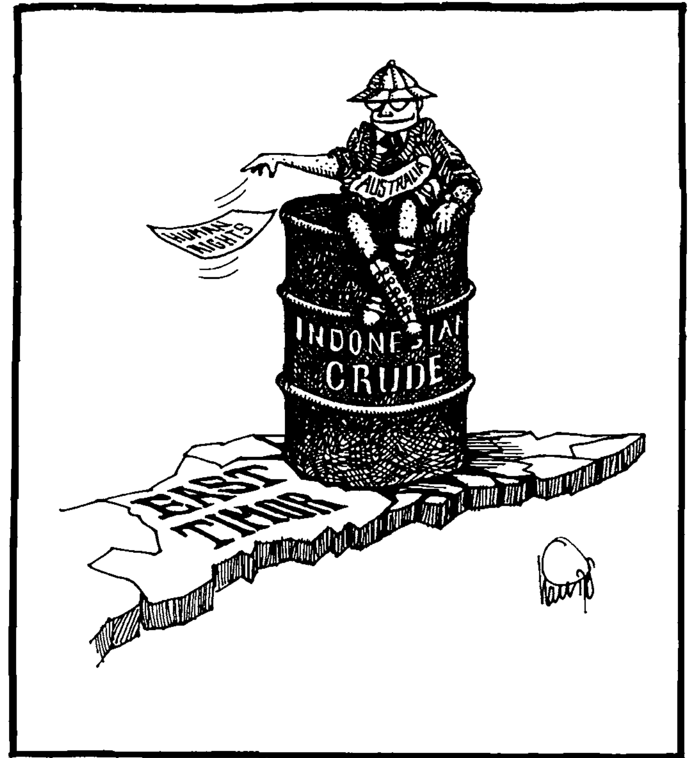
As early as October 1976 Australia gave de facto recognition of the integration of East Timor, and in January 1978 a de jure recognition followed. In March of that year, the government announced the gift of twelve Bell Sioux helicopters, plus facilities for the training of twenty-four Indonesian servicemen in Australia for the operation and upkeep of these aircraft. Three months later, in June, it was announced that six Nomad Searchmaster planes, fitted with ground and sea surveillance radar, would be given to Indonesia, in addition to six previously donated.[24]

The Australian Labor party, then in opposition, reacted strongly to this line of policy. Urged on by politicians such as Ken Fry and Gordon McIntosh, the party adopted a platform that committed it to reverse the policy on East Timor and support the right to self-determination in international organizations such as the U.N. However, following the change of government in March 1983, the new prime minister, Bob Hawke, and his foreign minister, Bill Hayden, worked to maintain good relations with Indonesia, thus openly betraying their own party platform. Hayden put the dilemma quite clearly: if we support East Timor, he said, an Australian airline company may lose its flying rights to and through Indonesia and this will cost us 160 million Australian dollars. So the implied question was: how much are half a million East Timorese worth?

By July 1983 the situation had deteriorated to the point where a member of the cabinet, Minister for Defence Support Brian Howe, was gagged after having criticized government policy and had to cancel his planned appearance at a public meeting in Melbourne where two members of Fretilin also were scheduled to speak. (During the Liberal government in 1975–83, Fretilin representatives were denied visas to Australia; the Hawke government did issue two visas in the summer of 1983, but the representatives were considered private persons and Hawke himself would not meet with them. The Australian Labor Party's Senator Georges, who attended the Melbourne rally in place of Howe, stressed the absurdity of a member of the Labor party and of the government apparently no longer being "permitted to speak in public in support of Australian Labor party policy," adding that "we have reached a point where we have accepted the advice of fascists in the determination of our foreign policy . . . certainly in regard to East Timor. Yet we fought against fascism, and in that fight the people of East Timor sacrificed themselves on our behalf," he said, referring to East Timorese involvement in World War II in aid of Australia. Finally, he said, it was "humiliating for us now to see an Australian government, a succession of Australian governments, deny the rights of the East Timorese because the fascist militarists of Indonesia demand that we do so."



Cartoon by Hans Borkent (1978), courtesy of Hans Borkent

But during the ALP conference of July 1984 the old platform was dropped, and on the crucial issue of self-determination the new resolution went no further than to criticize Indonesia for incorporating the territory without an internationally-supervised act of self-determination. It called on the Australian government to support "international initiatives, including the efforts of the U.N. secretary-general, that have the aim of achieving a settlement of the East Timorese problem," but there was no general reversal of actual policy. Within hours of the adoption of the ALP resolution, Bill Hayden was on his way to Jakarta to attend a "dialogue" with foreign ministers of the ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), profoundly relieved that he was taking with him a policy that some Indonesian officials had already said they could "live with." Benny Murdani was less generous, however. He bluntly told the foreign minister that attempts by anyone to send a mission to investigate human rights in East Timor would be regarded as an act of interference in Indonesia's internal affairs.[25]

One year later, Australia publicly acknowledged Indonesian sovereignty over the former Portuguese colony. In an interview recorded on 25 July 1985 in Canberra for Indonesian television, Prime Minister Bob Hawke recognized "the sovereign authority of Indonesia" over East Timor and went on to describe the East Timorese as "citizens of Indonesia."[26]

23. *National Times*, 7 July 1979; *The Australian*, 10–11 October 1981; *The Advertiser*, 14 October 1981; *Timor Information Service*, Australia, no. 32, September–October 1981; Shirley Shackleton, "Eight Years of Silence," *National Times*, 28 October 1983; my 1980 book pp. 91–100; my 1984 book pp. 78–80; Mark Chipperfield, "Balibo: rumours that refuse to go away," *The Australian*, October 16, 1985. Canberra's reticence over this 1975 episode is in striking contrast to its strenuous efforts to prevent the execution of two citizens convicted of possession of heroin in Malaysia in July 1986.

24. Budiardjo & Liong, p. 30.

25. My 1984 book pp. 129–149.

26. *Canberra Times*, 19 August 1985; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 71, September 1985; *Le Monde*, 19 December 1985.

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Clearly, what you say in opposition is one thing, but what you do in government is something quite different!

Portugal, Holland, and Sweden

As the former colonial power in East Timor, Portugal is directly involved in the issue. Technically, it is still the administering power and formally it is committed to ensure an orderly decolonization of the territory. Reality is somewhat different, though, since in the first place, Portugal has not administered anything at all since it withdrew from the main island during the civil war in August 1975, and secondly,

At a press briefing later that same day, [a Reagan] administration official refused to say whether such [death squad] victims were discussed in his private talk with Suharto and grew irritated when pressed on the subject. He repeatedly refused to say anything other than "our policy is to rely on quiet diplomacy—this is an issue we do not bring up in public." After the briefing, a reporter shouted at the official: "Sixteen questions and no answers!" The official responded dryly: "That's what I'm paid for," which is at least an honest answer, although it will hardly bring much comfort to Suharto's victims.

successive Portuguese governments have done next to nothing to fulfill their constitutional obligations. Moreover, in October 1981 a secret report declassified by President Eanes revealed that after the April 1974 revolution, Portuguese leaders secretly negotiated with Indonesia and accommodated that country's ambitions to annex the country. According to a description of the last of these meetings, held in Hong Kong in June 1975, a Portuguese delegation told Indonesian officials that it had drafted Timor's new decolonization statute in such a way that it would give them a year to try and persuade the population by peaceful means to accept incorporation into Indonesia. But if they did not, and Indonesia chose to use force, "the Portuguese government is not prepared to create problems, and could easily send a ship to Timor to evacuate all Portuguese."[27]

In July 1983 a new round of secret talks between Portugal and Indonesia began, this time under the auspices of the U.N. secretary-general and his special deputy for East Timor affairs, the Pakistani diplomat, Achmed Rafeeuddin, who is believed to be pro-Indonesian. There are two reasons for secrecy: In the first place, it is impossible for the two countries to meet officially, since Portugal severed diplomatic relations with Indonesia immediately after the invasion (although Portuguese air force general Morais e Silva had met with General Benny Murdani privately in Lisbon in January 1977, when the latter made a one-day visit—a most intriguing venture, as Jim Dunn has rightly noted: the head of Indonesian intelligence visiting a country which has severed diplomatic relations with Indonesia because of a military invasion which Murdani himself had masterminded). Secondly, Indonesia claims that East Timor was properly decolonized by the act of the Popular Representative Assembly on 31 May 1976, after which it became an "internal affair" not to be discussed by outside parties.

Both of them would like to get rid of the problem, but Fretilin's unbroken resistance and continuing international support have forced them to the negotiating table where talks so far appear to be confined to "human rights and humanitarian affairs," thus avoiding the crucial question of self-determination and independence. The East Timorese, though, and Fretilin in particular, have been completely ignored. In this way, the present negotiations are ominously reminiscent of the talks between Holland and Indonesia which led to the complete sellout of the West Papuan people in the New York Agreement of 1962. A similar deal may satisfy government circles in Lisbon that the people of East Timor will be consulted by the military regime, but it is idle fancy for anyone to think that such a deal will find acceptance by the East Timorese people.[28]

As the former colonial power in Indonesia, Holland is also involved in the issue, and East Timor has been a constant focus for Dutch solidarity groups that have worked since the late 1960s to expose the nature of the Indonesian military regime. One of the climaxes was the campaign to oppose the export to Indonesia of three naval corvettes in 1979 and 1980. There has been consistent pressure in Parliament on successive Dutch governments over their support for Indonesia, and a large number of Dutch parliamentarians from almost all political parties signed a joint appeal by parliamentarians from eight European Community countries calling on the governments of the Community "to work collectively for the self-determination of the people of East Timor." This appeal, organized by TAPOL in Britain and published on 29 July 1983, was signed by 170 parliamentarians of the Community.[29]

In January 1984 Dutch foreign minister Hans van den Broek paid an official visit to Jakarta, having been instructed by Parliament to raise with the Indonesians not only the issue of the death squads but also the offensive in East Timor and the situation in West Papua. In point of fact, East Timor was hardly mentioned and West Papua apparently not at all. The

27. My 1984 book pp. 114–116; see also João Loff Barreto, *The Timor Drama: Portugal and East Timor, April 1974–December 1975*, Timor Newsletter: Lisbon 1982.

28. *Timor Link*, no. 1, January 1985, published by the Catholic Institute for International Relations, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF, England; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 67, January 1985; Budiardjo & Liong, pp. 151–153; Jim Dunn, pp. 369–373; on West Papua, see the TAPOL book *West Papua: the Obliteration of a People*, London, 1983, Robin Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War: The Guerilla Struggle in Irian Jaya*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1985, and the article by Ian Bell, Herb Feith, and Ron Hatley in *Asian Survey*, May 1986.

29. Budiardjo & Liong, p. 155.

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From Politiken, *16 July 1984, courtesy of Torben Retboll*

Translation: The Danish minister of foreign affairs, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, does not want to interfere in the human rights situation of the countries we are making commercial agreements with.
"—I'm thinking of placing a big order in your country for electronic surveillance equipment for my newest model prison."

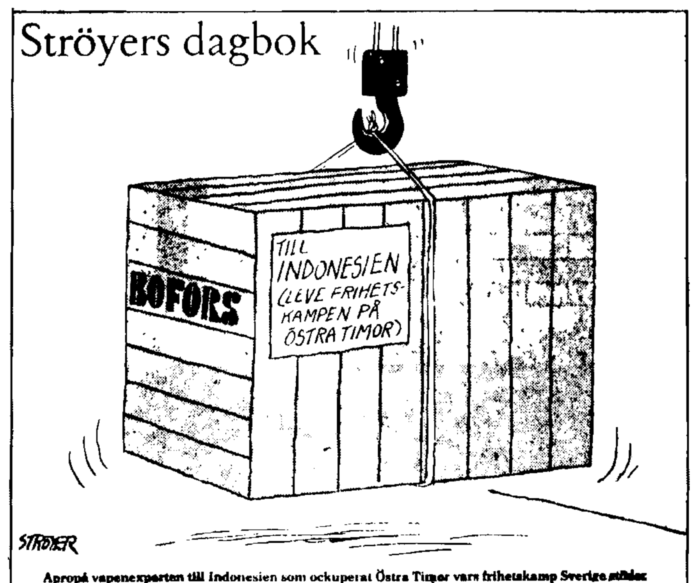
one issue van den Broek did raise, namely the death squads, elicited an angry protest from Murdani who told him to stop interfering in Indonesia's internal affairs, after which van den Broek apologized for creating this impression. On his return home, the Dutch foreign minister regretted that so much attention had been given to his discussions about the killings. He had gone, he said, primarily to promote the export of corvettes and weapons in order to counter unemployment at home. Obviously, the question of human rights was of little concern to van den Broek.

Human rights was also of little concern to Mrs. Schoo, Dutch minister for overseas development and chairperson of the IGGI, who visited Indonesia three months later, in April 1984. At the end of her visit, she told the Indonesian press that "we have supported Indonesia for the past twenty years, and I can't see why we shouldn't be able to go on doing so for another twenty years." Although she had professed some concern for human rights prior to her departure, this was all forgotten after her return: "I don't believe in using development assistance as a sanction," she told the Dutch press. "It is one of the aims of development assistance to create a situation in which people have enough to eat, can live a healthy life, and the children can go to school. . . . Human rights problems prevail in all developing countries. If we use respect for human rights as a sanction, it is as if we are punishing underdeveloped countries for what is a characteristic of underdevelopment." Two months later, in June, the IGGI convened in the Hague for its annual meeting and approved aid commitments to Indonesia for the next fiscal year of 2,460 million U.S. dollars, an increase of around 10 percent above what was pledged in 1983. Respect for human rights was indeed not to be used as a sanction.[30]

As a Western democracy that is not a member of NATO, Sweden has often taken a radical and independent stance in its foreign policy and did, in fact, do so with regard to East Timor in the beginning, but over the years the principled position has steadily eroded, so that by 1985 the Swedish government had come down on the side of the Indonesian generals. From 1975 to 1979 Sweden supported East Timor in the U.N. General Assembly while at the same time selling arms (especially Bofors cannons) to Jakarta. This was a classic example of a double standard and the Swedish press carried satirical cartoons where crates containing arms being loaded for export to Indonesia were labeled "Long Live Fretilin!" In 1980, Sweden abstained in the U.N. and asked to join the IGGI. The following year, when the same thing happened in the U.N. and Sweden joined the IGGI as an observer, the Social Democrats (then in opposition) protested strongly. But when the Social Democrats came back in government in 1982, they too abstained in the U.N. and did not pull out of the IGGI. Meanwhile, Swedish arms exports to Indonesia were growing by leaps and bounds, from a value of 21 million Swedish crowns in 1980 to 72 million in 1984.

Minister for Foreign Trade Mats Hellström, who publicly supported self-determination at the International East Timor Conference held in Lisbon in May 1979, has now turned his talents to explaining the wisdom of the current Swedish policy. "I think it was wrong to start an arms export to Indonesia as the Liberal government did," Helström told a public meeting in November 1984. "But now we are tied by our contracts and have to complete deliveries. The contracts mean that the Swedish government must supply spare parts and replace weapons

30. *TAPOL Bulletin*, nos. 61–64, January–July 1984; *Vrij Nederland*, Holland, 11 February 1984; Jim Dunn pp. 368–369.



courtesy of Torben Retboll

This is a satirical cartoon by Ströyer in the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter, *7 December 1978. The caption reads: Concerning the arms export to Indonesia, which is occupying East Timor whose freedom struggle Sweden supports. The crate is marked "Bofors" after the Bofors factory that produces cannons. The label on the crate reads: For Indonesia (long live the freedom struggle in East Timor).*

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that are destroyed. It is very hard to break such contracts, but in this case we are talking about anti-aircraft cannons which are mounted on ships, and as far as we know, they have not been used against the guerrillas." However, his implication that Sweden is only fulfilling old contracts is misleading. Even as Hellström spoke these words, his colleague, Birgitta Dahl, minister for energy, was getting ready to leave for Indonesia and Singapore to take part in a huge sales drive called "Technology Sweden," promoted and organized by the Swedish government. One of the companies involved was the Karlskrona shipyard which planned to sell minesweepers to Indonesia.

Amnesty reiterates its complaint about the extensive use of torture by Indonesian troops. Despite Indonesian attempts to cast doubt on the authenticity of military documents issued by the Indonesian army and captured by Fretilin in 1982, which contain guidelines regarding the use of torture, AI confirms its conviction that the documents are genuine. This is reinforced by the receipt of firsthand evidence that torture has been persistently practiced in East Timor. It lists three places in Dili where torture takes place and says that some people reported to have been held in these centers have since "disappeared" and some are feared dead.

At the same meeting, Hellström also stated: "I will not call it a double standard that we preach disarmament while at the same time exporting arms. It is a question of conflicting aims," he explained, adding that "our policy of neutrality gains more credibility if we can produce our own weapons. Today, we are producing 70 percent of our own weapons, which would be impossible if we did not at the same time export some. The Swedish market is too small for an arms producer. Recently, I visited Karlskoga where I was criticized by the trade unions because Bofors had laid off 1,000 persons as a result of declining demands. We have to find a middle road between the different aims." And so, it seems, in order to keep Swedish workers employed, the number of victims in East Timor will have to increase one more time.[31]

The Roman Catholic Church and International Relief Assistance

The only preexisting institution in East Timor not destroyed by the Indonesians is the Roman Catholic Church, which has a large and increasing following among the population. Church leaders, such as Martinhu da Costa Lopes, are virtually the only persons who have been able to speak out against the Indonesians without being harmed. Lopes, known as the bishop of Dili, was appointed apostolic administrator in 1977 at the age of fifty-eight. He complained privately to General Dading but otherwise remained silent until 1981, when he decided to speak openly and condemn the abuses at a rally of 12,000 people. In April 1983 he was forced to resign, after which he went abroad, travelling worldwide to support East Timor and giving testimony to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva in February 1984.

His successor, Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, who took over in May 1983 at the age of thirty-five, was widely believed to be more cooperative with the Indonesians. But as early as October 1983, he delivered a sermon at Dili Cathedral in which he protested against Indonesian brutalities and condemned the many arrests being made by the Indonesian army. He was reprimanded but continued undaunted. In a recent interview with Reuters, he revealed the existence of two mass graves where the victims of the Kraras massacre of August 1983 are buried: "I saw the graves, the places where those people were buried. In one place about seventy, and in another place fourteen," he said, adding that villagers had given him a list of the victims which includes the names of teenage boys. Even for someone in his position, such courageous statements may be dangerous, a fact of which he is well aware: "I am ready to be removed," he said in July 1984, "if that is the price of defending human rights and the rights of the East Timorese."[32]

While the church has given moral support to a people in distress, food and medical assistance has been provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), though not without serious and recurrent problems and restrictions. In the first place, the ICRC did not get access at all to East Timor until the fall of 1979, well after Indonesia's annihilation campaigns, and upon arrival relief workers compared conditions there with what they had seen in Biafra or Kampuchea. Secondly, in 1981 as the humanitarian situation was gradually improving, the ICRC was asked to leave again, as the Indonesians were launching a new military offensive to which they did not want any witnesses. ICRC operations were resumed in April 1982 and again suspended in July 1983 when preparations for the next offensive began. Thirdly, ICRC activities traditionally include prison visitations, but this was not permitted until early 1982 when the ICRC visited Atauro Island and started a food and medical program for prisoners there. This program has fortunately not been affected by developments on the main island since then.

31. *Ost-timor Information*, nos. 6–8, March–September 1985, published by the Timor Committee in Sweden, Riddargatan 38, 2 tr., S-114 57 Stockholm, Sweden; Björn Larsson, ed., *Det grymma spelet* (The Grim Game), Stockholm 1985 (in Swedish).

32. Budiardjo & Liong, pp. 117–124; *East Timor Report*, nos. 7–8, June–September 1984, published by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, 124 Napier Street, Fitzroy Victoria 3065, Australia; *Newsweek*, September 3, 1984; *Tempo*, Indonesia, September 1, 1984; my 1984 book pp. 179–193.

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In a rare and remarkable gesture, the ICRC has complained in public about Indonesian restrictions. The president of the ICRC, Alexandre Hay, has drawn attention to East Timor as one of the few countries where the ICRC is prevented from giving relief to the victims of a military conflict. At a press conference in Geneva in January 1985 he said that many countries, including Indonesia, were making it impossible for the committee to operate in accordance with Geneva conventions governing the conduct of war. By contrast, the ICRC had had no problems in working with the Fretilin administration in the period from September to December of 1975. An ICRC report dated 13 October 1975 said of the situation under Fretilin simply that: "ICRC has access to all prisoners."[33]

The United Nations

East Timor has received useful diplomatic support from the United Nations, where the issue has been discussed in the Security Council and the General Assembly in New York as well as in the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. The Security Council has adopted two resolutions condemning the invasion and calling for withdrawal of the Indonesian troops. The resolutions had overwhelming support, the first on 22 December 1975 (unanimously), and again on 22 April 1976 (twelve to zero, with two abstensions and one absent). Although these resolutions are binding, Indonesia has not complied with them.

The General Assembly has adopted similar but non-binding resolutions annually from 1975 to 1982. Indonesia can simply ignore them and has indeed done so. The diplomatic impact of U.N. support, however, has been eroded by a gradual decline in the number of supporting countries and the watering-down of the language of the resolutions. In 1975 seventy-two countries supported the resolution condemning the Indonesian invasion (with ten against and forty-three abstentions). By 1982, the number of countries supporting the by-now diluted resolution had declined to fifty (with forty-six against and another fifty abstentions—a very narrow margin).

A clear voting pattern emerged from the very beginning with few exceptions and only minor variations over the years: most Western countries abstain while many Third World and Socialist countries (e.g. Cuba and Vietnam) vote in favor. The U.S. and Australia (since 1978) have been against the resolutions. China and the USSR are in favor, but the most solid backers are the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome & Principe, and Cape Verde, which even managed to get the question back on the agenda of the 1986 summit of the Non-Aligned Movement to be held in Harare, Zimbabwe, after it had been deleted at the 1983 summit in New Delhi, India. Brazil is also in favor because of the Portuguese connection.

Support for Indonesia's position comes from regimes like Chile, Guatemala, Paraguay, and Turkey, which has its own invasion going on in Cyprus, as well as Indonesia's colleagues in the ASEAN alliance: Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and, since 1984, Brunei. Indonesia's chief trading partner, Japan, has always supported Jakarta. Among the few Western countries that have supported self-determination, one may note Sweden (until 1979), Cyprus, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, and finally Portugal, the former colonial power, which is committed by its constitution, though it has never been very active on the issue.

The period from late 1975 to early 1976 was of crucial importance to what transpired later on. This was when the U.N. might have acted decisively but failed to do anything of substance. In his memoirs, the former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Daniel P. Moynihan, provides an explanation for this fact when he says that ". . . the U.S. wished things to turn out as they did, and worked to bring this about. The Department of State desired that the U.N. prove utterly ineffective in whatever measures it undertook. This task was given to me, and I carried it forward with no inconsiderable success." Moynihan reveals that he was aware of the nature of that "success." He cites a February 1976 estimate that some 60,000 people had been killed, explaining that this is 10 percent of the population, "almost the proportion of casualties experienced by the Soviet Union during the Second World War." Later on, Moynihan became a U.S. senator, and in December 1980 he addressed a private conference on the U.N. that issued a resolution denouncing the world organization as "no longer the guardian of social justice, human rights, and equality among nations." It said the U.N. was "perverted by irrelevant political machinations" and was "in danger of becoming a force against peace itself." An intriguing situation, as Noam Chomsky has rightly pointed out: The world body being denounced for its inefficiency with regard to human rights and peace by a former U.N. ambassador who is actually boasting about his "success" in helping to cause a massacre that he compares to the consequences of Nazi aggression, not to speak of the far larger number of victims in the subsequent period.[34]

And U.S. efforts to "pervert" the U.N. were not limited to "political machinations" of the Moynihan variety, it was later revealed. Immediately after the invasion the U.N. did in fact decide in the Security Council resolution of 22 December 1975 to send a special representative to the territory. But when U.S. intelligence agencies learned that Indonesia considered sinking the frigate with the U.N. representative on board, they simply buried the information deep in their files without alerting the U.N. that the ship might be torpedoed. Eventually, the U.N. representative visited Indonesia-controlled territory in East Timor (only three towns) in January 1976, but his attempts in February to reach Fretilin-controlled areas from Darwin were sabotaged by the Indonesian and Australian governments.[35]

In September 1983 discussion of East Timor by the General Assembly was deferred, and the same thing happened in the fall of 1984 and of 1985. The proposal to defer was initiated by Portugal and moved by Iceland. Two reasons were given: uncertainty about the actual situation in East Timor, and the fact that consultations were continuing between the secretary-general and the parties involved. As for the actual situation, it should not have been too difficult to discover that there was a war going on. As for the consultations, Fretilin had been

33. *Öst-timor Information*, no. 5, October 1984; my 1984 book pp. 171–178; *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 67, January 1985.

34. Noam Chomsky, *Towards a New Cold War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), pp. 338–339 & 467–468 with further references.

35. Ibid.

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completely excluded (as explained above), although General Assembly resolution no. 37/30 of 23 November 1982 instructs the secretary-general to initiate consultations "with all the parties directly concerned." Indonesia, of course, hailed the deferral as a victory, saying that it might be "the last nail in the Fretilin coffin," as the *Jakarta Post* put it. Some observers also speculated that Portugal preferred to postpone the issue rather than risk losing the vote, which may be true, though there was no evidence that Portugal had engaged in any serious lobbying for the Timor cause prior to the General Assembly.[36]

The Human Rights Commission did not discuss the issue until February 1983, when it adopted a resolution that supports self-determination and condemns human rights abuses. The same thing happened again in February 1984 (when the former bishop, Martinhu da Costa Lopes, gave testimony), but in early 1985, during its forty-first session, the commission decided to delete East Timor from its agenda. (Even so, the issue was discussed but only under the general item of self-determination; Amnesty International and three other nongovernmental organizations gave testimony.) This was a serious setback, coming as it did on top of the consultations led by the secretary-general that ignored the right of the people to be represented in negotiations about their own fate. Far from showing any signs of respecting East Timor's right to self-determination or acknowledging the depth of suffering being inflicted on the people, Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar recently told the press in Jakarta that the atmosphere at the U.N. on the question of East Timor "is improving so much that I don't think it will come up any more. Or at least, that's what I hope." Commented TAPOL in London:

> This top U.N. official really needs to be asked whether he actually said the words attributed to him by the Indonesian press. What right has he so publicly to flout the U.N. Charter? His further remark that he was pleased that the Indonesian president and foreign minister welcome his personal efforts to establish contact between Indonesia and Portugal shows the extent to which the U.N. Secretariat is now serving the interests of a military regime that has annexed another country by force of arms.

If the U.N. should eventually delete the item from its agenda altogether, it will not mean the end of the struggle. But it will mean the loss of an important platform to keep the issue alive. Moreover, as one delegate said at a recent meeting of the U.N. Decolonization Committee in Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea, it will also mean that "the U.N. henceforth commits hypocrisy when interfering with any colonial problems whatsoever."[37]

International Protest and Support

In spite of heavy Indonesian and U.S. lobbying in favor of Jakarta's views, there has over the years been a continuous and principled support in the world community in favor of East Timor's right to self-determination and independence and against Indonesian aggression. Let us here, by way of conclusion, single out some of the major examples that have occurred since the last U.N. General Assembly resolution of late 1982.

In September 1983 solidarity and human rights groups from England, Holland, Sweden, West Germany, and Portugal issued a statement calling on their governments to stop the arms export to Indonesia and to support the East Timorese people.

Two months later, the Conference of Indonesian Bishops, often considered close to the local authorities, sent a six-page letter to Timorese clergy assuring them of their support and calling for the respect for human rights in East Timor. It was the first time the bishops had expressed in an open letter their concern over the situation; they urged officials to work in a "spirit of honesty" to resolve the problem, and this open letter prompted Pope John Paul II to remove Indonesia from the list of Asian countries that he was to visit in May 1984.[38]

In December 1983 more than 100 members of the U.S. Congress, led by Representative Tony P. Hall, Democrat of Ohio, signed a letter to President Reagan urging him to "add the suffering of the people of East Timor to America's foreign policy agenda." The letter asked the president to help in getting officials of the ICRC into the territory. Pointing out that Portugal and Australia had shown concern, the letter stated: "We hope you will work with Portugal and Australia to develop creative policies to address the underlying causes of the ongoing human suffering in East Timor."[39]

At the same time, 128 members of the British Parliament supported a resolution calling on the government "to halt the sale of arms and military equipment to Indonesia and to take other urgent steps to press Indonesia to halt military operations." In January 1984 a deputation of the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, led by Lord Avebury (Liberal), urged the Foreign Office that the U.N. consultations should include Fretilin and could only do so if the secretary-general or his envoy were physically present in East Timor. The deputation also asked the British government to persuade Indonesia to cease military operations, and further called upon the British government to suspend shipments of arms to Indonesia as a means of bringing pressure to bear on Indonesia in favor of a ceasefire.

In the same month the Angolan minister of information, attending the Conference of Information Ministers of the Non-Aligned Nations in Jakarta, held a press conference there specifically to talk about East Timor. Indonesian journalists were banned from attending, but many foreign reporters were there.

Two months later a broad-based group of 133 leading Portuguese citizens criticized President Reagan for remaining silent and inactive in the face of violence and suffering in East Timor. The accusation was contained in an open letter, signed by a former prime minister, several ex-ministers, fifty members of Parliament, writers, academics, and other prominent personalities of Portuguese society. The letter reminded the president that he was uniquely well placed to intervene in defense of the human rights of the East Timorese because

36. My 1984 book pp. 195–212; *East Timor Report*, no. 9, December 1984; *Timor Link*, no. 3, October 1985; *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 19, 1985; U.N. Document S/17592, 29 October 1985.

37. *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 68, March 1985; *East Timor Report*, no. 10, April 1985.

38. Klemens Ludwig & Korinna Horta, *Osttimor: Das vergessene Sterben*, Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker: Göttingen 1985; *East Timor Report*, no. 7, June 1984.

39. My 1984 book pp. 104–105.

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"most of the armaments used by Indonesia are of U.S. origin."

Also in March 1984 the Portuguese bishops issued a statement expressing solidarity with the people of East Timor. The church, the bishops said, "must make its voice heard in order to stop the injustices being suffered by the Timorese people and to ensure that they can, themselves, determine their future in peace and liberty." The statement ended with a call to the Portuguese government, "historically, morally, and juridically responsible," to the Indonesian government, "the occupying power," and to various international institutions to do everything in their power to bring an end to this tragic and seemingly endless situation.[40]

In May 1984 the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group sent out a dossier to all members of the IGGI in advance of the upcoming annual meeting in the Hague, calling on them to cease giving economic assistance to Indonesia because of the army death squads in Indonesia itself, the genocidal conditions in East Timor, and injustices in West Papua.

One month later the Japanese Catholic Council for Justice and Peace raised the issue with the Portuguese prime minister Mario Soares on the occasion of his visit to Tokyo. In a letter signed by the council's president, Bishop Aloisius Soma, the Council said, "We wish to plead with Your Excellency to do all in your power to carry out the mandate in your new constitution to make every effort to work for the realization of self-determination for the East Timorese who, despite annexation and invasion by Indonesia, continue to struggle for their independence and for the survival of their culture."[41]

Also in June 1984, a bipartisan group of 123 representatives and twenty-two senators of the U.S. Congress appealed to Secretary of State George Shultz, urging him to raise the issue during his official visit to Jakarta scheduled for the following month. When Shultz did so, it was an occasion for much reporting and comment in the American press. The cover-up that existed during the first four years of the conflict is over. Since the end of 1979 East Timor has been mentioned in the international press from time to time, and there is even much sympathy for the plight of the people there. Nonetheless, much of what is written is still dishonest in that it ignores the Western arms sales to Indonesia and the consequent Western responsibility for Indonesia's actions. A *New York Times* editorial of 11 July 1984 was typical of this kind of reporting. But with rare honesty, the Oakland *Tribune* editorialized:

> For too long the United States has spoken softly and carried no stick at all in the face of a modern-day massacre of innocents. . . . U.S. counter-insurgency aircraft wreaked havoc on villages and crops through incendiary bombing attacks. Though such offensive use of American-supplied weapons was illegal, the U.S. continued to offer Indonesia further arms. . . . While the U.S. denounces the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Vietnam's conquest of Cambodia, it accepts as a fait accompli Indonesia's yet unfinished 'pacification' of Timor. . . . Shultz has at least taken up the matter with Indonesia's foreign minister during his recent visit. . . . East Timor may be small and remote, but it remains close to the hearts of Americans who deplore its tragic fate.[42]

In July 1984 Pope John Paul II used the occasion of accepting the credentials of Indonesia's new ambassador to the Holy

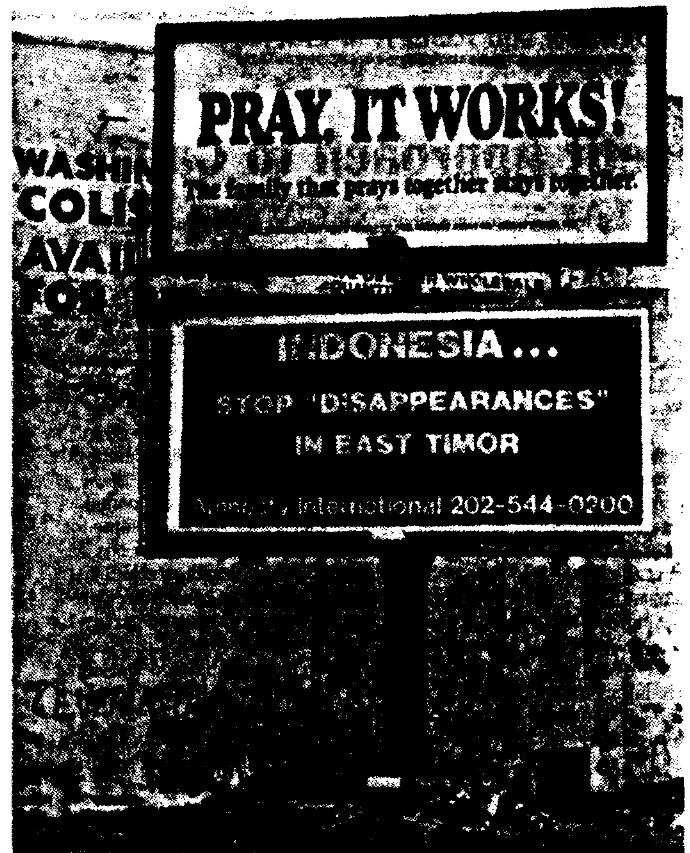

photo by Fred Sweets of The Washington Post*

This billboard was in Washington, D.C., on the corner of Sixth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue Southeast, a corner in view of the Capitol that is passed daily by hundred of officials.

See to admonish the Indonesian government. In his first public criticism of the situation in East Timor, he told the ambassador that "the Holy See continues to follow the situation with preoccupation. . . . It is the ardent wish of the Holy See that all the rights of individuals be respected and that every effort be made to lighten the suffering of the people by facilitating the work of relief organisations and by assuring the access of humanitarian aid to those in need."[43]

In April 1985 a bipartisan group of 131 representatives of the U.S. Congress urged President Reagan to use his visit to Portugal the following month to express American concern over the tragedy of East Timor: "We believe your visit to Portugal provides an excellent opportunity for the United States to join with Portugal in calling for access by the Red Cross to East Timor," the lawmakers told Reagan. "An indication of your interest could contribute significantly to efforts to prevent further bloodshed and misery in East Timor," they said. The letter was drafted by Tony P. Hall, and it was one of the largest Congressional expressions of support to date regarding the

40. *TAPOL Bulletin*, nos. 60–63, November 1983–May 1984.

41. *East Timor Report*, no. 8, September 1984.

*From *The Washington Post*, 19 October 1985, courtesy of Torben Retboll

42. *The Oakland Tribune*, 12 July 1984, printed in my 1984 book pp. 107–112; see also my article "The Western Press and the Third World," *Pressens Arbog* (Yearbook of the Press), 1986 (in Danish).

43. *New York Times*, 8 July 1984.

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Timor tragedy. In a press release, Tony Hall himself added that "the plight of the East Timorese is very much the responsibility of the United States as long as we are supplying Indonesia with the very arms which are being used to suppress their rights."[44]

At the same time, TAPOL in London started a drive for a worldwide campaign among parliamentarians supporting the right of East Timor's people to be represented at the talks being held between Portugal and Indonesia, and on 3 June 1985 Lord Avebury, chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group, announced the result at a press conference in the House of Commons: a total of 411 national parliamentarians and members of the European Parliament had signed the appeal. However, the press conference, which took place on the eve of the annual IGGI meeting in Holland, even as the Western governments prepared to donate huge sums in economic aid to Indonesia, was virtually ignored by the international media.[45]

In mid-1985 the Australian Coalition for East Timor (ACET) applied for radio transmitter and receiver licenses to contact Fretilin guerrillas in the mountains of East Timor, and at the same time they launched an appeal for a "Let East Timor Speak Fund." Though the minister for communications, Michael Duffy, at first rejected the applications, ACET has decided to reapply under a new Radio Communications Act. And in September 1985 the Congress of the Australian Council of Trade Unions without opposition passed a resolution strongly supporting the struggle of the East Timorese people, despite Hawke's recent sellout, and specifically urged "the Australian Labor Government to grant a licence to allow this radio link to operate and thus provide journalists, and other interested bodies and individuals, the right to speak to the resistance forces to gain their views on the situation in East Timor." The goal for the Fund is $A10,000, and a donation is an easy and concrete way of supporting the Maubere people.[46]

The Future

Meanwhile, the conflict continues. In an account which was recently smuggled out of the country, Msgr. Carlos Belo, the bishop of Dili, says that "an upheaval of gigantic and tragic porportions" is taking place, in which the identity of the Timorese people is threatened by destruction. Young people have been press-ganged into service as auxiliary forces in military operations, he says. "Successive, systematic and regular 'cleaning-up operations' are launched by the Indonesian army against centers of resistance." Villagers, even the most simple and humble peasants, have been arrested in waves, Belo reports. There is a permanent threat of reprisals with summary execution, by shooting, of the men and youths of villages considered to be sympathetic to the resistance forces. And the war is still growing, Msgr. Belo claims:

"A war that continues for nine years cannot be imputed to the blind obstinacy of a minority," he says, adding that "the attempt to Indonesianize the Timorese people represents a slow assassination of their culture. To kill their culture is to kill the people themselves."[47] ★

44. Tony Hall, Press Release, 8 May 1985; 1728 Longworth House, Washington, DC 20515, U.S.A.; see also Susan George in *AfricAsia*, Paris, June 1985.

45. To my knowledge, the only comment was Jonathan Power, *International Herald Tribune*, 11 June 1985; the text of the appeal can be found in *TAPOL Bulletin*, no. 70, July 1985.

46. *East Timor News*, no. 86–88, 1985; Let East Timor Speak Fund, Post Office Box A 716, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia. The Labor Movement's Peace Forum in Sweden (whose vice-president is Matts Hellström) has recently donated the equivalent of U.S. $4,000 to the Fund; a worthy gesture. Meanwhile, the Swedish government (whose minister for foreign trade is the very same Matts Hellström) continues to sell arms to Indonesia. See above and the Swedish *Öst-Timor Information*, no. 9, April 1986.

47. *Timor Link*, no. 2, June 1985; *The Observer*, 12 May 1985.

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Tan Malaka: Revolutionary or Renegade?

by Helen Jarvis

The figure of Tan Malaka haunts the margins of the history of the Left in Indonesia. Active in the Indonesian Communist party (PKI) in its early days and for a time Comintern representative in Southeast Asia, Tan Malaka later split with the party. He re-emerged to lead the militant wing of the Indonesian revolution until his assassination in 1949. Many aspects of his career, however, are still obscure, and this paper seeks to describe the long revolutionary journey, as Tan Malaka himself described it, "from jail to jail."[1]

Tan Malaka was born around 1896 in Suliki, a small village not far from the equator in West Sumatra. His given name was Ibrahim, but he was known throughout his life by the semi-aristocratic name Tan Malaka, which he inherited under the local matrilineal system from his mother. His father, as a low level official in the colonial administration, was also a member of the local elite.

A bright boy, Tan Malaka was sent to the Sekolah Raja (Chief's School), where he caught the attention of a Dutch teacher who convinced his parents and the elders of his village to raise a loan to send him to Holland to train as a teacher. This training lasted from 1913 to 1919, and Tan Malaka used his years in Holland to read widely and to make some contact both with the Indonesian students association (then developing in a nationalist direction) and with Dutch socialists and communists. Amongst those he met was Henk Sneevliet, who had helped found the Indies Social Democratic Association (ISDV), the first socialist organization in Indonesia, before being expelled from Indonesia in 1918.[2]

This organization, established in 1914 in Surabaya, East Java, had been almost entirely Dutch in membership, published only a Dutch-language newspaper, and initially had little impact on Indonesians. Few Marxists at the time expected revolution in the colonies, and their attention was directed towards the exciting events in Europe that culminated in the outbreak of revolution in Russia. For a time it appeared that the revolution might spread into Western Europe, including the Netherlands, but when it became clear that capitalism had at least temporarily staved off its demise, the ISDV began to refocus its attention on Indonesia and on the task of recruiting Indonesians. Some Indonesians were already attracted to socialist ideas, and in 1917 the first Indonesian socialist group had been set up, also in Surabaya, while the ISDV itself began to publish also in Indonesian. This process of reorientation was accelerated when the colonial government exiled the principal Dutch socialists from the colony in 1918 and 1919, leaving the movement for the first time in Indonesian hands. In May 1920 it changed its name to PKI (Perserikatan Komunis di India, Communist Association of the Indies, later Partai Komunis Indonesia) and became the first communist party in Asia (outside the Soviet Union). The PKI decided to seek affiliation with the Comintern in December 1920, and was represented at the Comintern from the time of the Third Congress held in June–July 1921.[3]

Tan Malaka meanwhile had returned to Indonesia at the end of 1919, taking up a teaching post at a Dutch tobacco plantation in Medan, East Sumatra, where he stayed until early 1921. It was during this period that he established contact with the ISDV and began writing for the press. His earliest known writing was an unsigned piece entitled "Land of Paupers,"

1. See Helen Jarvis, *Tan Malaka's "From Jail to Jail"* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, forthcoming).

2. For details of his life, see ibid., and Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: strijder voor Indonesie's vrijheid: levelsloop van 1897 tot 1945* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1976), passim.

3. For background on the early development of the Indonesian Communist party (PKI), see Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).

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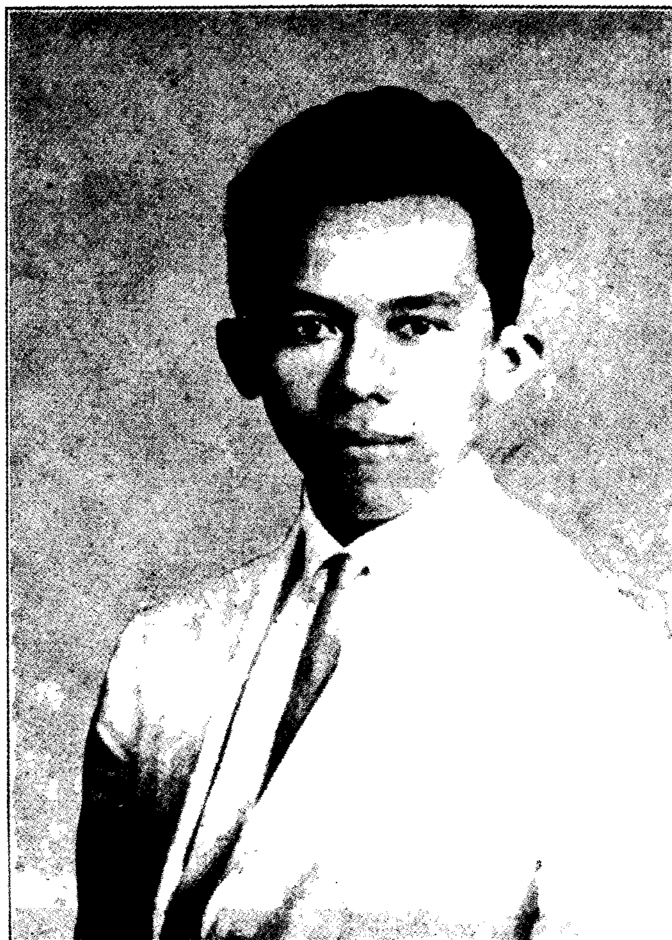
carried in the March 1920 issue of the ISDV newspaper *Het Vrije Woord* (The free word). In it he contrasted the great wealth of the country with the stark poverty and starvation of the majority of its people. The article, using statistics on conditions in Java and Sumatra, concluded:

> There is but one means that can bring rescue: the organisation and education of the proletariat, the organisation of class struggle for the achievement of the objective of the overthrow of the capitalist system and the introduction of planned production on the basis of communist principles.[4]

Tan Malaka also became heavily involved in a strike of railway workers in September 1920. In the same year he was nominated by a number of left-wing groups as a candidate in elections for the Volksraad, the Dutch-sponsored consultation assembly in the Indies. Unable to stand working in the environment of the plantation, where coolies were treated brutally and where he received little political encouragement and support, Tan Malaka moved to Java, hoping to get a teaching position in which he could develop politically. Skilled party members were a valuable and scarce resource, and the PKI immediately put him to work in the educational field. At the time the party was following a "bloc within" strategy as part of the proto-nationalist Sarekat Islam (SI or Islamic Association), which had claimed 360,000 members in 1916. In 1921, faced with declining membership, the SI decided to set up "People's Schools" to counter Dutch colonial education, which they believed inculcated feelings of inferiority and subordination in Indonesians. Tan Malaka was put in charge of establishing the first such school, at Semarang in Central Java, and was also asked to run classes for party members. So successful was this venture that "People's Schools" (also known as "Tan Malaka schools") were set up throughout Java and in some other islands of the archipelago.[5]

Although the legacy of Tan Malaka petered out in this fashion and although he had been vilified by both Left and Right, Tan Malaka's contributions to the development of the Indonesian revolution were substantial. He was an educator, and contributed to breaking the debilitating and suffocating role of the Dutch colonial education system in his country. He was also one of Indonesia's first and most original Marxist theorists, laying out a basic Marxist analysis in the 1920s, developing it in greater detail in the 1940s, and popularizing Marxist ideas during the independence struggle.



*courtesy of Robert Cribb**

Tan Malaka

Tan Malaka moved into trade union life with enormous vigor. At the end of June 1921 he was elected chairman of the Serikat Pegawai Pertjitakan (SPPH or Printing Workers Association), and he also held the posts of vice chairman and treasurer of the Serikat Pegawai Pelikan Hindia (Indies Oil Workers Association). In August he was appointed to the editorial board of the new SPPH journal *Soeara Tambang* (Mining voice), and he spoke at the large Semarang branch meeting of the powerful Vereeniging van Spoor- en Tramweg Personeel (VSTP, or the Union of Rail and Tramway Personnel). From May until August the PKI journal *Soeara Ra'jat* (Voice of the people) serialized his first book *Sovjet atau Parlemen?* (Soviet or Parliament?) as the main feature in each

4. In May 1920 Tan Malaka himself disclosed having written three articles in *Het Vrije Woord*. Harry Poeze has uncovered this article of 27 March 1920 as the first in the series of three signed by "A" and clearly from Tan Malaka's pen. Poeze, *Tan Malaka*, p. 95, n. 44.

*This photo and the next one are from J. Blumberger, *De communistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië*, 1928.

5. On Tan Malaka's educational philosophy see "S.I. Semarang dan onderwijs," *Soeara Ra'jat*, 1 October and 1 November 1920. Little research has been done on the People's Schools, but for some information see S.L. van der Wal, *Het onderwijs-beleid in Nederlands-Indië, 1900-1942* (Groningen: Wolters, 1963), p. 364, n. 9.

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courtesy of Robert Cribb

Asian delegates to the Comintern Congress, Moscow, November-December 1922. Standing: third from left, Tan Malaka; sixth from left, M.N. Roy. Sitting: first from left, Ho Chi Minh; third from left, Katayama Sen.

issue, introducing the party members to his theoretical abilities; articles by Tan Malaka on the SI School appeared in *Soeara Ra'jat* and in *Sinar Hindia* (Light of the Indies), the PKI daily newspaper. By this stage Tan Malaka was one of the leaders of the Revolutionaire Vakcentrale (RVC, or the Revolutionary Trade Union Federation), which had been established under PKI initiative in June, and he had played an important role in trying to keep alive the unity between the SI and PKI, which was failing fast. When the PKI president, Semaun, left Indonesia in October 1921, Tan Malaka was the logical successor, and at the December congress of the PKI, he was elected chairman after giving the principal address.

Whereas Semaun had favored a cautious line in PKI activities, Tan Malaka's leadership of the party brought with it a shift to direct action. He aimed to challenge the government's repressive powers by forging a united nationalist movement.[6] Within days of his election as PKI chairman, a pawnshop workers' strike broke out. As a member of the RVC executive body, Tan Malaka took a leading role in supporting the strike, speaking at mass meetings in several parts of Java. He was anxious to demonstrate that the communists' word could be trusted and that they were reliable backers of the workers' movement.

This leadership role could hardly, however, escape the attention of the colonial authorities. Dutch intelligence reports throughout the second half of 1921 showed increasing interest in Tan Malaka. He was followed day and night, and all of his speeches were recorded (often far from accurately) by police spies. Tan Malaka was arrested in Bandung on 13 February 1922. Under the arbitrary powers of the governor-general, he was then exiled, and he left for the Netherlands on 24 March.

Once in the Netherlands, Tan Malaka threw himself into the political fray. The Dutch Communist party (CPH) decided to run Tan Malaka as their third candidate in the 1922 parliamentary elections. It was a daring move: never before had an Indonesian been fielded as a candidate, and only recently had a constitutional amendment made all residents of the Netherlands East Indies eligible for election to parliament and to vote when living in Holland. The decision, however, was politically astute, for there was increasing disquiet in Holland over the repression in Indonesia and the erosion of the liberal Ethical Policy, particularly as manifested in the exile of nationalist leaders. The campaign attracted wide support, and Tan Malaka's percentage of the vote exceeded that of Van Ravesteyn, the second candidate on the ticket, although he did not receive an outright quota. Under the Dutch electoral system, however, the list of candidates as determined by the party prevails in such a case, and only the first two candidates were elected. As it turned out, Tan Malaka was actually too young to take a seat in parliament anyway.

Not expecting to be elected, Tan Malaka, in fact, left the

6. This view of Tan Malaka's role as Chairman of the PKI was first advanced in McVey, *Rise*, p. 119.

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country even before the results of the poll were declared. He travelled to Berlin, where he spent several months in the company of a fellow Indonesian communist, Darsono, who was attached to the West European Bureau of the Comintern in that city. During this period he may have had some contact with the Indian commmunist M.N. Roy (then also in Berlin). In his biography of Tan Malaka, Dutch scholar Harry Poeze points out that the rewriting of Tan Malaka's series of articles on his exile into a pamphlet reveals the influence of Roy in that the revised version is far less favorable to Gandhi.[7]

The figure of Tan Malaka haunts the margins of the history of the Left in Indonesia. Active in the Indonesian Communist party (PKI) in its early days and for a time Comintern representative in Southeast Asia, Tan Malaka later split with the party. He re-emerged to lead the militant wing of the Indonesian revolution until his assassination in 1949.

By October 1922 Tan Malaka had arrived in Moscow, where he was to spend the next year participating in activities of the Comintern. He took part in the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) planning for the Fourth Congress, in plenary sessions of the Congress in November, and in the Commission on the Eastern Question, in which he played a prominent role and began to express for the first time his own distinctive ideas on the relationship between communist parties and expressions of nationalism such as the pan-Islamic movements and the boycott movement against imperialist powers developing in India. The Lenin-Roy debate on this issue at the Second Congress of the Comintern had resulted in a compromise formulation of policy, and its implementation remained to be thrashed out at subsequent congresses.

As early as 1922 Tan Malaka had clearly chosen the Leninist side of the argument, urging collaboration between anti-colonial nationalist movements and local communist organizations. It is likely that Tan Malaka's support for such movements as progressive and even revolutionary in character had some influence in the softening of the previous Comintern line, defeating the anti-nationalist position advanced by Roy.[8]

courtesy of Robert Cribb

Cover of Tan Malaka's Russian language book on Indonesia

However, Tan Malaka went beyond Lenin in emphasizing the role that Islam, including Pan-Islam, had to play in the anti-imperialist struggle.

> Alongside the crescent, the star of the soviets will be the great battle emblem of approximately 250 million Muslims of the Sahara, Arabia, Hindustan and our Indies. . . . let us realise that the millions of proletarian Muslims are as little attracted to an imperialist pan-Islamism as to Western imperialism.[9]

With religion generally regarded by Marxist theorists as an opiate of the people and a pillar of the ruling class, this view was indeed novel. Apparently this was not held against him, however, for he was asked to remain in Moscow to participate in the International's work and to produce a book on Indonesia for translation into Russian. Starting in January 1923 Tan Malaka was listed with Semaun as an Indonesian correspondent for the Profintern journal *Die Rote Gewerkschafts-Internationale*, and he contributed to the journal on the Indonesian

7. Poeze, *Tan Malaka*, p. 213.

8. For a full discussion on the evolution of the Comintern's policy on the national and colonial questions see Demetrio Boersner, *The Bolsheviks and the National Colonial Question 1917-1928*, (Geneva: Droz, 1957). See also McVey, *Rise*, pp. 158-162; *The Comintern and the East: The Struggle for the Leninist Strategy and Tactics in National Liberation Movements*. (Moscow: Progress, 1979), and Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, *Lenin y la cuestion colonial*. (Santiago: Prensa Latino americana, 1973).

9. Tan Malaka, "De Islam en het Bolsjewisme," *Tribune*, 21 September 1922.

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and Dutch labor movements during the first half of 1923. During this period Tan Malaka apparently worked in the Eastern Bureau of the Comintern, as he was the rapporteur on Indonesia at the ECCI plenum held in June 1923.

It was the experience of those weeks in West, Central, and then East Java that brought home to Tan Malaka the contradiction between the willingness of the common people to risk all in the fight for independence, and what he saw as the pusillanimous attitude of the leaders in Jakarta engaged in negotiations with the Dutch for a compromise settlement of the dispute. Those leaders believed that the weakness of the new republic demanded extensive concessions to the Dutch and to Western capitalism in general in order to obtain recognition. Tan Malaka, however, was convinced by his journey that the time had come for wholehearted revolutionary action, and he set about organizing it.

It was presumably at the June 1923 ECCI plenum that Tan Malaka was appointed as Comintern agent for Southeast Asia, although no documentary evidence on the extent and details of this appointment have been uncovered. He left for his Canton base later in the year, arriving in December 1923. His autobiography gives little information on his activities in the first six months, save that he met Sun Yat-sen shortly after his arrival. From other souces we know that he devoted considerable time to discovering what had happened in the PKI since he had left Indonesia. Considerable changes had in fact taken place. The former president of the party, Semaun, had returned in May 1922 and had turned the PKI back from the direct action policy Tan Malaka had advocated as chairman. The government's savage moves against the party and the union movement in the wake of the pawnshop strike had taken their toll, and throughout 1922 most of the leadership's energies went into reconstruction, particularly of the party's union base. In late 1922 strikes began to break out again as economic conditions deteriorated. This apparent resumption of radicalism led to the definitive break between the PKI and the Sarekat Islam in early 1923. In mid-1923 the political situation blew up again with strikes by the railway union (VSTP). Once again the government used the opportunity to introduce and apply more repressive legislation. Semaun was exiled in August 1923, and the PKI was prevented from holding meetings.

Although the wave of strikes recalled Tan Malaka's own activist days in the colony, he observed them with grave misgivings, believing that indiscriminate strikes would not promote the communist cause but would simply give the authorities an opportunity to crack down. Concerned at the drift of the PKI from what he regarded as the communist course, Tan Malaka wrote a serious criticism, in which he stressed the need for the PKI to build and rely upon a proletarian base.[10] He was also distressed by the abandonment of the alliance with Islam represented by the split with the Sarekat Islam, for this in his view weakened the national solidarity that would be necessary if anything were to be done to remove colonial rule.

Keeping in touch with Indonesia, however, was only part of Tan Malaka's work in this period. He threw himself into Profintern duties, and was asked to edit an English language journal for transport workers of the Pacific. This new area of responsibility at least had the merit of providing concrete tasks, which the Comintern assignment had evidently not done, but the problems were mainfold. To begin with, Tan Malaka spoke no English or Chinese, and typesetting facilities for roman characers were hard to come by in Canton. The autobiography describes in detail the difficulties he had to overcome. Evidently he did manage to publish at least one issue of the journal, but at the cost of his health.

In August 1924, no doubt prompted by his isolation in China and the realization of how little contact he could maintain with Southeast Asia, Tan Malaka appealed to the governor-general of the Netherlands East Indies to be allowed to return home on the grounds of ill health. The governor-general agreed, but imposed conditions so onerous that Tan Malaka decided not to return after all. This decision led to his remoteness from the PKI at a time when it began taking the fateful steps which led to its destruction in 1926–27.

At its December 1924 conference the party took stock of the situation. An increasingly repressive colonial government was not only restricting its expansion but actively dismantling its power base. Hampered by political restrictions, the party was less active than most members would have liked and so was beginning to lose the broad recognition it might once have had as the most radical nationalist party. Under these circumstances, the party decided on a change in course that it hoped would bring it rapidly to power. It began to prepare for an illegal existence, with the aim of launching a revolution in the short term. The party's democratic centralist structure was replaced by "federative centralism" and an isolated cell organization.

In response to the crisis in the PKI, Tan Malaka wrote his *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* (Towards the 'Republic of Indonesia'). This book, published initially in Canton in April 1925, contained an analysis of the current world situation, the strength of capitalism in general and of the Dutch imperialists in Indonesia in particular, and the current situation of the nationalist movement and the PKI. It contained severe criticism of the party's weaknesses, and presented a program and a list of demands to be struggled for in the immediate future, as well as charting the likely development of the Indonesian revolution. It was in this document that the major tenets of his thought were presented—tenets on the nature of Indonesian society, the likely course of the revolution, and the tasks of the party.

He expressed the view that the deepening economic crisis in the Netherlands offered opportunities for revolutionary action in Indonesia. He was convinced that sooner or later the

10. This was presented as a speech by Soekindar, *These bagi keada'an social dan ekonomi serta tjara bagi mengadakan organisatie dan tactic di Indonesie*. (Weltevreden: Hoofdbestuur PKI, [1924]).

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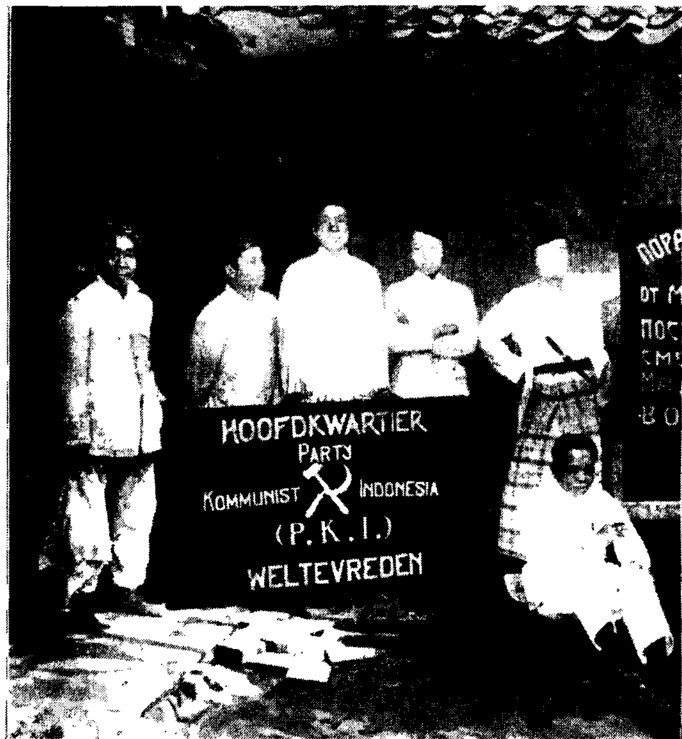
rival imperialisms of America and Japan would "settle with the sword which of them is the more powerful in the Pacific," but there was no certainty as to when the war would break out, nor how widespread it would become. The war would certainly present opportunities for revolution, but Tan Malaka recalled that World War I had not led to independence for the colonies. Whether the coming war would do so for Indonesia was not a foregone conclusion.[11]

There was little, however, that Tan Malaka could do from a distance, and in mid-1925 he decided that, though he might be excluded from the action in Indonesia, he might at least do useful work in the Philippines, since the climate and cultural environment would be considerably more hospitable. On 20 July, under the guise of a Filipino student returning from the United States, he arrived in Manila. Through contacts in the local nationalist movement he managed to find some income as a correspondent for the nationalist newspaper *El Debate*, of which Francisco Varona was editor. Probably it was Varona who assisted in the publication of the second edition of *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia,'* dated December 1925, and the publication in 1926 of another work, *Semangat Moeda* (Young spirit).[12] In his autobiography, Tan Malaka refers only to the nationalist leaders with whom he made contact—among others, Mariano de los Santos, José Abad Santos, and the labor leader Francisco Varona. No mention is made of people who later formed the Philippines Communist party, which many later observers have credited to Tan Malaka's influence.[13] There is some evidence that Tan Malaka did establish contact with at least the future PCP president Crisanto Evangelista, perhaps through Francisco Varona. Investigations of the extent to which Tan Malaka did reach and influence the Filipino left wing remains an area for future research by Filipino labor historians.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia around Christmas 1925, PKI leaders held a clandestine meeting in the Central Java town of Prambanan, where they decided to launch a rebellion within six months. Their decision followed severe restrictions on the party's activity, the exile of more party leaders, and a series of disastrous strikes, which led in turn to Dutch attacks on the trade union movement. The party now virtually abandoned public activity and clandestinely set out to stage the revolution, expecting assistance from Moscow. Although the date for the uprising was postponed, the decision was ratified by the exiled leadership of the party in Singapore without their consulting Tan Malaka, who was ill in Manila. This does not appear to be the consequence of an attempt to exclude Tan Malaka from the decision-making process, for when Alimin travelled to Manila in February 1926, he expected Tan Malaka's blessing for the endeavor.



from Blumberger, courtesy of Robert Cribb

PKI Headquarters, Batavia, 1925

Tan Malaka, however, was horrified at the plans. He told Alimin so, and began preparing a written argument against the project. His refutation grew to become a major theoretical statement. He outlined his objections as "Theses," detailing the errors such a course entailed, and repeating that the course to revolution lay not in putsches but in developing mass action and self-organization in the proletariat and peasantry. He projected what he regarded as the likely course that the revolution would take—from trade union organization through economic and political strikes to a mass uprising against the colonial power. At the same time he discussed what he regarded as the current weak state of the party, and of the entire trade union and nationalist movements of Indonesia, then on the retreat in the face of government onslaught and repression. He dispatched Alimin to Singapore to report his views and to call an emergency meeting of the PKI leadership, which he would attend. After several months with no reply, Tan Malaka set out for Singapore, arriving on 6 May 1926, only to find that Alimin had not presented the theses, which were still hidden in the lining of his bag. Alimin himself had left with another party leader, Muso, some days previously, bound for Moscow to seek assistance in the form of arms—in their opinion the PKI's sole requirement for the rebellion. Subakat, the PKI representative in Singapore and the only leader still present, soon expressed his agreement with Tan Malaka, and they began to attempt to reverse the PKI's course of action.

It was at this stage that Tan Malaka wrote his next important work, *Massa actie* (Mass action), in which he developed in greatest detail his views on the nature of the Indonesian revolution and the course by which it should be advanced, namely the strategy of mass action. He also elaborated in more detail his views on the various currents within the nationalist

11. *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* (Canton, 1925) (not sighted), Indonesian translation circulated in stencilled form in the 1940s and published as *Menudju Republik Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Jajasan Massa, 1962).

12. *Semangat moeda* (Tokyo [i.e. Manila], 1926). Previously seen by Ruth McVey in the Documentatie-centrum voor Overzees Recht in Leiden, but subsequently missing.

13. See for instance A.B. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines: An Introduction*. (Manila: Ateneo, 1969), p. 15; F. Delor Angeles, "The Man Who Brought Communism to the Philippines," in the *Philippines Free Press*, 9 December 1961; Ramon C. Aquino, *A Chance to Die: A Biography of Jose Abad Santos* (Quezon City: Alemar Phoenix, 1967), p. 7.

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movement, and raised for the first time his views on a future socialist federation of Southeast Asian countries and northern Australia later developed as Aslia. The book was designed to counter the current course of the PKI and was intended for distribution inside Indonesia to win cadre to Tan Malaka's line.[14]

In the ensuing months Tan Malaka and Subakat won over a number of PKI leaders to their views. Some sections of the party realized their own unpreparedness for revolution and pulled back. Indeed the Central Committee itself, in Bandung, backed off somewhat, but failed to issue any express countermand of the original decision. The Comintern, meanwhile, turned down the request for assistance and authorization from Muso and Alimin on the grounds that conditions were unfavorable and on the suspicion that the party was in the hands of ultraleftist putschists. Muso and Alimin, however, still keen to launch the revolution, neglected to transmit this verdict to Indonesia, and in such circumstances the plans for rebellion were pushed along by the more eager sections of the party, particularly the Batavia branch. The uprising eventually took place in a limp and scattered fashion—in Batavia and Banten, West Java, on 12–13 November 1926, and in West Sumatra on 1 January 1927.

The Dutch authorities were now provided with the perfect excuse to mount an attack on the communist movement, the result of which was the elimination of the PKI as a major force in the nationalist movement until well after independence was declared. Following the uprisings several individuals were executed, thousands arrested, and 1,308 supposed Communists and their families were exiled to Digul prison camp in New Guinea.[15]

Tan Malaka's verbal and active opposition to the uprisings has provided the focus for much of the discussion of the rebellion and its failure, for while it is hard to imagine the revolt succeeding under any circumstances, Tan Malaka's own report on the situation in Indonesia itself had an effect on the outcome to the degree that it dissuaded individuals and sections from participating. Since it is impossible to know what would have happened had Tan Malaka not intervened, discussion has focused on the question of whether he was entitled to do so.

Although both Tan Malaka's friends and his enemies agree that he was the Comintern agent for Southeast Asia, considerable disagreement has persisted as to the extent of his authority and specifically as to whether he held the power to veto decisions made by communist parties in the area of his jurisdiction (which actually meant only the PKI, for no other Southeast Asian countries had established communist parties at that time). While claiming never to have exercised it, Tan Malaka insisted later that he had held the right of veto in regard to the sections: ". . . Comintern representatives had the right to propose, criticise and even to veto."[16] Later PKI commentators have held that Tan Malaka had no such veto power, thus justifying their disregard of his opposition to the 1926 rebellion.[17] Semaun, even at a time when he supported Tan Malaka's views, said to Ruth McVey that Tan Malaka did not hold the veto power.[18] The question will remain open to interpretation on the basis of recollection by the individuals involved until such time as documentary evidence becomes available (unless, of course, it was destroyed to remove traces of the Comintern appointing a "Trotskyist" and giving him veto powers). However, precedent certainly existed for such powers, as can be seen clearly in the case of Borodin and the other Comintern representatives over the Chinese Communist party. Even Van Ravesteyn in Holland, through the Netherlands Bureau of the PKI, exercised veto power over the Indonesian party.[19]

Whatever authority Tan Malaka may have had, however, his view was soon repudiated. By the time the rebellions broke out, Comintern policy was shifting in an ultraleft direction and the uprisings were hailed by the ECCI in a manifesto of 20 November 1926 as justification for the current line in China. It was important for the Stalin faction to find such justifications for its contention that revolution in the East was imminent. The Java uprisings occurred conveniently at the time of the ECCI 7th Plenum, where they were hailed and used against Trotskyist criticism of the Comintern's China policy.

After the failure of the uprisings had become incontrovertibly evident, the Comintern once again criticized the PKI, this time for being ill-prepared. This was the line taken in the ECCI through 1927 and up to the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928,[20] and has been used by PKI leaders who cite Tan Malaka's opposition as deliberate sabotage and the principal reason for the defeat.

The years following the failure of the uprisings are the most shadowy of Tan Malaka's career, yet also among the most important in understanding his philosophy. For it was in these years that he broke with the PKI and the Comintern and established his own leftist tradition. We know that Tan Malaka travelled to Bangkok at the end of December 1926, and that after gathering information on the extent of damage the PKI had suffered, he established with Subakat and Djamaluddin Tamim a new party, the Partai Republik Indonesia (PARI, or the Republic of Indonesia party) on 1 June 1927.

The exact nature of PARI, and what its founders intended it to be, remains shrouded in confusion. Most histories of the period neglect to mention PARI or give little more than the date and place of its founding.[21] PARI has been presented as a

14. *Massa actie* (Singapore, 1926) (not sighted), republished by Poestaka Moerba in 1947.

15. On the 1926-1927 rebellion see *The Communist Uprisings of 1926-1927 in Indonesia: Key Documents*, edited by Harry J. Benda and Ruth T. McVey (Ithaca: Cornell University, Modern Indonesia Project, 1960). The interpretation of the rebellions given here largely accords with that presented by Tan Malaka in the autobiography. For the official PKI view, see Alimin Prowirodirdjo, *Analysis* (Djogdjakarta: Agit-Prop CC PKI, 1947) pp. 14–17; and *Pemberontaken nasional pertama di Indonesia* / disusun oleh Lembaga Sedjarah PKI (Djakarta: Pembaruan, 1961), especially p. 122 ff., "Pengchianatan Trotskis Tan Malaka." See also Shelton Stromquist, "The Communist Uprisings of 1926-27 in Indonesia: a Reinterpretation," *Journal of South East Asian History*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (September 1967).

16. Tan Malaka, *Thesis* (Jakarta: Bagian Siaran Biro Agitasi-Propaganda D.P. Partai Murba, 1953), pp. 39–41. This work was written in June 1946 while Tan Malaka was in detention in Lawu.

17. Alimin, *Analysis*, p. 14.

18. McVey, *Rise*, p. 207.

19. Ibid., p. 206.

20. McVey, *Rise*, pp. 347–353.

21. See, for example, Bernhard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth*

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complete break from communism on the one hand, and as a rebirth of the crushed PKI on the other, but scarcely any shred of original documentation concerning the party remains except for the party statutes and manifesto.[22] One must reconstruct details from contemporary accounts (most often by hostile observers) and from latter-day recollection by the participants, aimed primarily at post-hoc rationalization of their actions and subsequent political developments.

The PARI Manifesto was drawn up in Bangkok prior to the establishment of PARI. It was written in Dutch by Tan Malaka and translated by Subakat.[23] No copies of this original version of the Manifesto have been found, and a summary of a May 1929 revision of the Manifesto is all we have. The Statutes on the other hand appear in the Dutch archives in full, with parallel Dutch and Indonesian texts. They say the party's aim is

> to achieve full and complete independence for Indonesia as soon as possible and thereafter to establish a Federal Republic of Indonesia on principles that accord with the country's economic, social and political conditions, with the customs and character of its inhabitants and which, furthermore, are designed to advance the physical and mental well-being of the Indonesian people.[24]

This statement of aims is nationalist in nature, and gives no overt support for socialism or communism. The nature of the state is not developed beyond this generalized picture (notable in hindsight for the federal principle it enshrined) and is singularly lacking in economic or political definition. However, the party structure outlined further in the Statutes follows a democratic-centralist model generally associated with communist parties, with members given freedom of discussion and persuasion before a decision is made, but then being obligated to work to implement decisions made, regardless of whether they opposed or supported that line. The Statutes make clear that PARI was to be independent of "leadership or influence from any other party or force, either within or outside Indonesia." While this is obviously a rejection of the policy of domination from Moscow to which the Comintern had degenerated by that time, there is in the Statutes no reference to communism, socialism, the PKI, or the world communist movement.

He played a pioneering role in projecting the unfolding of the Indonesian revolution and in outlining a strategy for the PKI to follow in order to make it successful. His work during the 1930s acted as a link between the ideas and objectives of the pre-1926 PKI and the physical struggle for independence some twenty years later. And his place in history is secure as a result of his role from 1945 until his death in 1949 as the most determined and uncompromising advocate of resistance and struggle for total independence.

The PARI Manifesto, on the other hand, is devoted to an analysis of the PKI errors of 1926–27 and the failure of the Comintern to provide leadership to the world communist movement. The Manifesto details the events leading up to the 1926–27 rebellion and Tan Malaka's attempts to reverse the adventurist strategy outlined at Prambanan on Christmas Eve, 1925. The first page, according to the Dutch summary, states that "it is of the greatest importance for the whole of the Indonesian people that the fighters for Indonesian national and social freedom have clarity regarding the inglorious collapse of the PKI." The Manifesto concludes that a new party must be established in the wake of the destruction of the PKI. There are "serious drawbacks" to re-establishing the PKI (although these drawbacks are not spelled out in the summary), and PARI is regarded as this new replacement for the PKI. As to the nature of PARI, the Manifesto goes much further than the aims outlined in the Statutes, describing the party as "proletarian-revolutionary," founded, however, "solely in the Indonesian interest." In all likelihood the Statutes were aimed at meeting government requirements for the legalization of political parties—this would explain the moderate orientation and elaborate membership requirements concerning such things as literacy and age.

The Manifesto's charge of Comintern misleadership, particularly in China, is of great significance, for Tan Malaka's autobiography is extremely weak on these points. Tan Malaka evidently regarded China as the pattern Indonesia would follow if a break with the Comintern were not made:

> Stalin would send his Borodins, van Galens, Cheka, military and other innumerable advisers to a revolutionary Indonesia. The Third International would have nothing to say on the choice of individuals, and everything would be kept secret from this body. It would be in the interests of imperialism and not of the Indies if Stalin were to make himself master of an eventual revolutionary movement in the Netherlands Indies.
>
> . . . the Moscow leadership is good only for Russia. With examples from Germany, Italy and Bulgaria, it is demonstrated that the Moscow leadership has failed for other countries. The entire Third

Century (London: Pall Mall, 1971), p. 118; "After the failure of the PKI coup, executed against his advice, he [Tan Malaka] had founded in Bangkok the Partai Republik Indonesia (PARI) to carry on underground work in the colony." Jan Pluvier, *Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistische beweging in Indonesie in de jaren 1930 tot 1942* (Bandung: Van Hoeve, [1953?]), p. 162: "He [Tan Malaka] established the Partai Republik Indonesia (PARI) in Bangkok and attempted to make contact with like-minded people in the archipelago. This underground and, for those involved, dangerous activity led to many arrests but to no more result than those made by the rest of the PKI." Kahin, *Nationalism*, pp. 85–86, contains somewhat more information on PARI. Leslie Palmier, *Communists in Indonesia*. (London, New York: Anchor, 1973), pp. 106–107, comes to the rather strange conclusion that "at least at its foundation, there was no sign that PARI was to be independent" of the Comintern.

22. These documents appear in several different locations in the Dutch archives. I have quoted from those attached to Mailrapport 446x/36, sent back to Holland from the Netherlands Indies Intelligence Service in 1936.

23. Subakat's interrogation report, Algemeene Politie, Afdeling Recherche, No. 206/3 S.R., 13 January 1930, attached to Vb. 6-8-1930 B 18, p. 4.

24. Article 2 of the PARI Statutes. However, Article 3 relates to the aims expressed in the Manifesto, and describes PARI as following a "revolutionary policy."

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> International is built up in the Russian interest, and young Eastern leaders, in particular, will be inclined to go over to blind worship and to lose their independence, with the result that they will lack contact with their own masses, who have different impulses from the Russian people.

While the analysis of the Comintern and the Moscow bureaucracy is based on that developed by Trotsky, Tan Malaka regards the schism between Stalin and Trotsky as something irrelevant for Indonesia: "The people of the Indies have enough to do without waiting around for the conclusion of the fight between Stalin and Trotsky." It must be borne in mind, though, that in 1929 it was not so evident that the Communist movement would split definitively between these two factions. While PARI criticized the role of the Third International in China, its position on the policies of 1917–1923 are not clear, and one cannot tell whether such lack of clarity has arisen in the course of the Dutch summarization of the Manifesto, or whether it was present in the original document.

PARI never became the mass party intended by its founders. Operating with its leaders out of the country and under immediate and constant threat of prosecution not only by the Dutch authorities but also by the other imperialist powers in Southeast Asia, PARI never grew into anything beyond a small propaganda group. So fearful of detection were its members and agents that they adopted clandestine methods of operation that placed almost insurmountable barriers between themselves and the people they were trying to reach.[25] The facts concerning PARI's limited size and scope of activity and the extreme paucity of documentation remaining give grounds for concluding, as most historians seem to have done to date, that PARI is worth but a passing mention in the history of the nationalist movement in Indonesia.

Yet this was an organization that managed to survive for ten years, in contrast to the comings and goings of the strictly "nationalist" parties.[26] It was an organization that the Dutch intelligence considered dangerous enough to keep hounding. It was an organization that managed to keep re-establishing its structure as its activists were arrested and sent into exile. Over a ten-year period PARI managed to keep cells alive in a number of centers. It did so not only in the main cities, but also in relatively small towns in Java (like Cepu, Wonogiri, and Kediri) and centers in the Outer Islands (Sungei Gerong [Palembang], Medan, Banjarmasin, and Riau).

A case can thus be made for seeing PARI as a "connecting link" between the pre-1926 PKI and the physical struggle for independence some twenty years later.[27] With the loss of PARI's program it is impossible to say how many of the demands made by the pre-1926 PKI were espoused by PARI, but it is clear that in the late 1920s it was the only political party to call, as the PKI had done, for immediate and complete independence. This was in sharp contrast to Sukarno's PNI (the Indonesian Nationalist party or Partai Nasional Indonesia) and Hatta's proposed party, whose programs did not even mention *Indonesia merdeka* (Free Indonesia).[28]

Although the creation of PARI was clearly Tan Malaka's work, there is remarkably little evidence, even in his own autobiography, of his continued active involvement in the party. Shortly after the founding of PARI, in August 1927, Tan Malaka returned to the Philippines to what he thought was a haven. However, the American authorities had been asked to look out for Tan Malaka by the Dutch, who were anxious to get him back in their hands for dispatch to the Digul concentration camp. Some few days after his return he was betrayed to the Philippine authorities and arrested as he left the offices of the newspaper *El Debate* on the night of 12 August 1927. Front-page headlines and lurid descriptions of the subversive activities of this "Javanese Red" were splashed across the reactionary press. This was the time of the executions of the American anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, and the press lost no time in linking the two cases as equally vile examples of extremism.[29] In fact, the only charges brought against Tan Malaka were related to illegal entry into the Philippines. It was his past that was being served up to arouse the indignation of the good colonials. Filipino nationalists rallied to his defense, insisting that he be granted political asylum, and calling for free access for all "Malays" to the Philippines. Two universities went on strike in solidarity, and members of the legislature launched a defense fund. Tan Malaka was defended in court by the veteran nationalist lawyer, Dr. José Abad Santos, who promised to take the case to the Philippines High Court or, if necessary, to the United States Congress. The campaign never reached these lengths, however, as Tan Malaka agreed to deportation in order to protect people who had helped him get false papers.

Throughout the following decade Tan Malaka was dogged by deportation, imprisonment, and illness. He was deported from the Philippines to Amoy in China, where, according to his own account, the Dutch were awaiting his arrival. With the help of the crew, who were connected to Tan Malaka's nationalist Filipino supporters, he managed to jump ship and avoid detection in Amoy before being taken for safekeeping in the village of Sionching.

At some stage over the next few years, possibly in late 1929, Tan Malaka moved to Shanghai. In August 1931 he met

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25. For a detailed account of PARI—its manifesto, statutes and its activities during the 1930s—see Helen Jarvis, *Partai Republik Indonesia (PARI): Was It 'the Sole Golden Bridge to the Republic of Indonesia?'* (Townsville: South East Asian Studies Committee, James Cook University, 1981) and Poeze, *Tan Malaka*, chapter 10, "De actie van de PARI (1927–1933)."

26. Perserikatan Nasional Indonesia founded 4 July 1927, name changed to Partai Nasional Indonesia May 1928, dissolved itself April 1931; Partai Indonesia (Partindo) founded 1 May 1931; various Golongan Merdeka groups founded during 1930; Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia (PNI-Baru) founded December 1931 and virtually ceased activity on arrest of leaders February 1934; Partai Indonesia Raya (Parindra) founded December 1935; Gerakan Rakyat Indonesia (Gerindo) founded May 1937.

27. "The establishment of PARI outside the country had considerable significance as a connecting link, and as a renewal of the struggle to overthrow Dutch imperialism." Suharsono Isnomo, "Perdjoangan politik Tan Malaka: suatu tinjauan tentang cita Tan Malaka dalam usaha pembentukan satu partai" (Thesis, Fakultas Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial, Universitas Indonesia, 1973), p. 43.

28. The PNI's program called for strengthening "the feeling of nationalism and Indonesian unity," while Hatta's INV called for "self-determination for the Indonesian people." John Ingleson, ***The Road to Exile: the Indonesian Nationalist Movement 1927-1934***. (Singapore: Heinemann for ASAA, 1979), pp. 55 and 25.

29. See for example "To Deport or Not to Deport," in *Manila Daily Bulletin*, 23 August 1927, and also its 17 August 1927 edition; "Minando la base," in *Philippines Herald* (Spanish-language section), 3 September 1927.

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From Album Perjuangan, *courtesy of Robert Cribb*

The outbreak of the Indonesian revolution, 1945

Alimin there and apparently agreed to work again for the Comintern, according to documents found by Harry Poeze in the Dutch archives (including a report from the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat). This period is a major lacuna in his autobiography, between the end of Volume Two (late 1929) and the beginning of Volume Three (mid 1932), and there are few sources to verify this meeting with Alimin and the agreement made. Poeze maintains that the lacuna is a deliberate omission made by Tan Malaka to cover up this turnaround from his previous position against the Comintern. But Malaka himself says that "in 1932 I still had the confidence of the Comintern" (*Thesis*, p. 44) and in his autobiography refers to "obligations that I had to carry out in India" (Volume II, p. 30). Alimin later claimed that Tan Malaka had placed himself outside the International by his opposition to the 1926–27 uprisings, and makes no reference to any meeting in 1931.[30]

The Japanese attack on Shanghai forced Tan Malaka to leave in September 1932. In the fighting he lost virtually all his personal possessions save the most important, his passport. (While he does not specify, it was presumably a pass he had obtained in China.) Tan Malaka arrived in Hong Kong at the beginning of October 1932, the first stop on his intended journey to India, but within days he was arrested.

He was held with another PARI comrade, Djaos, for several months, interrogated by British officials from Singapore, and finally deported without charges being filed. Tan Malaka hoped that "British justice" would allow him the right to travel to Europe and perhaps seek asylum in Britain, and his case was raised in Parliament by the Independent Labour MP James Maxton.[31] However, he was deported again to Amoy, to

30. On this issue see Poeze, *Tan Malaka*, p. 415–417; Alimin, *Analysis*, pp. 15–17. It might be noted that further confusion stems from Tan Malaka's alleged attendance at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928, where the Indonesian representative Alphonso was mistaken for him. McVey (*Rise*, p. 436, n. 18) refutes this, but it is still commonly asserted as fact. Bukharin's denunciation of Alphonso's comments on the Comintern draft program is the principal basis for the Trotskyist label so often attached to Tan Malaka. The problem of Tan Malaka's role in the Comintern is compounded by the listing of "Maloka" as being elected a candidate member of the ECCI in 1928, referred to in some sources as being from South Africa, but about whom I have been unable to find any information.

31. See Hansard, 14 February 1933. In an unnumbered secret dispatch dated 22 March 1933, Governor William Peel proposed amendments to the Hong Kong Deportation Ordinance, citing the "very notorious" Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh) and Tan Malaka. These "red communists" had not committed any extraditable offenses and so could not be sent back to their own countries. However, Peel maintained that it was no longer "possible to consider red communist agitators and political offenders against their own country only—the class to which British law has traditionally afforded asylum. 'Red Communism' has become a matter of international concern. . . ." (Foreign Office 372/2913/02762).

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From Album Perjuangan, courtesy of Robert Cribb

Tan Malaka's one-time military ally, General Sudirman

what he regarded as certain apprehension by Dutch officials.

Once more, however, he managed to elude arrest, and retreated again to the countryside of south China, this time to the village of Iwe, where he suffered a complete collapse cured only by traditional Chinese medicine and a long convalescence. Tan Malaka wrote that from 1932 to 1935 he lost contact with Indonesia altogether.[32]

In early 1936 Tan Malaka's health had recovered sufficiently for him to move into the city of Amoy, where he established a "Foreign Languages School." By August 1937, however, he had to move on as the Japanese southward march was well under way. He went via Hong Kong to Rangoon and then down through the Malayan peninsula to Singapore where he established an identity as a Chinese and got a teaching post first at a primary school and later at a high school.

When the Japanese occupied Singapore and the Dutch surrendered, Tan Malaka decided the time was right to return to Indonesia. He travelled to Penang and there boarded a small boat across to Sumatra, and by mid-1942 he had managed to get to Jakarta. He lived on the southern outskirts of the city for almost a year, surviving on his savings from Singapore, and writing what he considered to be his magnum opus, *Madilog* (Materialism-dialectics-logic), explaining these concepts and stressing the importance of analytical thinking in reaching valid conclusions.

Running out of money, and believing his cover to be less than secure, Tan Malaka applied for a job with the Social Welfare Agency, describing himself as an Indonesian who had worked as a clerk in Singapore. He was sent to work in the office of a coal mine in Bayah on the deserted southern coast of West Java where he witnessed the plight of forced laborers mining and building a railway. He became involved in a number of voluntary social welfare groups trying to alleviate their plight, and in the final months of the occupation was chosen as a delegate from the West Java area to meetings called by young nationalists in Jakarta, where he made some tenuous links with the new nationalist and revolutionary youth, then on the brink of declaring independence.

After independence was declared on 17 August 1945 in the wake of the Japanese surrender, Tan Malaka came out of hiding, meeting some of his generation and the new revolutionary youth, and using his own name for the first time in twenty years. Still feeling his way and wishing to get an assessment of the revolutionary potential and spirit of the people, Tan Malaka left Jakarta for a tour of Java, arriving in Surabaya at the time of the fierce fighting against the British troops in November. It was the experience of those weeks in West, Central, and then East Java that brought home to Tan Malaka the contradiction between the willingness of the common people to risk all in the fight for independence, and what he saw as the pusillanimous attitude of the leaders in Jakarta engaged in negotiations with the Dutch for a compromise settlement of the dispute. Those leaders believed that the weakness of the new republic demanded extensive concessions to the Dutch and to Western capitalism in general in order to obtain recognition. Tan Malaka, however, was convinced by his journey that the time had come for wholehearted revolutionary action, and he set about organizing it.

In December 1945 Tan Malaka had discussions with a number of groups and individuals and drafted what he called a Minimum Program for the independence struggle. It was discussed in Purwokerto on 4–5 January 1946 at the Founding Conference of the Persatuan Perjuangan (PP or Struggle Front), a coalition of virtually all radical nationalist organizations in the Republic on Java, and it was adopted at the Second Conference on 15–16 January in Solo. Tan Malaka here remained true to his commitment to a national struggle incorporating all progressive-revolutionary forces, the same policy he had insisted on in 1926. Ironically the PKI was one of the few parties not to join the Persatuan Perjuangan, for it held at the time that Indonesia's stage of historical development demanded the consolidation of the bourgeois democratic revolution, even at the cost of stifling social revolutionary forces. The Persatuan Perjuangan immediately posed a head-on challenge to the government, both because it criticized the very basis of government policies and because of its immediate popularity. It was joined by 141 organizations in the first weeks, and it received significant support from the Republican army, especially from its commander, General Sudirman. The conflict between the two positions of *diplomasi* (diplomacy) and *perjuangan* (struggle), as represented by Tan Malaka, appeared at its sharpest at the February meeting of the Republican proto-parliament or Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat (KNIP, or Central Indonesian National Committee).

32. Tan Malaka, *Thesis*, p. 44.

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At this meeting there was a very real possibility that the Persatuan Perjuangan could become the government. The KNIP had endorsed the PP line and Prime Minister Syahrir had resigned. President Sukarno, however, was unwilling to authorize formation of a government on the basis of the Persatuan Perjuangan Minimum Program, and Tan Malaka was unwilling to settle for anything less. Tan Malaka, moreover, was incapable of pushing home his advantage and ousting Syahrir because of the fragility of the united front formation he had established—how could a government be formed from a group of parties which, for all their unity of purpose on the issue of struggle, had many different views on domestic policy? As it happened, Syahrir was reappointed cabinet *formateur* by Sukarno and, on forming his new government, was in a much stronger position to move against Tan Malaka.

On 17 March, following the Fourth Conference of the Persatuan Perjuangan in Madiun, Tan Malaka and other leaders of the Persatuan Perjuangan were detained. Initially a pretext was made that they were being summoned to Yogyakarta to parley with Sukarno. It soon became clear, however, that they were under forcible detention, and most of them languished in jail for two-and-a-half years. Several of Tan Malaka's more prominent supporters who avoided detention at this stage were picked up later, after they formed a group which attempted on 3 July 1946 to pressure Sukarno into adopting policies closer to those of the Persatuan Perjuangan. Tan Malaka was never brought to trial or even charged with committing an offense, although the 3 July Affair was used by the government as reason to continue his detention and to launch a major propaganda campaign against him as having tried to overthrow the government in "the Tan Malaka coup de'état."[33]

During his detention Tan Malaka continued writing in defense of his political stand, producing both newspaper articles and his books *Rentjana Ekonomi* (Economic plan), *Thesis* and *Gerpolek* (Guerrilla struggle-politics-economics).[34] The *perjuangan* forces, though severely weakened, maintained their opposition to the policy of *diplomasi* followed by successive governments. In particular, they opposed the Dutch-Indonesian agreements of Linggajati (November 1946) and Renville (January 1948), which they regarded as sellouts that weakened and disoriented the struggle for total independence.

In 1948 pro–Tan Malaka ex-leaders of the Persatuan Perjuangan established the Gerakan Revolusi Rakyat (GRR, or People's Revolutionary Movement) as a front of parties opposing the Renville Agreement.[35] One of the precipitating factors in the establishment of this front was the PKI's shift in line during 1948 from all-out support of Renville, and the Amir Syarifuddin government that had brought it about, to opposition to the new Hatta government that was implementing it.[36] Since from 1945 on the PKI had been one of the staunchest supporters of the policy of negotiation, it was profoundly distressing for the PP leaders to see the PKI endeavoring to present itself as the leader of opposition to the Renville agreement which its own party member, Amir Syarifuddin, had signed.

Nonetheless, the rift between the two was by no means absolute. When Muso, former PKI leader from the 1920s, unexpectedly arrived back in Indonesia from Moscow in early August 1948, and immediately set to accentuating the leftward turn taken by the PKI against Renville and towards the policy of *perjuangan*, the pro–Tan Malaka newspaper *Moerba* appeared on 14 August with a banner headline reading "Welcome Comrade Muso!," maintaining that Muso's new fighting policy for the PKI proved that Tan Malaka and the GRR were following the correct communist line, as opposed to the previous soft, traitorous and even "Trotskyist" line of the PKI. It is hard to say whether they really expected Muso to join forces with them, or whether this was merely a propaganda ploy, but Muso had no such course of action in mind. He responded to the advance by denouncing Tan Malaka as a traitor and a Trotskyist since 1926.[37]

In an apparent attempt to fend off the growing influence of the PKI as dissatisfaction with Renville mounted and Muso's popularity grew, the government released most of the 3 July detainees on 17 August. Tan Malaka himself was at long last

33. On the events between the Proclamation of Independence on 17 August 1945 and the 3 July 1946 Affair, including Tan Malaka's role, see Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972); George McT.Kahin, *Nationalism and revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952); Anthony J.S. Reid, *Indonesian National Revolution 1945-50* (Hawthorn, Vic.: Longman, 1954); and A.H. Nasution, *Sekitar perang kemerdekaan Indonesia*, 11 vols, (Bandung: Disjarah-AD dan Angkasa, 1973–1976).

34. These included: *Retjana ekonomi*—([Jogjakarta: Badan Oesaha Penerbitan Indonesia, 1946], also published in Surakarta: Badan Penerbit Indonesia, [1946]); *Thesis* (Djakarta: Moerba, 1946, also published [Djakarta: s.n., 1946] and Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1953); *Ulang tahun pembubaran Persatuan Perdjuangan* (stencil) (Djakarta: Naifosta, [1947?], also published [Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948?]); *Centreent marschieren vereint schlagen* (stencil written 6 May 1948 [Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948]); *Gerpolek* (written 17 May 1948 ([Medan?: Badan penerangan Divisi IX Banteng, 1949], also published Djakarta: [Jajasan Massa], 1964, and excerpts translated into English as "The partisan: his military, political and economic struggle," in *Fourth International*, September-October 1951); "Pandangan dan langkah Partai Rakjat" (stencil, written 31 July 1948 [Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948?]). A series of articles by Tan Malaka under the names A.R. Dasoeki, A.R. Dasuki and Dasuki appeared in the newspaper *Moerba* throughout 1948, including: "Demarkasi revolusi" on 30 March, 1 April and 3 April 1948; "Sambutan Murba" on 11 and 13 April 1948, also published Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, (1948?); "Murba Indonesia, insaflah kamu!" on 19 April 1948; "Hukum revolusi" on 26, 28, 29 and 30 April 1948, also published (Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948?); and 'Belantik Sapi di Kaliurang' final installment on 17 June 1948 (earlier issues missing from collection of Perpustakaan Negara in Yogyakarta).

35. While Kahin (*Nationalism*, p. 266) gives June 1948 as the date of the establishment of the GRR, and Nasution (*Sekitar*, Vol. 7, p. 111) gives April 1948, the newspaper *Moerba* refers to the body as early as 19 February 1948.

36. The history of the PKI in the immediate postwar period has not yet been studied in depth in the way that the party of the early 1920s was studied by Ruth McVey, and the later periods by Donald Hindley (*The Communist Party of Indonesia 1951-1963*. [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966]) and Rex Mortimer (*Indonesian Communism under Sukarno* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974]). For some discussion of the shifting positions and leadership of the PKI during the period 1945–1949, see Anderson, *Java*, pp. 216–219 and 343–347; Palmier, *Communists*, pp. 116–145; Arnold Brackman, *Indonesian Communism*, (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 44–136; Kahin, *Nationalism*, pp. 158–161 and 256–303. For an overview of literature on the PKI see F. Tichelman, *The Communist Party of Indonesia: a Bibliographical Impression of the Main Trends* (Townsville: South East Asian Studies Committee, James Cook University, 1980).

37. *Guntur*, 31 August 1948, reported Muso's words to this effect during a press conference held in Yogyakarta, 22 August 1948, and responded to in *Moerba*, 28 September 1948, "Siapakah sesungguhnja Trotskyist?" See also Soerjono, "On Musso's return," *Indonesia*, no. 29 (April 1980).

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restored to freedom on 16 September. The government was interested in developing an alternate left-wing pole to undermine the PKI, and the GRR thus became willy-nilly an ally of the pro-diplomacy government in its political struggle with the now pro-*perjuangan* PKI.

Meanwhile the polarization between the government and the PKI became increasingly acute, and armed clashes between units attached to both sides broke out in Solo and then Madiun in September 1948. On 19 September Sukarno made a fiery radio address attacking the PKI for "attempting to seize our beloved Indonesia," and asking the people to choose between him and Muso. Muso, never one to mince words, replied in kind, saying: "Sukarno-Hatta, slaves of the Japanese and America! Traitors must die!"[38]

For all its newly-acquired pro-*perjuangan* credentials, the PKI did not receive the support of the people. The Madiun uprising was quickly isolated and then routed, the leaders escaping to the hills with troops in hot pursuit. Skirmishes continued until the Dutch attack in December, but the rebellion was crushed within days and a generalized anti-Left sentiment dominated the government.

Tan Malaka's autobiography ends before Madiun, but he introduces Volume III with a postscript concentrating on the affair. Characterizing it as a "repeat of the Prambanan putsch of 1926," Tan Malaka outlined the multiple errors the PKI made in taking such an action. While opposing the PKI, however, Tan Malaka stated his refusal "to be used as an instrument to crush Muso's PKI by this government, which for two-and-a-half years had let us rot in all kinds of jails" (Volume III, p. vii). It is interesting in retrospect that he appears to accept unquestioningly the government's view of Madiun as a conscious putsch by the PKI, and does not entertain the possibility, argued strenuously by later PKI leaders, of provocation or precipitate action by second-echelon leaders.

Despite Tan Malaka's misgivings about becoming a tool of the Hatta government, the GRR and many of Tan Malaka's followers were not so reluctant to take up arms against the PKI, and were widely reported as participating in the fighting. Major Sadaruddin in particular, with whom Tan Malaka was later to become closely involved, led one of the principal assaults on the city of Madiun and pursued the fleeing PKI leaders into the mountain areas of East Java.

The destruction of the PKI, however, left Tan Malaka as the foremost exponent of the *perjuangan* line and, after the government had recaptured Madiun and wiped out the PKI, Tan Malaka proceeded once again to voice his criticism of the government's policies. His position had a certain attraction at that time, for a second Dutch attack on the Republic was indeed becoming more likely as the Renville agreement proved ever more unworkable. His position was likely to be particularly attractive to a number of PKI members, and to many sections of the PKI-dominated Front Demokrasi Rakyat (People's Democratic Front) which had opposed the Madiun uprising, and which were probably quite open to joining a strong party that was oriented to pursuing the politics of *perjuangan* within a left-wing framework. On the other hand, it is obvious that the post-Madiun atmosphere was scarcely conducive to the construction of a left alternative to the Republican leadership, and the vehemence of the PKI opposition and slander regarding Tan Malaka must have made it impossible for many former PKI members to consider joining forces with him under any circumstances.

This last possibility of a reconciliation between Tan Malaka and the PKI disappeared on 7 November 1948, the anniversary of the Russian revolution, when various pro–Tan Malaka groups and parties established the Murba (Proletarian) party with 80,000 members. Tan Malaka held the honorary position of "Promotor."[39] Partai Murba had both a Minimum and Maximum Program. The Minimum Program followed that of the old Persatuan Perjuangan, with a few amendments to conform to current conditions. The Maximum Program was a completely new feature, and chartered a course towards construction of a socialist Indonesia. In structure, Partai Murba was to be democratic-centralist.[40]

Throughout October and November Tan Malaka and the Partai Murba stressed the likelihood that the Dutch would launch a second attack, which was expected around 20 November. They repeatedly criticized the government for maintaining a position of absolute confidence in the Dutch and believing that they would not attack while negotiations were in progress. The party remained unable, however, to transform itself from a minor party of the Left into the major political opposition, and Tan Malaka eventually decided to leave Yogyakarta, both in the interest of self-preservation and in following his own prescription to build up resistance and an infrastructure outside the capital.

He had been urged ever since his release from jail in September to retreat to the security of West Java under the protection of the Lasykar Rakyat Jawa Barat (West Java People's Militia), which had long been one of the strongest supporters of his policies of *perjuangan*. Pressures came from many sides, however, and eventually he decided to go to East Java—to the Solo River Valley, which he had identified in 1924 as the center on whose survival rested the fate of the Indonesian revolution. Accompanied by thirty-five guerrilla fighters, Tan Malaka left Tugu station, Yogyakarta, bound for Kediri, East Java.[41]

By the time of the Dutch attack on 19 December 1948, however, Tan Malaka had made little progress towards achieving his goal of a coordinated guerrilla force. Sukarno decided tactically it was best to allow the government to be captured. Nominal power was transferred to an Emergency Government in West Sumatra, and five ministers and a number of military leaders who refused to surrender fled from Yogyakarta in various directions, and offered sporadic and largely uncoordinated guerrilla resistance. Tan Malaka's old ally, General Sudirman, was now increasingly suspicious of all politicians, and was in any case not only ill but increasingly eclipsed by younger Dutch-trained officers.[42]

38. Kahin, *Nationalism*, p. 294, quoting from *Front Nasional*, 20 September 1948.

39. *Peranan gemilang Murba Indonesia dalam revolusi kemerdekaan: sekitar sedjarah partai Murba* / disusun oleh Biro Agit/Prop, Dewan Partai, Partai Murba (Djatinegara: Edie, 1959), p. 33.

40. See Tan Malaka, "Keterangan ringkas tentangan maximum program," typescript, (Djakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948?); Partai Murba, *Anggaran dasar Partai Murba* and *Anggaran rumah tanggah Partai Murba*, typescript.

41. Djamaluddin Tamim, "Dua puluh satu tahun kematian Tan Malaka," bahagian I-IV, Feb-June 1970, typescript, Part I, p. 9.

42. I have not seen any detailed analysis or assessment of Sukarno's policy of

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It was under these circumstances of a virtual collapse of the Republican government in the face of the long-expected Dutch attack that Tan Malaka made a speech on Radio Kediri on 21 December 1948. While the alleged contents of the speech were used, both at the time and subsequently, by opponents of Tan Malaka as another example of his attempting to seize power, most of the evidence suggests otherwise. A press statement from the Republican delegation in Jakarta was quoted by the U.S. consul, Charles A. Livengood, in a report transmitted to Washington on 23 December 1948:

> Tan Malaka strongly condemned the policy of negotiations pursued respectively by Sjahrir—resulting in the conclusion of the Linggardjati Agreement which eventually led to colonial war I [i.e. the First Dutch Military Action] [, which] was started on July 21, 1947; by Sjarifuddin—of which the outcome was the Renville Agreement—and by Hatta who continued Amir's inheritance and the ultimate result of which was colonial war II.
>
> He further urged the Indonesian people always to keep in mind the Independence Proclamation of August 17, 1945, and the sacrifices of lives and properties given by the Indonesian people for that purpose. "For that reason, we must carry on the struggle," thus said Tan Malaka.
>
> In conclusion, Tan Malaka gave the following advices:
>
> (1) To annul all inventions as Linggardjati, Renville and Hatta's aide memoire.
> (2) To root out all puppet states created by the Dutch with the help of their henchmen.
> (3) To recapture every patch of ground occupied by the enemy's troops.
> (4) To seize all foreign property.
> (5) To restore self-confidence and annihilate all fifth columnists.
> (6) To ignore all truce regulations.
> (7) To reject any negotiations if not based on complete independence as proclaimed on August 17, 1945.
> (8) To unify all parties and fighting organizations and maintain the people's army.[43]

To those who still held out for the line of compromise and negotiation, and who regarded the United Nations as their only hope for salvation, this speech by Tan Malaka's was treasonous. As a result of an order issued by the military governor of East Java, Tan Malaka was seized and summarily executed, most likely on 19 February 1949.[44]

Tan Malaka's followers in the Murba party proved no more able than he had been to construct a viable party. One group continued its opposition to the terms of the independence agreement by launching a guerrilla struggle against the republic in West Java. Some members of this group later became close to Sukarno under Guided Democracy, though they did so as individuals rather than as party representatives. One strand, the Angkatan Komunis Muda (AKOMA, or Young Communist League), apparently did retain a revolutionary approach up until 1965, when it was banned, and in 1956 was represented by its leader, Ibnu Parna, at the World Congress of the Fourth International. Another group allowed their opposition to the PKI to so dominate their outlook that they were prepared to abandon all pretense of Marxism and embrace the New Order; one of these, Adam Malik, even served as Suharto's foreign minister and later as vice-president. In this capacity he was portrayed by some as representing the social conscience of the regime, but it can equally be argued that he gave a much-needed Left or liberal cover to the repressive policies pursued by the military.

Although the legacy of Tan Malaka petered out in this fashion and although he has been vilified by both Left and Right, Tan Malaka's contributions to the development of the Indonesian revolution were substantial. He was an educator and contributed to breaking the debilitating and suffocating role of the Dutch colonial education system in his country. He was also one of Indonesia's first and most original Marxist theorists, laying out a basic Marxist analysis in the 1920s, developing it in greater detail in the 1940s, and popularizing Marxist ideas during the independence struggle. He played a pioneering role in projecting the unfolding of the Indonesian revolution and in outlining a strategy for the PKI to follow in order to make it successful. His work during the 1930s acted as a link between the ideas and objectives of the pre-1926 PKI and the physical struggle for independence some twenty years later. And his place in history is secure as a result of his role from 1945 until his death in 1949 as the most determined and uncompromising advocate of resistance and struggle for total independence.

He had weaknesses. He lacked confidence and often failed to seize opportunities when they presented themselves (an ironic weakness in view of the accusations of adventurism). More fundamental, however, was his failure to understand the Leninist theory of the party. Tan Malaka's strategies certainly are predicated on the existence of a revolutionary party, but his actions belied that concern. His stress on a broad alliance of revolutionary-progressive forces overshadowed any attempt to build a vanguard party. In PARI in the 1930s one can see vacillation and uncertainty over the difference between the mass government, the united front, and the party itself. In the post-independence period, this weakness becomes more pronounced. While some of Tan Malaka's writings in 1945–46 allude to the existence of a successor party to PARI, there was no concrete expression of such an organization: no newspaper, no public statements, and no known members.

The Persatuan Perjuangan, that unwieldy coalition of 141 organizations, may have fulfilled the requirements for a national united front, but it was no substitute for an organized and disciplined party which might have seized the initiative in that time of revolutionary ferment. The result was the marginalization of Tan Malaka as a figure castigated by both Left and Right.

surrender, nor of the actual attempts to mount a coordinated resistance movement, but a graphic personal account by the deputy chief of staff, who fled Yogyakarta as the Dutch came in, is given in T.B. Simatupang, *Laporan dari Banaran*. (Jakarta: Pembangunan, 1961). Further details can be found in Kahin, *Rise*, p. 336; Reid, *National Revolution*, p. 219, and Nasution, *Sekitar*, Vol. 9, p. 207.

43. Charles A. Livengood (U.S. consul general in Batavia), Dispatch to Secretary of State, 23 December 1948, NARS Record Group 59, file 856D.00/12-2348, box 6293. This report tallies largely with the official Dutch report "Rede van Tan Malaka," Bijlage III to Regeerings Voorlichtingsdienst, Paleisrapport, Batavia, 22 December 1948.

44. For a discussion of the various theories surrounding the death of Tan Malaka see my "Postscript" to *Tan Malaka's "From Jail to Jail."*

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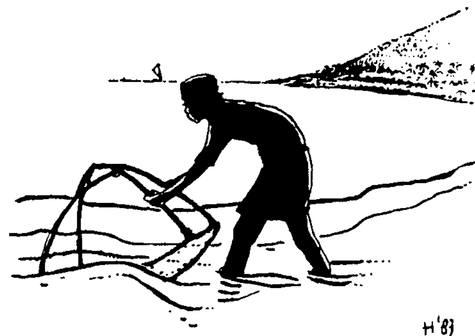

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Beyond Borders: Class Struggle and Feminist Humanism in *Banshū heiya*

by Susan Phillips

Introduction

Miyamoto Yuriko was born in Tokyo as Chūjō Yuri on 13 February 1899. Her father, Seiichirō, a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University, became one of Japan's leading modern architects; her mother, Yoshie, was the daughter of the famous moral philosopher Nishimura Shigeki, and a graduate of the aristocratic Gakushūin school. During Yuriko's early childhood, especially during the years when her father was away in England studying at Cambridge University, the Chūjō family income was modest. But after Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War and the stimulus it contributed to Japan's modernization, her family attained upper-middle-class affluence.

Yuriko excelled in Japanese literature and composition at what later became the middle school attached to Ochanomizu Women's University. Brought up in a supportive liberal home, she was somewhat unhappy with the restrictions that were imposed on her at this prestigious but conservative institution. Very interested in literature herself, Yuriko's mother encouraged her daughter's creative aptitudes. The Chūjō library was well stocked with the Japanese classics as well as the books of European art and literature that her father had brought home from England. What Yuriko could not find at home was available in the Ueno Library where she frequently went when she played truant from high school. Wide-ranging literary discussions and artistic endeavors were encouraged at home, reinforcing her sense of alienation from authoritarian educational and social institutions.

In 1916 Yuriko began studying English literature at Japan Women's University. But after the publication of her first novel, *Mazushiki hitobito no mure* (A group of poor people), the seventeen-year-old girl left school during her first term. The overnight success of this novel, thoughts of embarking on a serious literary career, and her deep sense of malaise with the school environment probably helped bring her to this decision.

Although she was brought up amid few material discomforts, Miyamoto Yuriko's early works deal with the poverty-stricken lives of the lower classes, landless peasants, and the vanishing race of aboriginal Ainu.[1] *Mazushiki hitobito no mure* is set in a Tohoku farming village where her paternal grandmother was a landowner and where Yuriko spent her summers as a child. The story of the Ainu, *Kaze ni notte kuru koropokkuru* (Koropokkuru riding the wind), was written after several months of research in Hokkaido where she had spent the first three years of her life. Both the White Birch Society (*Shirakabaha*), which gained prominence after 1910 with Mushanokōji Saneatsu at its head, and its offshoot, the Blue Stockings Association (*Seitosha*), in which Nogami Yaeko was active, influenced the humanistic concerns of these early works.

In the fall of 1918 Yuriko accompanied her father to New York, where she studied for a time at Columbia University. There she met Araki Shigeru, fifteen years her senior, who was a scholar of ancient Persian languages. Shortly after they married the following year, Yuriko returned to Japan to be with her mother who had fallen ill. Araki joined her in Japan six months later. This marriage—which ended in divorce five years afterwards—became the subject of her second major work, *Nobuko*, published in 1926. Yuriko's life with Araki proved a disappointment, since in temperament and outlook they were fundamentally incompatible. Romantic love, which she had hoped would provide the emotional and economic stability for her literary career, proved an illusion. Eventually she concluded that middle class marriage crippled rather than encouraged women's intellectual and spiritual growth.

1. See *Miyamoto Yuriko senshū* (Tokyo: Shin nihon shuppansha, 1968), 12 vols. for early works. See also Noriko Mizuta Lippit, "Literature, Ideology and Women's Happiness: The Autobiographical Novels of Miyamoto Yuriko," *BCAS* Vol. 10, No. 2 (April-June, 1978); and Brett de Bary, "After the War: Translations from Miyamoto Yuriko," *BCAS* Vol. 16, No. 2 (April-June, 1984).

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In terms of her career, marriage to Araki was detrimental, and her five marriage years were one of her most unproductive periods. Instead of writing, Yuriko became involved in philanthropic efforts, including relief work for victims of the Russian famine of 1922 and the Kanto earthquake the following year. Though politically uncommitted, she did make the acquaintance of a number of key people in the Japanese intelligentsia of the day who influenced her future political interests and writing career. One of these was the established writer Nogami Yaeko, who introduced her to Yuasa Yoshiko, a well-known scholar and translator of Russian literature. Following her divorce, Yuriko lived with Yoshiko, and during this period she completed *Nobuko*.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution in 1927, scholars and artists from around the world were invited to the USSR. Yuasa Yoshiko was among them and Yuriko decided to accompany her there, using the next three years to search for new directions. Embarking on an intensive study of Soviet society, the Marxist classics, and the new socialist literature, Yuriko was greatly influenced by her sojourn there. She was particularly impressed with the new role of women in the Soviet Union as it initiated its first Five-Year Plan. Equal rights, the protection of motherhood and children, the enthusiastic acceptance of women in the workforce, and the positive role of the state in universal education all became topics for her later essays on women's issues in Japan. Not only did the two women travel extensively throughout the USSR during their stay, but they also met Yuriko's family in Europe in 1929 where they visited the major urban centers. Firsthand exposure to the poverty of Europe's working class, the social unrest there on the eve of the great stock market crash, and the rise of fascism hastened Yuriko's acceptance of socialism and her commitment to political activism.

Two additional unrelated incidents strongly influenced her. Shortly before her departure for the Soviet Union, the novelist Akutagawa Ryūnosuke shocked Japan's intelligentsia by committing suicide. And before Yuriko joined her family in Europe, her younger brother, to whom she was very close, also committed suicide.[2] In these two deaths she saw the impasse of modern intellectualism and its defeat in the face of emerging historical currents. As she saw it, the solution lay in political action. In his last letter to her, Yuriko's brother wrote: "Feel no hatred toward anything." In her personal journal, Yuriko responded:

> On the one hand, this unforeseen death—symbolizing the bankruptcy of the age—and on the other, the new Soviet society that I observed ablaze and advancing day and night, opened my eyes. I discovered a meaning, a shape and a direction which I could link to the struggle I had previously waged alone. In political action, I attained a completely different perspective. As an artist, I will never abandon my uncompromising stance toward the present social system. I will never abandon my ability to hate.[3]

*Miyamoto Yuriko when she was a sixth grader.**

Thus resolved, Yuriko returned to Japan in late 1930 to participate in the ongoing workers' movement.

By 1930 the proletarian literary movement was reaching its peak, and the All Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts (NAPF)[4] had just been organized. The economic depression following the 1927 Japanese stock market crash caused a sharp increase in urban unemployment and the bankruptcy of the farming population. As elsewhere, the spread of Japanese worker-peasant movements was greatly influenced by the Russian Revolution. The proletarian literary movement was also radicalized by the periodic arrest and detention, under the infamous Peace Preservation Law, of communists and political activists after 1928, and it evolved from a broad united front into a highly politicized organization directly controlled by Moscow and the outlawed Japanese Communist party.

After joining NAPF in 1931, Yuriko began to write articles and essays introducing the new Soviet society to Japan. She was elected to the standing committee of NAPF and put in charge of the Women's Bureau of the Writers' League. In

2. As he stated in his suicide note, Akutagawa's reason for suicide was a vague feeling of unease about the future, aggravated by his own deteriorating emotional state. Yuriko's brother, Hideo, was still a student at the time of his death, but it is suggested in *Futatsu no niwa* that this sensitive and introverted young man was deeply disturbed by the increasing radicalization and polarization of society and, like Akutagawa, was overcome by intense feelings of unease about the future.

3. Miyamoto Yuriko, *Jihitsu nempu*, as quoted in Nakamura Tomoko, *Miyamoto Yuriko* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1973), p. 114. This and all subsequent quotations are my own translations.

*The three photos in this article are courtesy of Susan Phillips and are from Setouchi Harumi, ed., *Hi to moeta joryū bungaku*, vol. 1 of *Onna no isshō jinbutsu kindai josei shi* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1980), pp. 147, 175, and 178.

4. NAPF is abbreviated from the Esperanto translation Nippona Proleta Artista Federacio of *Zennihon musansha geijutsu renmei* as cited in George T. Shea, *Leftwing Literature in Japan* (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku, 1964), p. 200.

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October of that year NAPF was reorganized as KOPF (Japan Proletarian Cultural Federation),[5] and Yuriko joined both its central committee and its women's committee. She also became the editor of the new publication, *Hataraku fujin* (Working women) and joined the illegal Communist party, keeping her membership secret until after the Pacific War. As various organizational activities continued to occupy much of her time, her literary output remained relatively low.

Active in the major social and political movements of her day, Miyamoto's life was greatly changed and in many ways typified the challenges facing modern intellectuals. These concerns prompted most modern Japanese critics to look to her personal life for clues to explain her literary development. Although relatively ignored by literary critics before the war, Miyamoto's progressive anti-government activities made her the darling of post-war literary circles, particularly the left wing which made a strong comeback during the early years of the American occupation.

After joining the movement Yuriko met Miyamoto Kenji, whom she married in 1932. Yuriko was thirty-three years old at the time, and Kenji was a brilliant twenty-four-year-old economics graduate of Tokyo Imperial University. Yuriko, Kenji, and the proletarian writer Kobayashi Takiji became central figures in KOPF. But with the Manchurian Incident in the fall of 1931 and Japan's accelerated preparations for war, the government began vigorously suppressing political dissidents. In March 1932, a police roundup of leftists and social activists made life increasingly difficult for people connected with the worker and peasant causes. In April, Yuriko's activities in the proletarian literary movement led to her arrest and imprisonment for three months, and two months after their marriage, Kenji was forced underground. Attempting to destroy the proletarian literary movement and the Communist party which controlled it, the government initiated intensive anti-dissident measures. Yuriko was arrested again and Kobayashi Takiji was interrogated and murdered by the police. Kenji, a Communist party member, was sentenced to life imprisonment and remained incarcerated until the end of the Pacific War twelve years later.

Yuriko was never free from the threat of imprisonment. During her third detention in 1933, her mother fell seriously ill, and Yuriko was released to be at her deathbed. In 1935, she spent another seven months in jail, during which time her father died. Eventually she was tried for violations of the Peace Preservation Law but received only a four-year suspended sentence. This was probably because her Communist party membership remained a secret and also because her own health had so seriously deteriorated as a result of repeated internments that the government grew nervous about her possible death and martyrdom.

After the commencement of Sino-Japanese hostilities in 1937, members of the popular front were censored, and following the start of the Pacific War in 1941, freedom of speech for opponents of government policy was completely suspended. Yuriko therefore lost the right to publish until the end of the war. Imprisoned again in late 1941, she fell into a coma from extreme heat prostration the following summer, and given up for dead, she was released to her brother's home. She gradually improved, although her eyesight remained impaired for more than a year and by then her heart and liver were permanently damaged. Until her death in 1951, she never fully regained her health, and under such conditions writing became a perilous task.

Between 1932 and 1945 there were less than four years during which Yuriko was allowed to publish. Nevertheless, she continued to write. Her prison experiences were recorded in the novels *Senkyūhyaku sanjūninen no haru* (The spring of 1932) in 1933, and *Kokkoku* (Moment by moment) which was published posthumously. She also completed *Kowai no ikka* (The Kowai family) in 1934, and *Chibusa* (Breast) in 1935. In addition, she spent a great deal of time writing essays and articles on culture and society, writers and their works, women's issues, and literary criticism. Thousands of letters to her imprisoned husband also gave her an outlet for pent-up creative energies. A selection of these were published in 1949-50 under the title *Jūninen no tegami* (Twelve years of letters) and were considered by some critics to be literary works of merit.[6]

Unlike many communist writers of the period who recanted under government pressure or retreated into silence, Miyamoto Yuriko never succumbed to despair, nor did she abandon her "uncompromising stance toward the present social system." Her essay published in 1934, *Fuyu o kosu tsubomi* (The bud which survives winter), typifies her dogged attitude during the war years. Yuriko believed that like all winters this one would also eventually melt into a new spring, when the fragile buds of peace would blossom once again.[7]

The end of the Pacific War in August 1945 marked the beginning of the final stage in Miyamoto Yuriko's career. Political prisoners like Miyamoto Kenji were released and censorship was lifted. In a burst of energy Yuriko began working on *Banshū heiya* (The Banshu Plains), which appeared in August the following year, and *Fūchisō*, which was published that September. She also resumed her activities as an outspoken social critic and promoter of constitutional reforms and equal rights for women.

Yuriko's works were generally ignored before the war,

5. KOPF is abbreviated from the Esperanto translation Federacio de Proletaj Kultur-organizoj Japanaj of *Nihon puroretaria bunka renmei*, cited in Shea, *Leftwing*, p. 205.

6. Notable among these critics are Nakamura Tomoko and Honda Shūgo. See Nakamura, *Miyamoto*, p. 242 and Honda Shūgo, *Senji sengo no senkō-sha tachi* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1971).

7. Nakamura, *Miyamoto*, p. 170.

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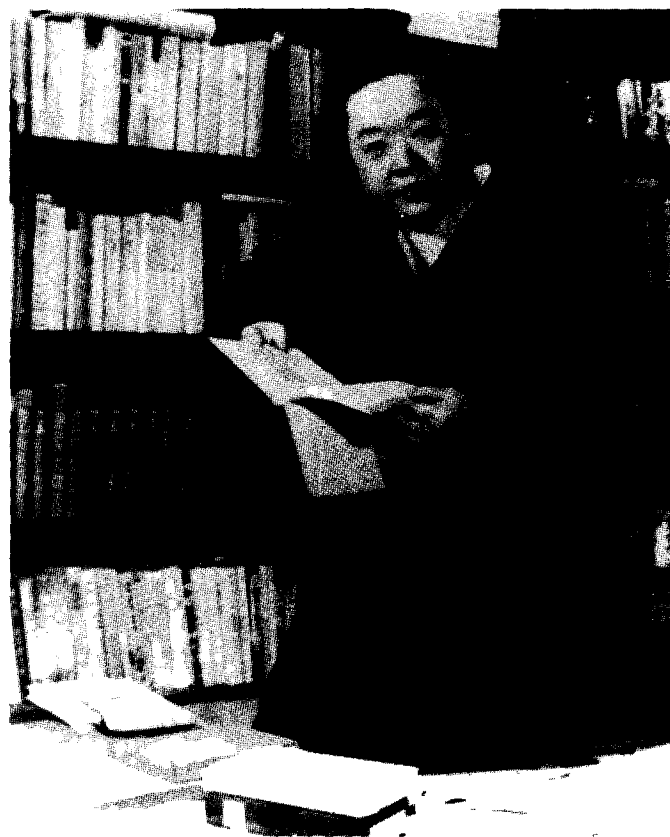
both by the mainstream and by left-wing critics who considered her pre-KOPF novels to be petite bourgeois in nature.[8] After 1946, however, her anti-militarist activities during the 1930s and 1940s made her an instant heroine, and *Banshū heiya* and *Fūchisō* won the first postwar Mainichi Cultural Award.

Her high-profile role in a number of new postwar political and cultural organizations and her continuing literary activities played havoc with the fragile state of Yuriko's health. Dangerously high blood pressure and deteriorating eyesight forced her to retire from public life in 1947 to devote herself to writing. *Futatsu no niwa* (The two gardens) was completed in January 1947, and *Dōhyō* (Roadsign), her last novel completed one month before her death, was written between October 1947 and December 1950. During this time she also wrote some two thousand pages of essays on culture, society, and women's issues. A pioneer in the field of women's issues, her *Watakushitachi no kensetsu* (Our foundation) is her most representative work on the subject in the postwar period. On 21 January 1951, the eve of her fifty-second birthday, Miyamoto Yuriko died suddenly of cerebrospinal meningitis.

Japanese literary criticism tends to place a disproportionate weight on autobiographical influence in an author's work, especially in the case of Miyamoto Yuriko where the autobiographical element is pronounced. Active in the major social and political movements of her day, Miyamoto's life was greatly changed and in many ways typified the challenges facing modern intellectuals. These concerns prompted most modern Japanese critics to look to her personal life for clues to explain her literary development. Although relatively ignored by literary critics before the war, Miyamoto's progressive anti-government activities made her the darling of postwar literary circles, particularly the left wing which made a strong comeback during the early years of the American occupation. Consequently, the novels which expressed the strongest opposition to the militarist regime and which were written during the years when intellectuals suffered the most oppression became the primary focus of critical attention. As a result, the novels written between 1934 and 1945 are given a disproportionate amount of importance in her total career, resulting in her being pigeonholed as a proletarian writer.

Miyamoto Yuriko did play an important role in the Japanese proletarian literary movement, but her involvement was not the result of a radical political or artistic departure from her earlier so-called humanist period. Her early childhood was influenced by the enlightened Meiji environment in which she grew up, and her formative years were influenced by the beginnings of Taishō democracy. Her attraction to the radical politics of the thirties and forties was a gradual process and, seen within the context of her earlier works, was a smooth transition from a generalized humanism to feminism and class struggle. Miyamoto Yuriko neither made a sharp turn toward the proletarian literary movement, nor did she drift away from it once it had disbanded. Her early literary development carried the seeds for future points of contact with this movement, and while her writing was influenced by it, her works reveal a consistent direction which challenges the label of "proletarian writer," a label which restricts and diminishes the scope of her



Miyamoto Yuriko at work on her book Dōhyō *in her study in 1949*

creative development and achievement. In my view, her feminist-humanist vision—passionate concern for the human potential in all people but particularly sensitive regarding women's problems—is as important as her support of collective social action.

One can see the cumulation of this development and achievement clearly in her important post–Pacific War novel, *Banshū heiya*. Since Miyamoto's novels are rarely analyzed from the standpoint of plot, characterization, or use of imagery, this paper will attempt to discuss these elements as they appear in *Banshū heiya*. *Banshū heiya* will be dealt with within the context of her total body of works.

Banshū heiya

Banshū heiya was the first novel Miyamoto Yuriko published after the Pacific War.[9] Despite her politicization in the proletarian literary movement during the 1930s and her subsequent distancing from the humanistic and feminist concerns expressed in such earlier works as *Nobuko*, Miyamoto never abandoned her commitment to women's issues. In *Banshū heiya*, feminist issues reemerge in altered form. This does not mean that the bitter experiences of the war years forced a rejection of earlier political and historical perspectives. Rather, in *Banshū heiya* one finds the merging of themes and

8. See Honda, *Senji sengo*, pp. 134–140, and Kurahara Korehito, *Kobayashi Takiji to Miyamoto Yuriko* (Tokyo: Tofusha, 1966), p. 121.

9. *Miyamoto Yuriko senshū*, IV, pp. 3-136.

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concerns found scattered throughout her earlier works, creating a new sense of balance and maturity. Miyamoto's somewhat strident treatment of class issues during the war years gives way to individual character development and a sensitive portrayal of women's issues. And a concern for technical complexity is revealed in her use of imagery.

In April, Yuriko's activities in the proletarian literary movement led to her arrest and imprisonment for three months, and two months after their marriage, Kenji was forced underground. Attempting to destroy the proletarian literary movement and the Communist party which controlled it, the government initiated intensive anti-dissident measure. Yuriko was arrested again and Kobayashi Takiji was interrogated and murdered by the police. Kenji, a Communist party member, was sentenced to life imprisonment and remained incarcerated until the end of the Pacific War twelve years later.

Banshū heiya opens on 15 August 1945, the day of Japan's unconditional surrender. Evacuated to the countryside during the fire bombing of Tokyo, Hiroko, the heroine, is living with her married brother in Fukushima. With the announcement of the war's end, Hiroko initially decides to visit her husband, Jukichi, who has been a political prisoner for the past twelve years. But on learning that her husband's younger brother is missing following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, she instead joins her grieving mother-in-law and sister-in-law in Yamaguchi Prefecture. When the occupation forces announce the release of political prisoners, she returns to her home in Tokyo to await Jukichi's homecoming. The novel ends during this final journey.

Imagery in *Banshū heiya* makes three major shifts: from darkness to light, from silence to sound, and from paralysis to movement. Unlike Miyamoto's earlier novels where characters display inflexible social and political attitudes, characters in *Banshū heiya* vacillate between inactivity and action, negativity and positivity, and silence and communication. During the final pages of the novel, action, optimism, and communication become the dominant motifs.

In the first scene in *Banshū heiya*, when Japan's unconditional surrender is declared, silence dominates:

> Hiroko was alarmed by the desolation of her surroundings at that moment. The intense heat that August afternoon made the air burn and the fields and mountains were enveloped by the endless heat. There was not a sound in the village. Not even the sound of coughing. Hiroko sensed this with her whole being. From noon until one o'clock on August 15, the entire Japanese nation held back its hushed voices as an enormous page of history was turned without a sound.[10]

Moved at first by the silence, Hiroko gradually becomes critical of this seeming passivity, epitomized by her brother, Yukio, who throughout the war maintained that, " 'For people like me who, ultimately, have no power to do anything, it's better to listen to what they tell us.' As the war progressed this side of Yukio's character became even stronger."[11] Yukio, however, is not the only person to have hidden behind silence. Travelling to her mother-in-law's, Hiroko notices how quiet the overcrowded train is, as if the nation had been rendered mute and insensitive by Japan's defeat. In contrast, her friends, the Ayusawas, with whom she stays in Tokyo en route, display rare signs of vitality. And in the evening, when she hears the sound of wooden sandals and bicycle bells as people make their way to a summer festival, Hiroko realizes how long it has been since she has heard these once normal sounds of city life.

During the next leg of her journey to Yamaguchi, Hiroko observes more socializing among the train's passengers than previously. But when damaged rail lines temporarily halt the train's progress, her fellow passengers retreat once again into gloomy silence. Only the Koreans in the adjoining car continue to talk and laugh among themselves. And the sound of a lone Korean woman, singing the song of Ariran, indicates to Hiroko that these Koreans, at least, have not lost hope.[12]

Hiroko arrives in Yamaguchi to find her sister-in-law, Tsuyako, changed by the news of her missing husband. She is sullen and quiet except when addressing other household members, when her voice takes on a bitter edge: "Instead of warmth which could move the heart of the person she addressed, her voice rang with a forced harshness."[13] When Hiroko leaves for Hiroshima to enquire after the missing brother-in-law's whereabouts, Tsuyako neglects to discharge her duty as his wife by seeing Hiroko off. Nevertheless, as the days pass and life returns to normal, Tsuyako's attitude gradually softens so that by the time Jukichi's release from prison is announced she is able to acknowledge Hiroko's good fortune.

During the final journey home to Tokyo, Hiroko's train passes many towns and villages ravaged by floods: "Not a sound could be heard. Flooded by an expanse of muddy water, the deserted scene spoke of the extent of the inhabitants' despair."[14] Throughout *Banshū heiya*, silence is evocative of Japan's despair and its sense of helplessness in defeat. Gradually, however, this silence is broken: by the sounds of children at play, by the singing of Koreans returning home, and by individuals who are eventually able to face the future. By the novel's end travellers talk unreservedly with their neighbors, Koreans whistle and sing, and even the grinding noises from the wheels of the horse-drawn carts hitting the ruts in the road create a sense of rhythm and harmony which was absent at the beginning of the story.

Images of light and darkness are used in a similar way in character development. *Banshū heiya* begins in the evening. Despite the end of the wartime blackout, Hiroko's brother and sister-in-law are reluctant to turn on the electric lights. But

10. Ibid., p. 10.

11. Ibid., p. 11.

12. Nym Wales and Kim San, *Song of Ariran* (San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1941). See p. 56 for an English translation of the text of this song. Also "Prologue," pp. 57–61 for a discussion of the significance that this song has held for Koreans for more than three hundred years.

13. *Senshū*, IV, p. 60.

14. Ibid., p. 116.

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when they finally overcome their initial hesitation, "the brightness after so long made the worn corners of the house come alive again . . ."[15] This scene is later contrasted with the Ayusawas' decisiveness, reflecting Hiroko's critical attitude toward her brother's family:

> When it became permissible to brighten the lights at her younger brother's house where Hiroko was staying, Yukio, as the head of the household, haltingly brought out only as many white ceramic light shades as were absolutely necessary. After Sae dusted them off, Yukio replaced the old ones with them. The blackout shades were tossed down by the packing crates in the storage room. And that was that. The Ayusawas had not dealt with the light shades in their living room in this way. Husband and wife together remodelled the shades originally designed to obstruct light to give off more light. It was a trivial thing, but Hiroko, who had seen virtually everything in her environment changed by external forces, either unknowingly or mechanically, found it refreshing that the Ayusawas, who could see changes coming, had decided to make new light shades of their own design.[16]

The movement from darkness to light is repeated in other scenes as well. During Hiroko's first trip by train to her mother-in-law's, the gloomy carriage in which she is riding is contrasted with the brightness and vitality of the next car from which the sounds of Koreans' laughing and singing can be heard: "There was an inexpressible sense of life's richness in their joyful spirit which filled the darkness."[17]

Later, Hiroko arrives at her mother-in-law's home to find it dark and gloomy. But when she leaves to return to Tokyo, she notices a small new window in the front door. The light trickling in from it suggests the beginning of new hope in their lives. On her final journey back to Tokyo, the train is forced to stop in the dark and rain because of extensive flooding. But after it leaves Himeiji the weather improves and warm autumn sunshine continues until the novel's end. The final scene is set on the Banshū Plains bathed in sunlight where the cheerful songs and energetic footsteps of the returning travellers echo hope and optimism.

During her involvement in the proletarian literary movement, Miyamoto Yuriko's characters were divided into well defined opposing groups whose political stances and attitudes were relatively inflexible. Passive characters, usually those portrayed as politically unaware, remained inactive, while workers and political prisoners representing the proletarian vanguard remained steadfast under pressure, their sense of commitment to the cause never shaken. In *Banshū heiya*, however, characters from a variety of political and socioeconomic backgrounds are given the opportunity to change their outlooks. Perhaps because of the personal trauma she experienced during the war years, Miyamoto Yuriko realized that weakness and hesitation exist in everyone—regardless of social class or gender. Moreover, realizing the price the Japanese nation had paid for its passivity, she is restrained in her criticism, preferring to portray people as capable of effective social transformation. While characters in *Banshū heiya* are initially passive and despairing, they eventually embrace hope and change, a shift in attitude reflected in the movement of imagery from silence and darkness to light and sound.

Paralysis and movement are used in a similar way to develop thematic elements. On the day of Japan's surrender, the Tohoku village where Hiroko is living is described in the following way: "From noon until evening on August 15th, and even after darkness had finally fallen, the paralyzed stillness of the entire village remained unchanged."[18] Only after two or three days does the village begin to show signs of stirring:

> On the night of the 15th when Hiroko went for a bath, Jinsuke and his son, clad only in loincloths, sat by the summer hearth where the stumps were burning low. His wife, Otome, wore only a skirt after the bath. Their heads hung down in fatigue. But recently their appearance had changed. They seemed more alert, they moved with agility, and when night fell father and son could be seen pulling their heavy wagon into the darkness of the cedar trees.[19]

While she prepares to leave Tohoku for Yamaguchi, even Hiroko's brother and his wife become more physically active. But it is the children who have changed the most. Throughout the war, normal childhood activities had been severely disrupted by the tyranny of the constant air raid sirens. With the arrival of peace, days of uninterrupted enjoyment stretch before them.

Imagery in* Banshū heiya *makes three major shifts: from darkness to light, from silence to sound, and from paralysis to movement. Unlike Miyamoto's earlier novels where characters display inflexible social and political attitudes, characters in* Banshū heiya *vacillate between inactivity and action, negativity and positivity, and silence and communication. During the final pages of the novel, action, optimism, and communication become the dominant motifs.

Crowded with demobilized soldiers and passengers who appear to be in a state of shock following Japan's defeat, the Tokyo-bound train is described by Hiroko as a "rout train." But after changing trains in Tokyo for Hiroshima, she notices changes in the attitudes of the occupants:

> Although it had only been three days since the surrender, this train which had passed through the capital and was heading along the Tokkaido road was no rout train. The aftermath of August 15th had entered a second phase and travellers appeared to be moving again. This time they were not abandoning their homes, making off with anything that could be carried. The feeling was that these people had tasks to perform at the journey's end which were in keeping with Japan's new circumstances.[20]

But not all Japan is on the move. Arriving at her mother-in-law's in Yamaguchi, Hiroki finds the village still in a state

15. Ibid., p. 16.
16. Ibid., p. 32.
17. Ibid., p. 46.
18. Ibid., p. 11.
19. Ibid., pp. 18–19.
20. Ibid., pp. 39–40.

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of shock. No vehicles or pedestrians are to be seen on the streets and no one greets her at the door. When the village is hit by a flood, the inhabitants mobilize to save their belongings. But Hiroko finds the most dramatic change in people during her return trip to Tokyo. Until this point in the novel, movement is only sporadic, typified during the first stretch of her journey by the train's lurching progress as it limps along the damaged rail lines. Like the train, Hiroko and many fellow passengers are not in perfect physical shape. Hiroko has weak legs and her companion has glaucoma, but somehow they manage to help each other walk through the evening rain to the next town where another train awaits them. Gradually "they overcome each succeeding obstacle and head for Tokyo, getting nearer with every step."[21] By the end of *Banshū heiya*, the entire nation appears to be moving: "The horse-drawn carts rumbled along the straight line of the national highway toward their destination . . . All of Japan was moving like this."[22]

Although passivity and action had been used to define the political stance and attitudes of characters as far back as Miyamoto Yuriko's first novel, ***Mazushiki hitobito no mure***, usually only the central character tries to effect changes in an environment of passive resistance or outright opposition. In her fiction done during the proletarian literary movement, the number of characters committed to political and social change increases, although they are usually restricted to members of the working class. In *Banshū heiya*, however, virtually all characters are portrayed as capable of change—albeit in varying degrees. By the end of the war, Miyamoto Yuriko realizes that all people, regardless of class background, have the potential to change, and that they must also bear the responsibility for making their world a better place.

In her earlier novels, Miyamoto Yuriko attempts to portray human behavior in terms of its relationship to the sociopolitical environment. But *Banshū heiya* marks a high point in this development because for the first time historical events are an integral part of the novel's internal structure. Characters are portrayed within a historical context and are forced to react and come to terms with the major events of their times. In previous novels, events like the Kanto earthquake do not directly influence characters' lives but, rather, mark the abstract passage of time. In contrast, *Banshū heiya* is structured around Hiroko's journeys across the country. The trains and roads on which she travels are symbolic of life and Japan's past and present movement through history. Travelling to her mother-in-law's home in western Japan, Hiroko observes the nation coming to terms with the path on which it had travelled so far. And during her return journey to Tokyo, she notes new developments as people advance along another, and as yet incomplete, route which leads them from the present into the future.

In the opening scene of *Banshū heiya*, the Japanese nation is portrayed as silently watching as an "enormous page of history turns."[23] Hiroko describes the unconditional surrender as "the moment history convulsed,"[24] as if Japan had been brought to its knees by the quakes and tremors of some uncontrollable external force. In her earlier novels dating from the proletarian literary movement, protagonists try to expose the irrational and arbitrary ideological premises of the Japanese military state. In *Banshū heiya*, a state gone mad has been smashed, not by a united working class as she had hoped, but by Japan's enemies.

Past events in *Banshū heiya* are revealed through a series of flashbacks: "During the past fourteen years the Nazi prison system had been incorporated into Japan's Peace Preservation Law and one wasn't allowed to even breathe."[25] Hiroko depicts this period in her life as "a heavy weight." Before her departure from Tokyo, she recalls her visits to her imprisoned husband where the doors and walls of the compound reflect the power of the state:

> The heavy revolving door opened slowly from the inside. The door was several times the height of any human and while Hiroko stood waiting by the small window she felt as powerless and small as the weeds which grew at the base of the high outside wall. The height of this wall was not the only daunting thing. Unless the revolving door was opened from the inside Hiroko's strength was not enough to budge it one inch, even if she was to faint against it.[26]

When Hiroko first arrives at her mother-in-law's, she reflects on how the village had been changed during the war:

> Since then the war, which brought the invasion of Manchuria and China, had escalated and life had changed remarkably. Business became difficult to conduct due to the controls which were imposed. Situated on a large river with fields scattered between low mountain peaks and woods, the village had been divided into so-called upper and lower sections. In addition, it was incorporated as a town with Tawara which faced the sea three kilometers away. The village had not become a town through any development from its earlier rural form. Rather, the fields and rice paddies had been transformed into a town for purely military objectives. Subsequently, a new military road had penetrated the eight kilometer stretch between Tokuyama City and the newly constructed town. This road was to be used exclusively by military trucks . . . The bus, truck and Datsun traffic which hurried over the narrow highway day and night shook the loose joists of Jukichi's poor house from morning until late at night. From the second-story window, one could see train loads of soldiers waiting for long periods of time on the railroad tracks where women from the town's Women's Committee served them tea and rice balls. The heart of this new military town became an enormous arsenal which mobilized the young men and women from the neighbouring villages. At set times in the morning and evening, the road before Jukichi's home was filled with people riding bicycles to and from their villages. . . .[27]

In this way the traditional rural economy is destroyed to meet the needs of the military machine. But Jukichi's village is not the only place where such changes have occurred. Throughout the novel, Hiroko also sees numerous other villages similarly afflicted, including the village in Fukushima where she first stays with her brother. After Japan's surrender, however, only the ruins of these military installations remain. And like the inhabitants, they are described in terms of paralysis and silence: "Only yesterday, military trucks and motorcycles had dashed along the needlessly wide road. Today, nothing passed by. The road was white and dusty, silent and

21. Ibid., p. 120.
22. Ibid., p. 136.
23. Ibid., p. 10.
24. Ibid., p. 10.
25. Ibid., p. 12.
26. Ibid., pp. 34–35.
27. Ibid., p. 56.

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deserted. . . ."[28]

The influence of the past on the present does not stop with the signing of the peace treaty. Towns like Jukichi's, where the local economy has been warped to meet military objectives, face total collapse with the war's end. As entire industries cease to exist, the youth who had been mobilized to work them retreat to their native villages, leaving the new towns to deteriorate into *goke no machi*, or widows' towns. In addition, construction of these military roads ignored the ecological balance of the surrounding terrain, resulting in poor soil drainage and severe flooding during the autumn rains. During her stay in Yamaguchi, Hiroko helps her in-laws fight flood waters, and when she makes her final journey to Tokyo she witnesses other towns that have suffered a similar fate.

One of the most brutal aspects of Japan's wartime militarization is that many of these villages' sons and husbands who had left for combat duty never returned home on these unnecessary networks of roads. Within these past and present movements of Japan's history along the web of roads and railways, the characters of *Banshū heiya* act out their lives, vacillating between silence and sound, darkness and light, and paralysis and movement.

Scenes of wartime ruin and destruction gradually give way to descriptions of renewal, which first appear in terms of natural imagery after the flood when Hiroko surveys the gutted remains of the arsenal:

> The people who had triumphed in greed in these various structures had disappeared since the 15th of August. Where Hiroko walked, the windows of the building were now boarded up and some buildings still sporting signs had become empty. Perhaps because of the pelting rains of four or five days before, or because of earlier air bombardments, a stand of sycamore trees was uprooted and had toppled onto the sidewalk for several blocks. Though soiled by mud, the foliage of these fallen sycamores was luxuriant with new green leaves.[29]

The theme of new life rising from destruction is repeated shortly afterward as Hiroko regards Nuiko's sister's room: "There was an elegance surrounding Sawako's desk like a dandelion blooming amid a pile of ruins. A small and innocent thing, the perfection of this purity nevertheless moved Hiroko who had just witnessed desolation as far as the eye could see. It revived her faith in living things."[30]

Like other characters, Hiroko looks to a better future, realizing that it must be built on the ruins of the past. Looking at Sawako's room she muses: "Today is born from yesterday, tomorrow breaks away from today and then continues on. . . ."[31] The final description of the Banshū Plains further develops this theme:

> The autumn sunshine turned the Banshū mountains, the fields, small hamlets and trees a golden colour in the breeze. The horse-drawn carts rumbled along the straight line of the national highway toward their destination. The noise from the ruts in the road harmonized strangely with the cheerfulness of the young people and blended with the many emotions that filled Hiroko's heart. This advance along the national highway would not happen twice in their lifetime. The hedges of the small hamlets they passed, the ruins of the large factories, rusted red and standing in the distance of the Akashi pine forest . . .: All of Japan was moving like this. Hiroko felt it keenly.[32]

In her first novel, *Mazushiki hitobito no mure*, Miyamoto Yuriko attempts to explain her characters' behavior in terms of their relationship to the social environment in which they live. *Nobuko* further develops this, and in *Kokkoku* politics and history are given a larger role. However, although the protagonist in *Kokkoku* states that "history inevitably advances,"[33] the historical process is not part of the novel's overall structure and the reader must accept the character's statement as fact. But in *Banshū heiya*, history and characterization are interconnected and developed through imagery and symbolism.

Miyamoto Yuriko neither made a sharp turn toward the proletarian literary movement, nor did she drift away from it once it had disbanded. Her early literary development carried the seeds for future points of contact with this movement, and while her writing was influenced by it, her works reveal a consistent direction which challenges the label of "proletarian writer," a label which restricts and diminishes the scope of her creative development and achievement. In my view, her feminist-humanist vision — passionate concern for the human potential in all people but particularly sensitive regarding women's problems — is as important as her support of collective social action.

While natural imagery is also present in Miyamoto's earlier works, it is not central to the development of thematic elements. In *Kokkoku*, for example, the protagonist often views the sky, flowers, and trees from her squalid prison cell. While this juxtaposition does produce a sense of irony, it does not develop the role of the working class in the historical process.

The theme of love also reappears in *Banshū heiya*, and through it Hiroko's world view is revealed. Hiroko's relationship with her husband is different from the type of male-female relationships found in earlier works. In *Nobuko*, the heroine views romantic love as the basis for a relationship enabling both parties to attain emotional and intellectual growth. Nevertheless, she realizes that the existing marriage system makes both of these impossible, especially for women intent

28. Ibid., p. 15.
29. Ibid., p. 86.
30. Ibid., pp. 88–89.
31. Ibid., p. 88.
32. Ibid., p. 136.
33. *Senshū*, III, p. 66.

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Miyamoto Yuriko with her husband Miyamoto Kenji at their home in Hayashi-machi (1950).

on pursuing independent careers. In the novels written during her involvement in the proletarian literary movement, romantic love is conspicuously absent, as if it is a bourgeois preoccupation irrelevant to class struggle. In *Banshū heiya*, Hiroko does not regard herself as the free individual Nobuko did and is very conscious of her role as Jukichi's wife and of her relationship and responsibilities to his family.

Hiroko compares the relationship to a ship: "Their life together did not resemble ocean waves that moved aimlessly back and forth. Rather, their relationship was like an advancing ship. And together they viewed the movement of history and the passage of time which would not be repeated."[34] This connection between their relationship and history implies a type of political partnership. The younger Nobuko believed that she could only realize her potential alone. The mature Hiroko believes that women alone are incomplete:

> Looking back over the past ten years or so it became obvious to her. It was impossible for Hiroko to think of her life during that time without Jukichi. For example, seven years before Hiroko had been indicted because of her participation in the proletarian literary movement. She was sentenced to three years in jail with a five-year suspended sentence. Even then she had continued to emphasize the class nature of literature. During the preparations for her trial, Jukichi read through the relevant documents and, although restricted by having to do so through letters, wrote often criticizing the material on the basis of whether she had heroically defended reason or compromised too much. Hiroko learned a great deal from this. For her the compromises were small, but for Jukichi they represented the limit of what he would tolerate in his wife.[35]

The sharing of ideologies became the basis for a lasting relationship capable of surviving twelve years of separation and persecution.

For the heroine of *Nobuko*, the roles of daughter, wife, and daughter-in-law represent petty concerns for social position and economic security, and she tries to eliminate them from her life. Although not abandoning her critical stance towards the family system she once abhorred, in *Banshū heiya* Miyamoto expresses sympathy for female characters and relatives who bear the dual burdens of gender and social class. Like Hiroko, thousands of women are deprived of their sons and husbands during the war. But Hiroko has been fortunate because she has known that her husband, although imprisoned, is alive. Many other women have had to face the future alone. Hiroko criticizes her sister-in-law's coldness toward her husband's family but sympathizes with her plight:

> "The Japanese are bankrupt." This short phrase uttered by foreigners pierced her to the heart... The misfortune of losing Naoki—the centre of their lives—had prevented these lone women from succumbing to even feelings of grief. This is what real misfortune is, Hiroko thought. This is how emotions become bankrupt.[36]

At the end of the war, Japanese women are left to contend with both the physical scars left on their environment and deep emotional wounds. During the war, women shouldered the greatest burden to ensure the survival of their families. With the war's end, their efforts to raise their children and rebuild the country continue, often without the aid of their men who have been maimed or killed. Discipline and perseverance have seen them through the difficult years. But, like Hiroko's sister-in-law, the times have made them hard and bitter. "Where was the real bitterness of the war to be found in people's lives?... It was found daily in the silent ruins of the tens of thousands of

34. *Senshū*, IV, p. 100.
35. Ibid., pp. 123–124.
36. Ibid., p. 54.

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'widows' towns' created throughout Japan.''[37]

Conclusion

Miyamoto Yuriko's novels reveal both a consistency and development of form and content throughout the more than thirty years of her career. The subject matter of her novels concerns the plight of oppressed people, although the nature and definition of this changes with each of her major literary periods. In *Mazushiki hitobito no mure*, her first novel, the unhappy lives of rural sharecroppers are the focus. Later, with *Nobuko*, the emphasis shifts to the personal sphere of the author as she analyzes the situation of women within the restrictions of family and marriage. During her association with the proletarian literary movement, Miyamoto Yuriko deals with the urban proletariat struggling against police oppression. Thus, in novels such as *Kokkoku*, we see a serious attempt to universalize the individual experience in terms of the social and political system.

From the beginning of her writing career, Miyamoto Yuriko was concerned with the effect of the sociopolitical environment on the quality of human life. She looked for the causes of negative behavior in existing social structures rather than individual personality. Even in her first novel, characters are shown in conflict with society, and they are forced to engage in some kind of activity to alter their situation. However, action is restricted to the personal level. During the proletarian literary movement, her characters for the first time embrace change through collective action. And with *Banshū heiya* collective action merges with the theme of collective responsibility, reflecting the gradual broadening of her historical perspective.

Throughout her career, Miyamoto Yuriko consistently developed characters who reject passivity and struggle for change. In her earlier works, the central characters are generally alone in their battles against injustice, but they nevertheless represent that optimistic view of humanity that dominates her later works. Rather than representing the period in which Miyamoto first embraced political action to achieve social change, the proletarian literary movement was a transitional period when humanist issues evolved from the personal center to a larger group with shared ideologies and aims. By the end of the war when she wrote *Banshū heiya* she was able to view not just those committed to a specific political ideology but all humanity as capable of effecting significant social transition through collective effort. Emerging at the time of Japan's surrender, her optimism and ability to combine the desire for personal inner growth with a commitment to political action and fundamental social change enabled her to avoid the nihilism and sense of defeat that was so widespread in Japan at that time.

Miyamoto Yuriko's novels portray humanity as rejecting obstacles to growth and advancement; her characters strive to break the fetters that bind them—be they family, marriage, the state, or destruction and despair. Her heroines refuse to admit defeat in the face of adversity and possess an unflagging optimism that a better world is within their grasp. Reaching beyond the negative aspects of present society, novels like *Banshū heiya* anticipate a better world. The vitality and integrity of Miyamoto's novels emerge from within this movement as well as from the defiant stance taken by her protagonists against unjust situations.

Banshū heiya is one of Miyamoto Yuriko's most artistically successful novels. Sophisticated use of imagery and stylistic devices to develop thematic elements creates a sense of depth and maturity not found in her pre-1945 novels, with the possible exception of *Nobuko*. In addition, *Banshū heiya* marks a return to humanistic issues and the progressive middle-class female character found in such early works as *Mazushiki hitobito no mure* and *Nobuko*, indicating that ultimately she felt more comfortable with protagonists who mirrored her own life experiences than she did with the somewhat politically strident working class characters who appeared during the time of her involvement in the proletarian literary movement. However, during the postwar period, Miyamoto Yuriko's heroines develop into a harmonious blend of both these character types, suggesting both personal, artistic, and political growth.

Despite the emphasis on female characters whose experiences echo her own, Miyamoto Yuriko does not indulge in the gloomy introversion of the *shi-shosetsu*, or ''I'' novel. Her sense of social change within history, and her belief in social responsibility and political commitment raise the stature of her characters from isolated individuals to universal modern heroines. In addition, her return to feminist issues in the postwar period reveals the lasting effects of the enlightened humanist environment in which she grew up, even as her belief in the need for a more radical social and political revolution continues to make its presence felt. Looking at social and political contradictions within the framework of feminist issues, Miyamoto Yuriko was able to create a unique form of popular literature which transcends the boundaries of both cultural difference and time. ★

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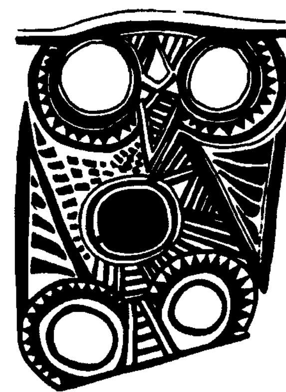

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37. Ibid., p. 60.

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Review

CHILD OF ALL NATIONS, by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Translated by Max Lane from the third printing of the Indonesian edition with further editorial revisions. Ringwood: Penguin Books Australia Ltd., 1984. ix, 285 pp., introduction and glossary. Australia, $A6.95; U.K., £3.50.

by Vincent Pollard

> People say that before mankind stands only distance. And its limit is the horizon. Once the distance has been crossed, the horizon moves away again. There is no romance so strong that it could tame and hold them—the eternal distance and the horizon. (*Child of All Nations*, p. 1)

Child of All Nations is Max Lane's translation of Indonesian novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Anak Semua Bangsa* (Jakarata: Hasta Mitra Publishing House, 1980). The second volume of a tetralogy, *Child of All Nations* holds its own as a compelling tale of human suffering and outrage against Dutch rule in the Netherlands East Indies (NEI) of 1899–1900. (Pramoedya's *This Earth of Mankind* is the first volume; *Footsteps* and *Glass House*, the third and fourth, respectively.) *Child of All Nations* is simultaneously personal and political. It depicts indignation and protests of a Southeast Asian people responding to white Christian Dutch disregard for an Islamic marriage between a Javanese youth (Minke) and his Eurasian spouse (Annelies). Colonial interference in this intimate personal relationship contributes to Annelies' early death.

Born 6 February 1925 in Blora, Java, Pramoedya is well aware of Dutch insensitivity and cruelty in NEI. His personal commitment to national liberation cost Pramoedya two years in colonial Dutch prisons during the final pre-Independence period. But his novel is more than the story of justifiable Javanese anger under foreign provocation. Drawing from the life of Tirto Adisuryo (Indonesian journalist and critic of Dutch colonial policy), he patiently sketches a turning point in the political maturation of his grandparents' generation. To appropriate Pramoedya's metaphor, his book unveils a dynamic truth before an expanding "horizon." Unfolding before the reader is a young husband's saddened, bitter reaction to forced separation from his wife and, shortly afterwards, to her untimely death in Holland. Transcending localized anti-Dutch sentiment, the book reveals the genesis of Indonesian nationalist consciousness at the turn of the century.

A prolific and influential writer, Pramoedya was active in such associations as LEKRA (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat—Institute for People's Culture) in post-Independence years. LEKRA often took positions similar to those of the PKI (Indonesian Communist party). This made Pramoedya an easy target for Suharto's right-wing junta after their violent 1965 accession to power. The military junta interned Pramoedya for four years in Jakarta prisons. His captors then moved him to a forsaken Buru Island work camp. In his new role as ex-*tapol* (political prisoner), Pramoedya has brought his four-part epic to fellow Indonesians under the Jakarta dictatorship. The first two volumes were best-sellers until banned by that government's order in 1981.

Pramoedya turned some circumstances of a harsh incarceration to his advantage. Depending on one's source, his keepers either confiscated or destroyed his library and research notes, and they denied him writing materials for the first ten years of his captivity. In 1973, however, Pramoedya told his story aloud in nightly installments to fellow inmates. Two years later he received permission—and a typewriter—to write his novel.

From a print-medium orientation, Pramoedya's oral storytelling served as a vital mnemonic. From an audiovisual perspective, his oral narrative had a more pervasive impact on his novel. Oral performance and written literature have closely interacted in Java and elsewhere for centuries. In the Buru penal camp Pramoedya, the imprisoned storyteller, did not play the traditional role of *dalang* (puppet master) in the *wayang kulit* (shadow play with leather puppets). But even in the darkened isolated barrack[1] without puppets, screen, or backlighting, two common features of his role and that of the *dalang* stand out: (1) narrating a story from memory; and (2) adopting the voices of each and every character as he or she appears. Pramoedya provides an explicit analogy. Speaking

1. For this datum, I am indebted to David T. Hill who has interviewed former political prisoners from among Pramoedya's audience at Buru. Cf. "A Writer Secured: The Ordeal of Pramoedya Ananta Toer," *The Age Monthly Review*, Vol. 4, No. 8 (December 1984–January 1985), p. 22; and "Who's Left? Indonesian Literature in the Early 1980's," *Working Paper* [Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies], No. 33 (1984), pp. 5–6.

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photo from the Netherlands Information Bureau

Batavia was built as a Dutch city, with the houses arranged along the canals. This is one of the old quarters of the Batavia of 1945.

through Minke, he compares the complexity of Southeast Asian international relations to ". . . . that grand epic of conflict, the *Bharatayuddha wayang* story" (p. 254). Minke ". . . . had never met a puppet-master who dared to put it on. It was too complicated and that complexity left an impression of the supernatural. So, too, it was with this 'balance of power' " (p. 254). Pramoedya, however, had set out to demystify "the supernatural"—the false notion that the common people couldn't comprehend the political forces enslaving their country. He may also have benefited from audience reaction to his numerous storytellings and had the opportunity to develop a more textured treatment of Minke's nascent political consciousness.

A nineteenth-century Dutch policy debate on the NEI provides a political opening for Pramoedya's story. The *Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie* had gradually conquered much of Java and Sumatra, eventually extending a patchy and indirect control over large parts of the tropical archipelago that became NEI. After the Java War of 1825–1830, Holland's desire to ensure a steady financial return from NEI led to the *Cultuurstelsel*, i.e., Culture (or Cultivation) System. This policy forced peasants of densely populated central and eastern Java (a major locale in *Child of All Nations*) to cultivate crops for export—first indigo and sugar cane, and later coffee, tea, tobacco, and pepper. A state monopoly administered the program and collected the profits. This extension of village production did not raise the standard of living in NEI. The *Cultuurstelsel* also limited the profits of some private capitalists. And so, for differing reasons, humanitarians and Dutch business people criticized this policy in the 1860s. The result was the Liberal Policy and an 1870 agrarian law opening NEI to large infusions of European private capital, eventually abolishing the *Cultuurstelsel*. By the late 1890s (as the novel commences), the principal articles of export were sugar, coffee, tea, rice, indigo, cinchona, tobacco, and tin. Except for rice, almost 80 percent of these exports went to the Netherlands. At the same time Dutch liberals had to confront the failure of their policy to improve the lives of the colonial peoples. Growing criticisms led to advocacy of a welfare-oriented Ethical Policy by one faction.

In this setting, Minke's close ties to two women are pivotal to his political awakening: Nyai Ontosoroh, his mentor and mother-in-law, and Annelies, her Eurasian daughter and Minke's spouse. *This Earth of Mankind* develops the earlier relationship between Annelies and Minke. The opening lines of *Child of All Nations* poignantly summarize how their separation affected Minke:

> Annelies had set sail. Her going was as a young branch wrenched away from the plant that nourished it. This parting was a turning point in my life. My youth was over, a youth beautifully full of hopes and dreams. (p. 1)

Herman Mellema, Annelies' Dutch father, had died; and her legal status had changed: She is no longer Nyai's charge. Consequently Annelies' Islamic marriage to Minke no longer has legal standing. The Marechausee (elite troops of the colonial army) seize her, take her from Surabaya to Betawi (Batavia—today Jakarta), and thence send her by sea to the Netherlands. Panji Darman, Minke's younger friend, heeds Nyai's urgings and manages to "escort" Annelies to her destination. He becomes Minke's last link with the living Annelies. From his letters and telegrams (pp. 14–27 and 274), Minke and Nyai learn of Annelies' faltering health. A weakened Annelies dies shortly after disembarking in the Netherlands.

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Minke, counseled by Nyai, turns from prayer and pity, begins "... to learn to feel the fire of revenge..." (p. 27) from her, and undertakes to find out who perpetrated Annelies' kidnapping. This joint mission of Minke and Nyai is the heart and soul of *Child of All Nations*. (Surati and other women in Pramoedya's story have a less didactic impact but are also important.) Nyai's personal direction and political guidance is powerful and catalytic. One index of the changes undergone by Minke is the ability of this young man of Islamic upbringing to pose the pre-feminist question to himself: "Why must women be just the substratum of life?" (p. 225). And it is to his mentor Nyai that he answers in the novel's final words: " 'Yes, Ma, we fought back, Ma, even though only with our mouths' " (p. 276).

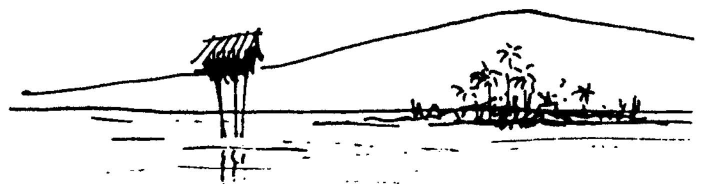
Minke's travels in Java are an effort to investigate circumstances related to Annelies' death. But his journey also mirrors and punctuates the political transformation of the aspiring young journalist (and prospective medical student) from concerned individual to militant nationalist (not yet a revolutionary). Minke painfully struggles to overcome the limitations of his bourgeois, Dutchified schooling in Surabaya. In this metamorphosis, Minke becomes a "child of all nations, of all ages, past and present," a pupil who sheds his resistance, reluctance, and prejudices to learn from an impressive range of teachers.

A heartrending tragedy infuses and motivates Minke's investigations on Java. But the centrality of capital—sugar capital—is a chain or net linking key aspects of the story on another level. Sugar—that is, the dominating network of social relations in growing, harvesting, milling, shipping, and selling the commodity—enslaves Indonesians in *Child of All Nations*. Sugar reciprocally enmeshes and implicates "Oriental" and "native" administrators and bureaucrats, subsuming their services in Amsterdam's rule of the equatorial archipelago; and sugar extends its deadly grasp into the editorial office of the publication for which Minke has written. Indeed, at the outset, Pramoedya also suggests a dramatic comparison between the lethal power of capital and the mythological force of Batara Kala, the Indonesian Hindu god of death, from whom "nothing can escape being pushed along..." (p. 1). On a more explicit level, the didactic colloquy (pp. 197–218) between radical Dutch journalist Ter Haar and Minke on board the ship *Oosthoek* draws together undercurrents and tides of Indonesia's imperialized political economy succinctly and convincingly.

Pramoedya portrays the pervasive, pernicious power of the sugar capitalists and thereby lends further coherence to Minke's journey-narrative, gradually endowing it with an overarching structure, unity, and goal. Minke's travels in Java are an effort to investigate circumstances related to Annelies' death. But his journey also mirrors and punctuates the political transformation of the aspiring young journalist (and prospective medical student) from concerned individual to militant nationalist (not yet a revolutionary). Minke painfully struggles to overcome the limitations of his bourgeois, Dutchified schooling in Surabaya. In this metamorphosis, Minke becomes "child of all nations, of all ages, past and present" (p. 127), a pupil who sheds his resistance, reluctance, and prejudices to learn from an impressive range of teachers. Besides Nyai Ontosoroh, they include: egalitarian impulses from the French Revolution of 1789; persistent anti-colonial resistance in the Atjeh (today's Aceh) region of northernmost Sumatra; Japan, the Asian power confronting intrusions of North Atlantic-based empires into the Eurocentrically-defined "Far East"; the Malolos Republic (1898) in the Philippine archipelago to the northeast; Khouw Ah Soe, the articulate revolutionary-nationalist Chinese emigre to Surabaya; and liberal Dutchmen. This education shatters Minke's illusions concerning bourgeois colonial legality. Step by step, the aggrieved young widower transcends earlier parochialism, senses deeper implications of anti-Dutch sentiment among peasants and others on Java and Sumatra, and responds to the Pan-Asian range of anti-colonial struggles. This synthesis emerges by the time the finger of blame for Annelies' death points to her stepbrother, the marine engineer Maurits Mellema (pp. 254–276).

Max Lane's translation of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Child of All Nations* flows smoothly, introducing us to incipient Indonesian nationalism. Through Minke's expanding awareness, the reader sees in the roots of nascent nationalist consciousness an evolving, multidimensional, and dialectical "sense of place" of Indonesian people. This is in reaction to local and foreign representatives of capitalist imperialism but also in felt solidarity with strivings for independence and a better life by other peoples of East and Southeast Asia at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Nonspecialists will contend with three omissions from this first English-language edition of Pramoedya's novel. First, the Glossary (pp. 277–285) is inadequate for its broad purpose. Max Lane points out: "To preserve something of the rich texture of cultures, languages, forms of address, dialects, beliefs and milieus of the Indies," his translation has "retained numerous Malay, Javanese and Dutch terms" (p. ix). For example, the multilinguality suggests subtleties of interclass and intercaste communication and conflict. Translations or notes on 143 of these words are too brief. Secondly, Penguin Books would enhance the next edition of *Child of All Nations* by following the example of the Indonesian edition and footnoting essential vocabulary when a term first appears. Thirdly, Minke's journey-narrative and the power of the sugar capitalists in Pramoedya's tale deserve a map with Indonesian place names, colonial subdivisions, and land-use patterns in Java. ★



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Review

CAPITALISM AND CONFRONTATION IN SUMATRA'S PLANTATION BELT, 1870–1979, by Ann Laura Stoler. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985, xii, 244 pp., $22.50.

by Robert Cribb

The east coast of Sumatra is one of the world's major plantation areas. The tobacco, rubber, coffee, oil palm, and sisal plantations established there by European and American entrepreneurs in the second half of the last century have so transformed the landscape that the region "appears as an enormous nursery of manicured shrubs, whose regularity is effaced only by the clusters of buildings dotting the checkerboard pattern of rubber and palm" (p. 3).

It is not the physical, however, but the social landscape of Sumatra's plantation belt that is the concern of this elegantly written and carefully argued book. Specifically, it describes and analyzes the successive systems of labor relations which underpinned the commercial viability of the plantation system. During the nineteenth century nearly all the workers on the estates were single males, initially Chinese and later Javanese, recruited on three-year contracts with the help of a variety of dishonest stratagems. They were held to their work by a combination of government-enforced "penal sanctions" and deliberate encouragement of indebtedness. In the twentieth century, by contrast, employers preferred to recruit families who then eked out a semi-subsistence living on the fringe of the plantation economy, supplying labor as it was needed and reabsorbing workers when it was not. Stoler's analysis of this phenomenon in the context of the rise of nationalism and changes in the world economy is particularly effective.

Stoler pays considerable attention to gender relations in the plantation belt, and argues that they have consistently played a major role in the structure of labor relations. I found this unconvincing as far as the period of the contract system goes. She states: "Female coolies were part of the bait that was used to allure male workers to Deli and part of the palliative that was supposed to keep them there" (p. 32), but this seems in fact to have been relatively insignificant in comparison to the other recruitment and retention techniques she described. Stoler's argument, on the other hand, is entirely convincing when she comes to the twentieth century and shows how women have kept alive the "subsistence" sector at times when male labor was demanded by the plantations. They have done so both by tilling the land themselves and by engaging in other activities such as prostitution.

The central purpose of Stoler's book, however, is not to describe labor policy and the techniques of labor control, but to examine labor relations from the point of view of the workers themselves. This has not proven easy. The success of the plantation belt has depended, amongst other things, on keeping workers disunited, and Stoler's endeavor to bring to our attention the actual voices of these workers does not produce a clear image. During the period from the revolution in the late 1940s up until the mid-1960s, labor organization in the plantation belt was relatively unrestricted, and there was a lively union movement. But the structure of the workforce made it difficult for unions to represent the entire system that supplied workers. The strikes that unions organized were indeed a challenge to the plantation system, but they were a challenge mounted by no more than sections of the mass of workers whom the plantations exploited. In any case, local union activities were constrained by the ties that the unions quickly developed with authorities outside the region. Stoler devotes considerable attention to the phenomenon of squatting, the seizure and subsistence cultivation of plantation land by Javanese workers, but she points out that these actions, deeply threatening though they were to the plantation sector, were more a product of traditional, conservative, and individualist land hunger than of any modern political radicalism.

The book concludes with a detailed ethnographic study of life and attitudes in a single Javanese community in the plantation belt. In this chapter the reader truly leaves behind the world of the plantation managers, but there is not a lot which suggests a workers' antithesis to the views of the managers. The confrontation which Stoler promises in her title is not present, and the section offers a peculiarly downbeat end to the book.

I do not wish to suggest that *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra's Plantation Belt* is any the less for this. Stoler has shown a commendable faithfulness to her material, refusing to squeeze more out of it than is there in the first place. In a study such as this, however, a "deeper" listening to the workers' voices would have been valuable. The book is excellent on what the workers say they believe. But there is a theoretical tension in the book between the structural analysis which shows how the system works and could be made not to work, and the attempt to render workers' perceptions, which inevitably do *not* demonstrate full awareness of economic structures. It would have been useful to be provided with a more explicit analysis of worker ideology in the context of the economic system, and for Stoler to have developed the theme of hegemony which she raises perceptively and thoughtfully in the introduction. Nonetheless, the book deserves wide reading as a valuable addition to our knowledge of both the East Sumatra region and labor relations in Indonesia in general. ★

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Review

PEASANT AND ARTISAN RESISTANCE IN MUGHAL INDIA, by Irfan Habib. Montreal: Centre for Developing Area Studies, 1984, McGill Studies in International Development, No. 34, 30 pp.

by Ravi Arvind Palat

Though the *Communist Manifesto* placed class struggle at the center of historical analysis, its theoretical primacy was empirically confined to Europe, both in Marx's own writings and in the work of most scholars within the Marxist tradition. The generalized slavery of Asian societies, brought about by the absence of private property in land, was perceived to have inhibited structural change in these societies until the arrival of agents of history in the guise of European colonizers. The history of Asian societies, in other words, was seen as a repetitious, cyclical history, a nonhistory.

In his work as a historian of Mughal India, Irfan Habib has consistently challenged this conceptual refrigeration of precolonial India. He now seeks to reconstruct protest movements by peasants and artisans in the Mughal Empire to discover why these movements were so singularly unsuccessful in comparison to peasant movements in medieval China and England in bringing "relief to themselves *as* peasants." In other words, he attempts to investigate the signal inability of the Mughal peasantry "to stand forth as a class" (p. 27).

After briefly outlining potential social contradictions in Mughal India that are already familiar to readers of his earlier works, Habib marshals an impressive array of sources to distinguish between various types of peasant resistance. The most common and widespread of these insurgencies were caused, he argues, by increases in land revenue, "the real Indian counterpart of rent" (p. 6). Increased demands for revenue were met primarily by flight, especially to the lands of rebellious *zamindars*. Where flight was not possible, some cultivators, led by "the higher strata of the peasantry," took to armed resistance, as the alternative was often slaughter or enslavement (p. 13). These increased demands for revenue could also have the effect of uniting *zamindars* and peasants against the Mughal state. Even when peasant distress fueled revolts under the leadership of the *zamindars*, the landless proletariat remained "outside the pale and subject to arbitrary action" (p. 22). In this context, the major difference between the *zamindar*-led or inspired revolts (such as the Marathas) and the sectarian insurgencies (such as the Sikhs) was that while both forms produced similar results—the submersion of peasant interests—the latter, by its greater ecumenical appeal, enabled "certain lower groups" to force their way up, without a fundamental transformation of the social structure (p. 20). Hence the most notable consequence of these movements was the extension of the political ambitions of *zamindars*. The consequent failure of the peasants in Mughal India to improve their material conditions is attributed to their "backward levels of class-consciousness."

In sharp contrast to the countryside, the cities of the Mughal Empire did not experience any significant social movements. This urban quiescence was largely due, it is argued, to the fact that the taxes imposed on craftsmen and merchants were considerably less than the claims made by the state on the produce of peasants. Consequently, the grievances of artisans and petty traders were largely of "a transitory character," arising from the legal monopolization of trade in a particular commodity or the imposition of a new tax. In such cases, the typical form of protest remained flight, though the traders were also known to have resorted on occasion to the closure of their shops.

We contentedly read this study of peasant movements in Mughal India, written with the mastery of sources and the apt deployment of empirical evidence that we have come to expect from Habib, until we recall that the small cultivators in Mughal India and those who made the English Rising of 1381 were located in, and responding to, a set of material conditions different in almost every conceivable way. Can they both meaningfully be subsumed under the category of "peasants"? Is it really surprising that, enmeshed as they were in entirely different networks of relations, they reacted in different ways? To elevate the reactions of one group of people, made in a particular complex of conditions, as more advanced than those of some other people, made in a very different situation, is tantamount to arguing that the interests of the peasantry are immutable over time. The point, surely, is to explain why medieval peasants in India had the levels of class-consciousness they had. Here we come to a crucial methodological flaw in this analysis: the definition of classes solely by reference to the relations of production. Yet the bourgeoisie is the first class to define all human actions and social relations exclusively by reference to production. The relations between classes in noncapitalist societies cannot be grasped without recourse to other categories—religious, political, juridical, etc.[1] Indeed, in his

1. Given the constraints of a short review, it is impossible to develop this point at length. See, however, Cornelius Castoriadis, "An Interview," *Telos* No. 23 (Spring 1975), pp. 131–55; Castoriadis, *Crossroads in the Labyrinth* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1985); Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1985); Castoriadis, "On the History of

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deployment of empirical evidence, Habib himself notes that the ties of caste were a significant formative influence in the shaping of social movements (see especially pp. 13, 21).

A conceptually adequate analysis of social movements must examine why they arose in the precise form they assumed. It entails a discussion of the relations of domination and subordination, of power and class control. After Gramsci, it is almost superfluous to insist that the ruling class only rarely (and then, only for short periods) exercises its hegemony by direct coercive force. Habib's study, moreover, focuses on the most dramatic form of resistance—armed revolts—to the exclusion of a wide variety of other forms available to rural cultivators, such as the surreptitious evasion of taxes. More surprising, however, is the fact that no details are furnished regarding the frequency of these insurgencies within the longitudinal span of the Mughal Empire. In conjunction with his failure to situate these social movements within the long-term dynamic of Mughal society—increasing commercialization, relative regional specialization of production, the growing integration of economic activities on a subcontinental scale, etc.—we are presented with a typology of resistance rather than an analysis of class struggle as the motor force of history.

These criticisms are perhaps ungenerous; this is, after all, one of the few works to examine peasant and artisan resistance during the Mughal period and is thus a pioneering work. The inadequacy of the historical record of medieval India, furthermore, poses considerable problems in the reconstruction of anti-systemic movements. I offer these criticisms, then, in the hope that by attending to the issues raised here, we can propose new and creative ways of looking at the historical record. In this task we look to Habib, with his demonstrated mastery over the sources and his fine scholarship, for guidance. ★

the Workers' Movement," *Telos* No. 30 (Winter 1976–77), pp. 3–42; Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: New Left Books, 1974), pp. 403–04; E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1966); Thompson, "The Peculiarities of the English," in Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980), pp. 290 ff. For an interesting critique of Anderson, see also Frank Parkin, *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 7.

Correspondence

The following letter was sent to the Bulletin, *and we reprint it here in case our readers would also like to express their concern to the Japanese government.*

March 14, 1987

Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone
Official Residence
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
Japan

Dear Prime Minister Nakasone:

The racist remarks emanating from the political leaders of Japan recently are both ominous and distressing. Inasmuch as re-writing of the past always points to a prescription for the future, one wonders if the statements made by Masayuki Fujio, former Minister of Education, and his colleagues in the Diet can suggest an attempt to reenact the aggressive political and military role for Japan in Asia. Similarly, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's contemptuous characterization of the minorities both in the United States and Japan betray deplorable ignorance and bigotry unbefitting the leader of an economic superpower. Placed in the general context of intensifying nationalism and racism both in Japan and the United States, such irresponsible pronouncements pose a grave threat to the future relationships of Japan, East Asian nations, and the United States as well as the welfare of Japan itself.

We, the undersigned scholars concerned with Japan and East Asia who have long been active in combatting racism in the United States, protest the alarming developments in Japan and urgently request that the Japanese officials retract their statements with forthrightness and without qualification. We also urge our colleagues in the United States to join with us in voicing our profound sense of concern and outrage.

Eqbal Ahmad	Hampshire College
Robert N. Bellah	Univ. of Calif., Berkeley
Dominic C.N. Cheung	Univ. of Southern California
Noam Chomsky	MIT
Jaime Concha	Univ. of Calif., San Diego
John Dower	Univ. of Calif., San Diego
Carol Gluck	Columbia University
Harry Harootunian	University of Chicago
Pai Hsien-Yung	Univ. of Calif., Santa Barbara
Joseph Lau	Univ. of Wisc., Madison
Leo O. Lee	University of Chicago
Peter H. Lee	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa
Fredric Jameson	Duke University
Masao Miyoshi	Univ. of Calif., San Diego
Tetsuo Najita	University of Chicago
Ishmael Reed	Harvard University
Edward W. Said	Columbia University
William S.S. Tay	Univ. of Calif., San Diego
C.H. Wang	University of Washington
Wai-Lim Yip	Univ. of Calif., San Diego

Errata

The following two rather important errors appeared in our previous issue (Vol. 18, No. 4, Oct.-Dec., 1986) in the review essay by Tongqi Lin, "The China-Centered Approach: Traits, Tendencies, and Tensions."

(1) p.49, column 1, line 4. "1960s" should read "1980s"

(2) p.56, column 1, line 19. "does preclude" should read "does not preclude"

Books to Review

The following review copies have arrived at the office of the Bulletin. *If you are interested in reviewing one or more of them, write to Bill Doub,* BCAS, *3239 9th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302-2112, U.S.A. This is not, of course, an exhaustive list of the available books in print—only a list of books received. We welcome reviews of other worthy volumes not listed here.*

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Claude A. Buss (ed.), *National Security Interests in the Pacific Basin* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1985).

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