

**A LIFE**

**UNDER**

**THREE FLAGS**

**By**

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I thank my Heavenly Father in Jesus Christ very much for this great opportunity to study for the Ph.D. degree with the University of Western Sydney; and for His blessing to me that I may remain alive during the dysentery epidemic, the Second World War and during the dangerous accidents which have happened to me. I had to take a break from finishing this thesis between year 2000 and 2003 because of a heart attack after having some hard times in the Indonesian Presbyterian Church, Randwick, Sydney. Praise the Lord that I now have the strength and courage to finish it as I had hoped before.

I am grateful to Elizabeth T.H. Tan, Winny, Abrams, Adela, Alvin, Caroline and Amanda for their support. May God bless them forever.

To the memory of my beloved late parents:

Father        SUN SENG TJAY

Mother       KWA ROSE NIO

Who have taken good care of me with love and sacrifice,  
Especially when I was suffering from Dysentery, Typhus and Eye disease.

To my loving wife Elizabeth T.H.Tan, and my devoted  
sons and daughters :

Abrams    H. Dj. Sun

Liana     H.L. Sun

Lucia     H.L. Sun

Winny    H.B. Sun

Loeki     H.K. Sun

Leo       H.L. Sun

Benjamin H.Tj. Sun

Who all have given me moral support and are eagerly awaiting  
the result of my thesis.

# **A LIFE UNDER THREE FLAGS**

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

The author was born on 2 October 1919, in Cilimus, Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. He attended Dutch public and private schools and continued his study in the Dutch Teachers' Training College and Dutch Theological College before World War II. After the War he obtained a L.O. Teacher's Diploma in Indonesian Language from the Department of Education and studied at the National University, Faculty of Indonesian Language and Literature in Jakarta. He also studied Social Economics and Politics at the National University from 1950 to 1955. Later he obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees in Business Administration from the University "17 August 1945" in Jakarta and the B.A. and M.A. degrees in English Language and Literature from the National University.

He had been Manager and Managing Director business enterprises, founder, share holder and Director of the Serayu Transportation Company. Later he made a living by teaching Indonesian, Dutch, English, Management and History at JPP (Pa Hoa) Senior High School, St Paul Christian University, National University and to private Indonesians as well as foreign students in Jakarta.

Subsequently he migrated to Australia and has been working as Interpreter with the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales. He has passed an Interpreter examination held by the Ethnic Affairs Commission as well as a Translator level 3 examination organised by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).

The author has obtained a degree of Masters of Arts in History from the University of New South Wales, Sydney. To improve his knowledge he continued his study at the University of Sydney and obtained the degree of Master of Arts (Honours) in History for his thesis on *Sukarno; Hero of the Quest for Indonesian Independence*. Afterwards the author submitted his thesis on *A LIFE UNDER THREE FLAGS, 1919-1975* to the University of Western Sydney in order to obtain the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) in History.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Since the author was getting older he wondered whether he could write something important to remember beautiful Indonesia – his beloved country of birth where he had lived for more than 60 years – as his endeavour to thank her for her love and kind hospitality.

Therefore when the author found an opportunity to study history at the University of Western Sydney he thanked his Heavenly Father in Jesus Christ for His great love and power given to him in the writing of this thesis entitled “A Life under Three Flags” which would be submitted to obtain the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

He is deeply grateful to Professor Robert Lee and Dr. Mary Hawkins – his supervisor and his associate supervisor in this thesis writing – who not only read parts of the manuscript and offered him many helpful suggestions and criticism, but also gave him support and encouragement. He is also grateful to the late Dr. J. R. Angel – former Senior Lecturer of Sydney University - who was very kind to introduce the author to the University of Western Sydney and delighted to read the manuscript of his thesis.

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Neither the institutions nor the persons mentioned share the responsibility for the content of this thesis. Obviously the decisions about what to tell were necessarily the author’s own.

Peter L. T. Sun  
Sydney, March 2005

## PREFACE

The author is deeply grateful to Indonesia – his beloved country of birth – where he had lived for better or worse for more than 60 years. He experienced the Dutch colonial period and the hard Japanese military interregnum as well as the era of liberation, i.e. the rise of independent Indonesia in 1945. There were many things to tell about the Dutch colonial period, the hard Japanese interregnum and independent Indonesia. Indonesian scholars, especially those who had the chance to share in governing and managing the country, could tell the young Indonesian generation which system and policy would be the best in helping their country and people to prosper.

The author was interested in writing a PhD thesis on Dutch and Japanese military periods as well as on the independent era of Indonesia. Furthermore the author hopes that all people and countries which are interested in doing business in Indonesia will be acquainted with the Indonesian background and culture and that the cooperation would be successful for their mutual benefit.

## SUMMARY

I was born in the district village of Cilimus, a little mountainous place in the residency of Cirebon. Between five and nine years old I suffered from dysentery, typhus and eye disease which could have made me die or go blind. Praise be to God I recovered under the loving care of my parents. At that time the uprising of the PKI broke out and soon after the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) was set up by Ir. Sukarno. From 1928 till 1932 Indonesia suffered from the Great Depression which caused much unemployment and business became very bad. At first my education was not a great success since my parents were hesitant in choosing between sending me to a Chinese school or a Dutch school. When I was successful in finishing at Dutch Primary School with good examination records I went to Solo and Yogyakarta to attend Dutch teachers' Training College and a Dutch Theological College.

I had to leave school when the Japanese arrived. My family had to move to Kadugede, a remote village on the slope of Mount Ciremai, 45 km from the city of Cirebon. I could not continue my studies since all Dutch schools were closed. All the young people had to undergo military training or serve the Japanese Military by building airports and so on. I underwent Japanese Keibotai (Intelligence) military training in Linggajati, a mountainous village, 5 km from Cilimus. The Keibotai military training centre in Linggajati was headed by Mr. Watanabe who was a colonel and quite likely responsible to Colonel Kuriya, chief of the Joochoo (Intelligence Staff) of the 16<sup>th</sup> Army. Some other assistants to Watanabe were Akano, Fukuda and Tomita. The purpose of this training was to train the Chinese youth to become auxiliary Intelligence Staff. I had to flee to the military training dormitory when I was not permitted to go home in order to get engaged to my fiancée. When I came back to the military training I was punished by one week's room arrest. One month after the arrest I heard that Japan had surrendered to the Allied Forces after suffering from atomic bombardments on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I returned home on 15 August 1945. Two days later, 17 August 1945, Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed the independence of Indonesia. Native young people underwent military training to defend their country. The republic set up the people's Security Body (BKR) which later became the People's security Forces (TKR), the foundation of the current Indonesian Armed Forces. Somebody was slandering me and accused

me of being a spy for the Japanese military. I had an interview with the council of the BKR of Kuningan which trusted me and set me free. On 10 March 1946 my fiancée and I celebrated our wedding party. When the Dutch occupied West Java I went to Batavia (Jakarta) to find a job and asked my parents, my wife and children to come over when I settled. In Jakarta I improved my knowledge and achieved several diplomas, and degrees in Languages and Business.

For many years I worked as manager and managing director of several enterprises until I ran a transportation business where I had 50% share and was appointed Managing Director. The business was running smoothly until the abortive coup of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). After the Communist coup and the rupia devaluation there came a slump in my business. I got a job at the National University as lecturer in English and Dutch. I also had private students in English, Dutch and Indonesian which became a good teaching business. But since I wanted to obtain a foreign degree, my wife and I migrated in 1983 to Australia.

In this thesis I address the issue of the role of the Chinese in late colonial Indonesia. In many ways my family was typical of the Chinese as businesspeople and entrepreneurs. My attitudes to colonialism changed from enthusiastic admiration for the Dutch in my youth to a more nationalistic approach and embrace of the Indonesian Republic as a young man. While, like most Chinese, I was no supporter of Japan's war aims, I was obliged to serve in Japanese-sponsored organisations and my analysis of the Japanese occupation is not entirely negative. This autobiographical analysis charts these important (and representative) changes in my attitudes, as well as providing a personal perspective on a crucial period in Indonesia's history from the point of view of a representative member of a significant minority.

## Chapter 1

### Growing up in the Dutch East Indies, 1919-194

#### 1. The Period Before 1924

I was born in the district town of Cilimus in the Netherlands East Indies on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1919. Cilimus is located in the Regency of Kuningan, Residency of Cirebon, West Java, which was then the most important, populous and prosperous island in the colony. The town itself lies at the base of Mount Ciremai (3070m) on the main road from Cirebon to Kuningan.

At the time of my birth, the population of Cilimus numbered about five thousand people. The majority were indigenous Sundanese, while approximately five hundred were of Chinese origin. Of these, fifty percent were engaged in running small businesses, fifteen percent lived by planting paddy, peanuts and onion crops, and the remainder worked in shops and fields. The ethnic Chinese lived along the main road, which stretched from north to south for about two kilometres. It was the policy of the Dutch colonial government to segregate the ethnic Chinese into separate residential quarters in order to dominate and control them. This was intended to prevent the Chinese from raising a revolt, as had occurred in Batavia in 1740.<sup>1</sup> The Dutch colonial government also feared that the natives and the Chinese would unite forces to rebel against colonial rule as had happened in Semarang in 1741-1745.<sup>2</sup> Living in isolation from the Javanese was not a specific desire of the Chinese themselves.

The Sundanese did not live along the main road. They lived in groups in *kampongs* (villages) separated by fields, rivers and hills. They worked in paddy,

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<sup>1</sup> H. J. de Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*, s'Gravenhage: W. van Hoeve, 1949, 253-256.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 257- 262.

peanut and onion fields, they raised chickens and sheep for their own needs or sold fruits, vegetables, satay and other snacks and small things.

World War I ended at 11am on November 11, 1918 after Germany admitted defeat and signed an armistice.<sup>3</sup> In the aftermath of the war Holland, which was neutral throughout the hostilities, needed lots of raw materials from her colonies, especially rice, sugar, rubber, coffee, tea, spices and petrol. Many Dutch and European businessmen came to the Indies, especially to Java, to buy commodities which were in great demand in Europe. After World War I the Netherlands East Indies adopted an 'Open Door Economic Policy' to invite foreign countries to invest their capital by offering them tax incentives and other facilities. The Netherlands did not have capital enough to exploit her colony nor did she have sufficient armed forces to defend it in war. In West Java the booming export market in raw commodities encouraged the Chinese population of the Cilimus, Kuningan, and Cirebon areas to plant and collect sugar cane, peanuts and onions, which they delivered to Dutch and other European exporters. The paddy rice and sugar cane were delivered by the Chinese collectors to rice and sugar mills established by wealthy Dutch and Chinese entrepreneurs. The business system was free and individual, a true laissez-faire economy. The native population found plenty of work and earned enough money to support themselves. They worked in fields, in shops, in factories, and for European families, usually as unskilled labourers, foremen, civil servants, office employees and daily wage earners.

My father, Sun Seng Tjay, had a job as a peanut collector and made a good living from the trade. At the height of the peanut season in 1919, my mother was due

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<sup>3</sup> Jack Wren, *The Great Battles of World War I*, London, New York: Hamlyn, 1975, 420; Jacques Legrand, *Chronicle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, Melbourne: Chronicle Australasia, 1991, 246.

to give birth to me. At 6am, early on the morning of Friday, 2 October, my father had to collect Ibu Umbaran, the midwife who had helped my mother with the birth of my sister two years earlier. The midwife did not have to wait long before I came into the world at 8 in the morning. The whole family was very happy, especially my grandfather Sun Hong Kok, because I was the first-born son. My grandfather consulted a Chinese astrologer for a name for his grandson and gave me the name of Liang Tek ( ) which means 'Good Morals'. Since his surname was Sun ( ) my full name became Sun Liang Tek ( ).

My grandfather prayed to God before a Chinese altar in order to thank Him for a healthy grandson with good morals. When the stump of my umbilical cord fell off, my father invited his Indonesian acquaintances and neighbours to attend a *slametan* (a ceremonial meal) in my honour. As my parents were living in the Indies, they decided to follow customary Muslim practice, as well as celebrating in the traditional Chinese style by performing the rites of *Sam Kauw*, (doctrines which are a mixture of the teachings of Lao Tze, Kung Fu Tze or Confucius and Buddha). The natives and the Chinese were tolerant of each other's traditional beliefs so that they could associate without any religious or cultural problems. Moreover, they mixed together in school, in sport and in daily life. This had long been so and the local population were well aware of the historical ties that bound the royal house of Cirebon with imperial China. In the sixteenth century Sultan Gunung Jati of Cirebon (d.1568) married a Chinese princess Ong Tin, daughter of the Ming emperor of China.<sup>4</sup>

When I was about one, my mother opened a small shop which sold cigarettes, *kretek* (cigarettes containing chopped cloves), tea, coffee, sugar, soap and other

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<sup>4</sup> Paramita R Abdurachman (ed.), *Yayasan Mitra Budaya Indonesia*, Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1982, 38.

household sundries. My father helped my grandfather, a prominent peanut planter, merchant and collector who had business relations with exporters in the city of Cirebon. Bi Sajem was the maid servant who took care of me and cooked meals for my parents. Little Amir, Bi Sajem's son, played with me and kept an eye on me when I was asleep.

When I was about two years old I used to play with my sister An Nio and my cousins An Dun and Ji Tiok in the front yard of my neighbour's house. My uncle Seng Goan, the younger brother of my father, was a naughty 15 year-old boy. He often disturbed us when we were playing 'buy and sell peanuts'. We used gravel as peanuts and a small stick with a stone as a pendulum to imitate a portable balance scale at that time. The seller was Ji Tiok whilst the others were customers. One day uncle Seng Goan was pestering us by kicking the gravel and then running away. When cousin Ji San heard his younger brother Ji Tiok crying he grabbed a stone and threw it at uncle Seng Goan. The stone hit my uncle directly on his forehead and killed him instantly. Both Chinese and Indonesian neighbours hurried to the scene of the accident in order to give first aid. My grandfather could not say anything; he was shocked and had tears in his eyes. He loved both his son Seng Goan and his grandson Ji San. He said in Chinese to himself: *Chu Ho Ho; Bong Su Chi Jin Seng Su Chi Tian*.<sup>5</sup> After this incident he became very despondent and was often unwell.

I was about three years old when my aunt Lian Soe married a young man in the city of Cirebon. The bride and bridegroom, who were sitting with crossed legs on a plaited mat, wore traditional Chinese dress. The bride wore a bowl-shaped hat on her head with a transparent fabric to cover her face. The bridegroom, in loose-fitting clothes, with a red top rimless cap of black velvet, opened the bride's veil and greeted

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<sup>5</sup> That's the fate (of my son); Man proposes God disposes.

his fiancée with folded hands and a smile. The bride and the bridegroom went together to a Chinese altar, set up in the front door of the house, to pray to the God of Heaven and Earth. They both knelt on a prayer mat and bowed seven times with slowly burning joss sticks. After that they approached my grandfather and elder members of the family to offer them *arrack* (rice wine) to drink and received gifts of money folded in red paper. My grandmother was not present since she had passed away a long time before. When the prayer ceremony was finished my aunt Lian Soe went away with her husband in an *andong* (two- or four-wheeled horse-drawn cart) to the city of Cirebon, accompanied by close members of the family.

## 2. The Dysentery Epidemic

The aftermath of World War I not only brought prosperous business to the Indies but a miserable dysentery epidemic as well. Many people in Cilimus suffered from dysentery which had been brought in by foreign ships docked at Cirebon harbour. The symptoms included inflammation of the bowels which caused severe diarrhoea, usually accompanied by a discharge of mucus and blood. Many people died in the villages not far from the city. The disease spread rapidly throughout Cilimus, which is only twenty-one kilometres from Cirebon. At least one person died in the town of Cilimus every day. People did not know about modern medical treatment. They just completely surrendered themselves to their God or Gods. There was no medical centre or hospital in Cilimus and only one public medical doctor was assigned to the regency of Kuningan and he was usually based in the town of Kuningan or in the city of Cirebon. No one could afford the doctor and medicine they had to buy from the chemist. Besides, most people preferred traditional medicine, especially as Western medicine was still regarded with suspicion. Rumours spread

among the people of the village that western-trained doctors were untrustworthy. So many consulted the local *dukun* (indigenous medical practitioner) instead, who also could invoke powerful spirits. The government medical doctor became even more unpopular when he advised the head of the district town of Cilimus to isolate affected patients in quarantine barracks. Close family members of the patients fasted the whole day or abstained from salt and meat while praying to the gods and spirits at night. They expected miracles performed by supernatural powers upon their ailing ones. Their methods of healing and medical treatment contradicted the cleanliness and purity of modern medical therapy. People were physically weak and easily contaminated by the spread of disease.

#### **a) My Grandfather Dies**

I was five years old when I contracted dysentery. I had severe diarrhoea which caused waste matter with mucus and blood to be emptied from my bowels frequently. After two months I became very pale and thin but my grandfather did not arrange for a medical doctor to see me. He preferred to have a Chinese physician instead who gave me Chinese herbal medicines. I was still ailing when my grandfather became sick with dysentery. He had been invited by his neighbour to have dinner. They were good friends and my grandfather was often consulted when there were problems. My grandfather himself was a *Feng Shui Sinshee* (Master of Traditional Chinese Environment) and was regularly consulted by people when they wanted to build a house, a tomb, to get married, to run a business and so on, where advice was badly needed. *Hong Shui* (Fujianese) or *Feng Shui* (Cantonese) is ancient Chinese wisdom based on arranging a harmonious living environment. Literally, *Hong Shui* means ‘Wind’ and ‘Water’ but beyond that *Hong Shui* is most concerned with the

environment or atmosphere of a place. It holds the promise of everything anyone could possibly want: a happy family, a good marriage, a healthy and long life, a successful career, wealth and good luck. It tells us how to locate ourselves in the universe in a better way because the simple Chinese observation is that people are affected for good or ill by their surroundings; the layout and orientation of workplaces and homes. Every hill, building, hall, window and corner and the ways in which they face the wind and water have an effect. If you change your surroundings, you can change your life. The goal of *Hong Shui* or *Feng Shui* is complete harmony with the natural order which, when achieved, will bring prosperity, health and happiness.<sup>6</sup>

One day my grandfather asked my father to move me to his bedroom so he could sleep in mine. He had dreamt that he had met an old man who advised him to move his mango tree to the western corner of the backyard if he wanted to save the tree. My grandfather interpreted this dream as advice that I should be moved to his bedroom, which was at the west side of our house, in order to save my life. Grandfather spent about three weeks in my bedroom before his condition worsened and he finally died. He was 64 years of age. Not only was he mourned by our family but by the entire Chinese community as well. He belonged to the educated Chinese class, having mastered Chinese letters, philosophy, and *Feng Shui*.

When my nanny, Sajem, brought me to pay homage to my grandfather, I saw my father, mother, uncles and aunts kneeling before a coffin with slowly burning joss sticks. After bowing several times to show their respect, they walked around the coffin following a Buddhist monk in yellow robes with a rosary hanging around his neck whilst a Chinese religious hymn, with a melancholic tone, was played on a native trumpet and a native two-stringed musical instrument called a *rebab*. Behind

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<sup>6</sup> Sarah Ross Back, *Feng Shui*, Sydney: Random House, 1984, 1-5.

the coffin was a bamboo statue draped in my grandfather's clothing and sitting on a chair, representing my grandfather's presence.

The next day I saw a lot of Chinese people in the street of my house surrounded by the watching native public whilst a Chinese religious hymn was played. After the final act of homage had taken place in the family house, my grandfather's coffin was carried to the Chinese cemetery for burial. Ten men, dressed in black, carried yellow banners displaying Chinese religious and philosophical proverbs, all wishing that the deceased would be welcomed by the God of Heaven and Earth. They walked slowly in front of the procession followed by a Buddhist monk and two traditional Chinese musicians. Behind the monk, in a white costume and with a white ribbon around his head, my father walked slowly, carrying a container with slowly burning joss sticks in it. Next came the coffin of my grandfather carried by ten pallbearers, closely followed by weeping family members. After moving slowly through Chinatown, the procession increased its pace. At the cemetery another group of people was waiting to inter the coffin and direct the final prayer ceremony. My grandfather had arranged and built his tomb many years before his death. He chose the site carefully, ensuring that it presented a beautiful vista with the blue mountain of Ciremai and the river of Cibacang snaking away into the distance. After a meal of *nasi rames* (rice and side dishes served together) everyone left the cemetery to go back home to be greeted and thanked by the close family members of the deceased.

#### **b) I Recover from Dysentery**

My father continued my medical treatment with herbal medicines from the Chinese physician who regularly came from Cirebon to see me. I was getting better, although my father had to spend a lot of money for my therapy. I could sit and move

my bowels without any help. My appetite for food and sleep increased which made me healthier and stronger. I could play with my sister An Nio and Amir again. Many suffering native children could not be saved as their parents were poor and could not afford to pay for a doctor and medicines. The colonial government did not have enough doctors and medical aid to provide care for so many sick people. Despite the aims of their Ethical Policy, which the Dutch were so proud of, the government did not allocate sufficient funds to support the public health system. World War I had drained the country's wealth and shipping blockades had impeded the smooth transport of essential commodities. The post-war boom in the export of raw materials could not redress the declining economic conditions in the Netherlands and her colonies. The dysentery epidemic in our region was so severe that even the youngest son of our rich neighbour, Kwi Jin, could not be saved, let alone poor native people who had no money to pay for medical treatment. Thank God I completely recovered three months after the death of my grandfather.

### **3. My Parents set up a Bigger Shop**

After my grandfather's death, my parents decided to open a shop specialising in the sale of hulled rice, coffee beans and granulated sugar. Since they did not have enough capital my father visited Mr Sin Bee in Cirebon, a rich exporter and rice dealer who used to buy peanuts from my grandfather. It was arranged that my father could buy commodities from him on credit. My father returned from Cirebon with four sacks of rice, two sacks of granulated sugar and one sack of coffee beans; each sack weighed 100kg. Within two days they had sold out so my father had to obtain new supplies from Mr Sin Bee. He paid Mr Sin Bee the sum owed for the goods that had been sold and procured ten sacks of rice, four sacks of granulated sugar and two

sacks of coffee beans, together with five tins of coconut oil weighing 20kg each. These commodities were sold in a week. As the sales and turnover increased, Mr Khee Choo, who also was a grocery wholesaler, removed the limitation on the number of goods my father could acquire. He also offered my father the opportunity to sell Chinese tea packed in tin foil and paper. The tea was nice and cheap so that my parents could sell 100 packs of tea per day, ensuring a healthy profit. My parents used their capital to expand the range of goods they sold and to build a bigger shop. They bought and sold rice, coffee beans, granulated sugar and coconut oil, kerosene, peanuts, canned milk, canned beef and other sundries. In one year my parents raised capital of 2000 guilders, enabling them to pay cash for cheap commodities and to further increase the size of the shop. There was always help when our Heavenly Father would give someone good luck. So it was with my parents; they were respected by people and reliable in business. Suppliers came to my parents to offer good conditions of payment for their commodities.

Every time my father made a business trip to Cirebon he bought me Chinese candied fruits and toys. I was the only son and enjoyed much love and care but I was not spoiled at all. In the daytime I could play by myself with all the toys I had and at night I went early to bed when my parents were not busy.

#### **4. My First Day at School**

There was no Chinese school in Cilimus where people could learn traditional culture and languages. Rich Chinese families hired tutors to teach their children the Fujian dialect and the national Chinese language, Mandarin,. Some sent their children to a Chinese school in the city of Cirebon. In 1900 overseas Chinese residing in the Indies had founded the Tiong Hwa Hwee Kwan Association (Chinese temple).

Branches were established in the principal cities and towns, where members of the Chinese community could gather to worship Buddha, or discuss the teachings and philosophies of Kung Fu Tze and Lao Tze. Following the Chinese Revolution in 1911, the Chinese Tiong Hwa Hwee Kwan school was established to teach Chinese children the Fujian dialect or Mandarin.<sup>7</sup>

I was six and a half years old when I attended the local Malay school for the first time. Accompanied by my father and sister, I walked the short distance to the school, which was only a hundred metres from our home. Although the school only employed Sundanese teachers and was originally established for the local Sundanese population, ethnic Chinese were accepted as well. I was wearing new shoes, trousers and a shirt made of Shantung silk fabric that my grandfather had purchased in China. The native pupils did not have shoes; they wore sandals or went barefoot. Most of them wore a sarong, a shirt and a *pici* (rimless cap) on their head.

Pekih, a native boy who was the same age as I, was jealous of my dress and shoes. When school was over Pekih put some dirt on my shoes. I was angry and kicked him. While we were wrestling my father rushed over to separate us. He scolded Pekih and guided me by the hand back home. After this incident my father accompanied me to school every day and picked me up when school was over. If he was unable to come, he always sent his strong native servant to do the job.

I was a fat and healthy boy who had several girl friends, my sister An Nio and some neighbour girls by the name Chiu Kim, Chui Lan and Chui Gin. They were good to me and treated me with care. We sometimes played bride and bridegroom. Chui Gin was the bride and I was the bridegroom whilst the other girls acted as bridesmaids. They had tin cans and bamboo sticks to play music. The bride and the

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<sup>7</sup> De Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*,, 465.

bridegroom had wreaths upon their heads and walked slowly around the yard. We played until my mother called me home to give me a snack.

## **5. My Aunt Sam Noi's Wedding**

In September 1926 my aunt Sam Nio, the youngest daughter of my grandfather, married a young man called Tan Eng Po. The style of the marriage ceremony and wedding dress was western. The bride wore a white long dress of velvet with white fur-rimmed borders. The bridegroom wore a black suit with a white shirt and a tie. To dress that way was quite a statement of sophistication in those days. Since I was the youngest son of the family I had to stand at the front door accompanied by an old lady offering the bridegroom two apples on a tray. The bridegroom had to take the apples and put two silver guilders on the tray in return as payment. The two guilders were for me which I spent later to buy toys. The bride and the bridegroom greeted each other by lifting their folding hands and kneeling on a prayer mat to bow seven times before a Chinese altar in order to pray to the God of Heaven and Earth. After they had prayed to my grandfather's altar they greeted the elder family members by offering them *arrack*. In return they received gifts of money folded in red paper. When the ceremony was over my aunt Sam Nio went with her husband by a horse-drawn buggy to live with her husband's family.

## **6. The Boy Vulnerable to Illness**

I was growing healthy and making good progress at school. I could soon write and read Sundanese, a regional language of West Java. I read simple Sundanese books on legends, history and stories. My grandfather had left with us Chinese books in the Chinese language – which I did not understand – with comments in Malay. The books

contained pictures of the life of Buddha and legends about Kauw Che Tian and Sie Jin Kui, heroes of justice in China. I wished that I could manage the Malay language and understand the books. I could not do it because I had to spend more time at home after experiencing bouts of fever and stomach pains.

#### **a) I Contract Typhus**

My father consulted a Chinese physician who gave me herbal medicine but it did not deaden the pain in my stomach, especially when I moved around. My father decided to take me to Cirebon to see Dr Tan Ping Ie, who had studied medicine in Holland and Switzerland. He told my father that I was suffering from typhus, an infectious disease in my stomach causing great weakness and purple spots on my body. The doctor advised my father not to bring me to his surgery in Cirebon but to let me rest as much as possible. He would travel to Cilimus by car once a week in order to examine me and advised my father as to what to do. A poor boy was I who had to stay in bed instead of going to school and playing outside in the open air. For one thing I was grateful to our Lord in Heaven; that my parents were wealthy, loving parents, who believed in modern medicine. Dr Tan Ping Ie regularly came once a week to see me. My father paid him a fee of ten guilders, which was equivalent to the price of two sacks of rice of 200kg. In addition, my father had to buy medicine from the chemist in Cirebon. It cost him about 25 guilders altogether when the doctor came to see me once a week. After two months of rest the fever and pain in my stomach began to subside. I thank our Heavenly Father for my recovery and loving parents who were prepared to pay so much for my medical treatment.

My mother was always busy in her shop, assisted by two native servants and a Chinese relative. She used to open her shop at 6am after she had taken a bath. She

never ate or drank anything before 10am and used to have dinner at 6pm. She put the takings in a wooden money box which she kept with her at all times. Every day customers lined up at 6am to buy rice, sugar, coffee powder and coconut oil. At 10am my mother used to have her breakfast but when she was very busy she used to have only a snack and a cup of warm tea instead. At noon – when there were not many customers – she would take a break for lunch.

My father helped my mother in the shop as well as attending to his duties as a farmer. He shopped in Cirebon when he was short of supplies for his shop and to deliver peanuts and onions to Mr Sin Bee, an old rich business relation in Cirebon. My father also had his own servants and workers who helped him with weighing, drying produce in the sun and transporting peanuts and onions to Cirebon. My parents worked hard but they were happy with their family. In the evenings they used to count silver and copper coins, the earnings of the day. The income of the shop was at least 100 guilders a day, not to mention the proceeds raised from selling gunny sacks and empty food and petrol containers they accumulated. The sale of these items raised about 500 guilders a year which my mother spent buying gold jewellery.

#### **b) I Contract an Eye Disease**

The good fortune of my family continued until one day when I developed a problem with my eye. My right eye turned pink in colour and became very painful which made me scratch. It seemed to have been infected by my dirty fingers when I accidentally rubbed my eyes. As my parents were still influenced by conservative family members, they consulted an indigenous medical practitioner. The *dukun* chanted a magic formula sitting before a bowl of clean water, which he used to wash my eyes. He did this several times for two weeks but my condition did not improve.

Finally my father sent for a Chinese physician who gave me Chinese herbal medicine and a little bottle of eye lotion. I was under the treatment of the Chinese physician for one month but my eye was not getting better.

One evening my parents and I were in the sitting room. My mother placed me on her lap to examine my eyes, using the light of a petroleum lamp. When I tried to look at it all I could see was something red, whilst everything else in the room was indistinct. My eyesight was clearly deteriorating. When I failed to identify some of the things my mother pointed to she wept bitterly. She asked my father to take me to Dr Tan Ping Ie in Cirebon.

At 6am the following morning my father and I travelled to Cirebon and arrived at Doctor Tan's surgery at 8am. He examined both my eyes and smeared some eye ointment into my eyes. Afterwards he wrote a prescription for medicine which my father had to buy at the chemist. After dressing my eyes with the ointment for three days, my right eye began to get better. The pink colour in my eye disappeared and my eyesight improved. My parents were very happy and when my father visited the doctor with me for the second time, he presented Doctor Tan Pink Ie with twenty *gurami* fish (a fresh water fish). After following Doctor Tan's treatment for one month, my right eye completely recovered. My parents knelt on a prayer mat and bowed seven times before the altar of the God of Heaven and Earth and three times before the altar of my grandfather. They spoke in a whisper thanking God and Grandfather for the recovery of my eye. After that my parents invited Muslim native neighbours and held a *selamatan*. Praise be to God that my right eye fully recovered, otherwise I would have been blind forever, since my left eye also became infected during this period. Later when I became a successful businessman I used to keep

small coins or notes in my pocket to give beggars, especially blind ones, who often reminded me of my suffering in childhood.

## **7. My Journey to Bandung**

My father took me on a journey to Bandung to visit my aunt for a few days. We went by bus to Cirebon early in the morning. My mother stayed at home because she had to take care of the shop. In Cirebon we took a bus to Bandung via the mountainous town of Sumedang where Governor General Daendels (1808-1811) had a hard struggle constructing a post-road from the west to the east of Java. Outraged by the treatment meted out to the native workers, the Regent or *Pangeran* (prince) of Sumedang refused Daendels' demand to finish the road by a pre-determined date. Daendels did not dare to send troops to punish the Regent because he was so busy organising a defence system for Java against any English attack. He was trying to keep internal conflict with the traditional rulers at bay, since he needed to conserve his military resources to defend Java from the English. Daendels failed on both counts. The zigzag mountainous road near Sumedang, known as *Jalan Cadas Pangeran* (the Prince's Rocky Road), is now a popular tourist route.

Bandung is a mountainous city, which lies in a valley and is surrounded by mountains. In the north are the mountains Burangrang, Bukit Tunggul and Tangkuban Perahu. In the east is the Mount of Tampomas and in the south are the mountains of Papandayan, Galunggung, Malabar and Guntur. The climate is cool. Bandung is famous as the city where Ir Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, founded his political party, the PNI (Indonesian Nationalist Party) in May 1928. The party aimed

to achieve *Indonesia Merdeka* (Indonesian independence) by promoting unity among the three major political groupings: nationalists, Muslims and Marxists.<sup>8</sup>

We arrived in Bandung at about noon and went to the 'De Zon' store in Pasar Baru Street to find my uncle Tan Eng Po. Bandung was a big city, twice as big as Cirebon and the people spoke Sundanese. My uncle welcomed us and took us by *dokar* (a horse-drawn buggy) to his home in Kebon Sirih Street.

Bandung was busier than Cirebon. The roads and the streets were broad and lined with shops, stores and stalls owned by Chinese businessmen. Everywhere there were Chinese selling food, clothes, spices, fabrics and household sundries. The native population were employed as cart drivers or vendors of satay, ice and cakes. They also worked for the Dutch Indies government as police officers, soldiers and Malay-language teachers at primary schools. Although the Chinese were wealthier than the natives, life and relations went on smoothly and peacefully. The natives were patient, tolerant, at that time mostly passive, and had the philosophy of being obedient to Allah. Many of them prayed five times a day, often fasting from morning till noon or abstaining from certain foods and drinks. They believed that God, when the moment came, would give them everything they needed. In the 1920s relations between the Chinese and the natives was peaceful.

According to the Sundanese, Bandung was originally known as Bendungan, which means a dam or barrier made of concrete and built across a river to hold back the water and form a reservoir. From Bendungan the name was shortened to Bendung and finally Bandung in accordance with the style of local language. We enjoyed our holiday in Bandung. But after staying four days we had to go back home since father had to return to work.

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Liang Tek Soey, *Sukarno: Hero of the quest for Indonesian Independence*, MA (Hons) thesis University of Sydney, 1992, 53- 61.

## 8. The Ethical Policy

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, leaders of the ethical movement argued that the Dutch had obtained huge revenues from Indonesians by means of compulsory labour under the culture system. One of the promoters of the Ethical Policy was Mr Conrad Theodor van Deventer, a Dutch jurist and statesman, whose pamphlet *Een Eereschuld* (A Debt of Honour) had a profound influence on the development of the colonial Ethical Policy in the Dutch East Indies. Until his death in 1915, van Deventer was one of the leading champions of the Ethical Policy, as an adviser to the government and a member of the States-General. In 1901 Queen Wilhelmina ordered an inquiry into welfare in Java, thereby endorsing the Ethical Policy which was implemented by Alexander W. F. Idenburg in his two roles as Minister for Colonies (1902-5; 1908-9; 1918-19) and especially during his period as Governor-General (1909-16).

Idenburg declared three principles as typifying the Ethical Policy: education, irrigation and emigration. "All this was occurring within a rapidly altering economic environment." To finance the realisation of the Ethical Policy the Netherlands government took over the colonial government's debt of some 40 million guilders "so that Batavia could increase expenditure without further indebtedness." The European traders and companies doing business in Indonesia had to pay more tax in order to support the Dutch East Indies government in its attempt to carry out the Ethical Policy.<sup>9</sup>

Two prominent colonial officials took charge of implementing the rather elitist education system of the Ethical Policy: Dr Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje who was a

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<sup>9</sup> M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, London: Macmillan Asian Histories, 1983, 143

Dutch scholar of Islam, and J.H. Abendanon who was the first ‘Ethical’ director of Education.<sup>10</sup> They submitted a proposal on the education of the indigenous elite which was accepted by the government. A European-style education in the Dutch language for a westernised Indonesian elite was approved. Part of the aim was to permit Indonesians “to take over much of the work of Dutch civil servants, thus producing a grateful and cooperative elite, cutting administrative expenses, restraining Islamic ‘fanaticism’ and ultimately creating an inspiring example for the lower level of Indonesian society.”<sup>11</sup>

In 1900 three *hoofdenscholen* (Chiefs’ school) were built and reorganised into OSVIA (*opleidingscholen voor inlandse ambtenaren*, training schools for native officials), which produced civil servants. In 1900 the *Dokter-Jawa* school was turned into STOVIA (*school tot opleiding van inlandse artsen*) which educated and trained students to be native doctors. In the early 1900s, several schools were founded, including the Dutch Native School (HIS; formerly ‘First Class’ schools, founded in 1914), the Dutch Chinese School (HCS, founded in 1908), the Junior Higher School (MULO), the General Middle School (AMS, founded in 1919) and the Higher Middleclass School (HBS, founded in 1905 exclusively for Dutch students). There was also the Technical College (THS, founded in 1920 in Bandung), the Law College (RHS, founded in 1924 in Batavia) and the Medical College (GHS, formerly STOVIA, founded in 1927) for all citizens to attend regardless of race.<sup>12</sup>

To meet the requirements of the Ethical Policy, the Government also encouraged people to set up private European primary schools. Under these circumstances a private Dutch Native School (HIS) *Pasundan* was established in my birthplace of Cilimus.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 148

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 150

The irrigation projects, mostly located in Java, were not effective due to the growing population of the island and the development of sugar-cane plantations on land formerly used for rice cultivation. The training received by Indonesian students at the Bandung Technical College was aimed at providing the technical skills to maintain irrigation systems for the large-scale production of sugar and tobacco crops. It was irrigation in the interest of the plantation owners, not the underfed masses.<sup>13</sup> The production of rice was not equal to the needs of the inhabitants. Java, once famed for its Cianjur rice, became dependent on supplies of Saigon rice imported from French Indochina (Vietnam). People often ate rice once a day with salted fish or raw greens with hot pepper sauce. The poor Indonesian people could do nothing. They were weak, suffered from poverty and became prey to capitalism and imperialism. Most of them were waiting for the arrival of the *Ratu Adil*,<sup>14</sup> a just king who could save them from their misery.

The emigration policy was introduced in 1903. People from overcrowded Central Java were moved to sparsely populated regions of Sumatra.<sup>15</sup> Economic activity shifted to the outer islands where labour was in high demand for new capital ventures such as oil exploration and plantation agriculture. This need meant that a labour recruitment scheme needed to be implemented as quickly as possible. The Javanese and the Sundanese were not at all attracted to working on the outer islands. This was because they were traditionally very close to their families or because they realised that people who left Java on a contract to work somewhere on the outer islands were harshly treated and seldom returned to their native villages. When I was a little boy I was told that many people were kidnapped by agents working for

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<sup>13</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Hong Kong: Gunung Agung, 1966, 67.

<sup>14</sup> *Ratu Adil* refers to a popular messianic figure in Javanese folklore.

<sup>15</sup> De Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*, 461

plantations and companies on the outer islands, People in my village knew that they had to run away from a certain red car, which was said to go into remote places to kidnap people.

The Ethical Policy contradicted the realities of Dutch colonial policy. The Ethical Policy was based on humanitarian principles to ensure that the Indonesian people were provided with sufficient food, clothing, housing, education and other human facilities. On the other hand, colonialism, especially the Economic Open Door Policy, was entirely profit-driven. Since the Dutch colonial government did not have the means to fund major development projects, it introduced the Economic Open Door Policy to encourage investment by foreign companies, notably British, American and Japanese, which it could then tax. The government allowed the Indonesian people to suffer from unemployment, dysentery epidemics and at times even starvation. Therefore some Javanese were willing to emigrate to Sumatra, Borneo and other islands even though they often had to work very hard in remote places without enough food, shelter, education and medical facilities. They had to stay far away from their families, friends and customs without the facilities which gave them a better life. The emigration projects under the Dutch Ethical Policy did not work very well because of a lack of funds to develop new living and agricultural areas on the islands outside Java. Most who left Java worked as coolies on plantations in places like East Sumatra and Borneo and suffered harsh conditions, including penal sanctions if they wished to break their contracts and leave. The colonial government could not ask foreign investors in the plantation and mining industries to treat people more humanely because it was afraid they would leave the country if their investments were not profitable.

The irrigation projects under the Dutch Ethical Policy were also unsuccessful,

because the island of Java was overcrowded. There was no more land in Java for planting paddy rice, whilst the other islands like Sumatra, Borneo and Celebes had to be developed to become suitable for planting paddy rice. The colonial government needed funds, manpower, technical know-how and skills. The huge trees of the virgin forests of Sumatra, Borneo and Celebes were a rich resource to be cut down and sold abroad. To begin with, the colonial government required a successful emigration policy, that is the government had to be able to keep emigrants and people in the remote places of the islands.

Since the cultivation of paddy rice requires at least six months, the government had to supply emigrants and people in the remote places with paddy rice, salted fish, salt, sugar, coffee, tea, clothing, medication and tools to clear land and grow crops. It was a very hard task for the colonial government, because there were no asphalted roads available at all from seaports and railheads to remote places. As a result, the colonial government failed to organise and implement effectively the emigration and irrigation projects.

Government education projects were more successfully implemented. Students from all ranks in theory enjoyed the free European-style education with a monthly education benefit between 30 and 50 Dutch guilders for every Dutch High School student. However, the system was very elitist, admission was on merit, places were very limited, and only a fraction of the applicants was admitted. Moreover, soon after the educational benefit was restricted to only the best students in each high school. Finally, it was cancelled altogether in 1930 and people were forced to pay fees in order to send their children to the Dutch schools. The people, especially the rich and the elite, loved the school system because their children could later obtain jobs easily. When a member of an Indonesian family graduated from a government high school,

college or university in Holland, he could become a high ranking government official with a high salary. He could then belong to the upper-class *priyayi* which was respected by many people.

There emerged young and clever people with university degrees, such as Ir Sukarno, Drs Mohammad Hatta, Dr Cipto Mangunkusumo, and Mr Ali Sastroamijoyo, who became leaders of the Indonesian people and heroes of the quest for Indonesian independence. The education system introduced under the auspices of the Ethical Policy was more beneficial to the freedom fighters than to the Dutch colonial government because the European-style educated Indonesian young people became leaders and members of Indonesian political parties who fought for Indonesian independence.

## **9. Budi Utomo**

The Dutch colonial government created upper class officials among the natives, or *priyayi*, who were of royal or aristocratic descent. Many were descendants of sultans or sunans. The *priyayi* served as regents,<sup>17</sup> *wedana*<sup>18</sup> or *camat*<sup>19</sup> alongside Dutch officials working for the Dutch colonial administration or for the Sultan. The *priyayi* had access to the best educational facilities and could become doctors, teachers or high-ranking officials.

Doctor Wahidin Sudirohusodo, who was a member of the *priyayi* and a retired medical doctor, had great concern for the intellectual development of his fellow native Javanese. He started fund-raising to grant fellowships to his fellow countrymen who needed money for their study. In 1908, following a great Javanese congress in the

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<sup>17</sup> Person appointed to rule under a governor.

<sup>18</sup> District chief, ruling under a regent.

<sup>19</sup> Subdistrict head, ruling under a *wedana*.

Dutch Teachers' Training College at Yogyakarta, Doctor Wahidin established *Budi Utomo* (High or Beautiful Endeavour) to promote traditional Javanese culture and to represent the interests of the lesser *priyayi*. *Budi Utomo* did not attract widespread support from the *priyayi* class who were afraid of competition from the young intellectuals and wanted to keep their inherited positions in the Dutch colonial administration.<sup>21</sup>

## 10. *Sarekat Islam* (SI or Islamic Union)

In the beginning *Budi Utomo* was not a political party. It was a culture-oriented organisation and only paid attention to the needs of the *priyayi* and members of the native civil service (*pangreh praja*). Since the well-being of the common people was neglected, there were efforts to set up a broader-based popular organisation to represent their interests. It was in 1909 that a graduate of OSVIA (Training School for Native Officials) named Tirtoadisurjo, who had left Government service and become a journalist, founded the *Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah* (Islamic Commercial Union) in Batavia. In 1910 at Buitenzorg (Bogor) he set up another such organisation. In the following year he encouraged a successful *batik* (an Indonesian style of fabric dyeing) trader in Surakarta named Haji Samanhudi, to found *Sarekat Dagang Islam* as an anti-Chinese *batik* traders' cooperative. Several branches were soon set up. The organisation changed its name to *Sarekat Islam* on 10 September 1912 with Umar Said Tjokroaminoto as chairman and Abdul Muis and Haji Gunawan as vice chairmen. Tjokroaminoto was a charismatic figure of the organisation who inspired Sukarno, briefly his future son-in-law and first president of the Republic of Indonesia, to become a political leader.

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<sup>21</sup> De Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*, 464.

*Sarekat Islam* welcomed natives who wanted to build an Independent Moslem Indonesian nation.<sup>22</sup> It then became a political party and gained mass support to struggle for self-government within the Dutch East Indies. By 1916 the organisation claimed to have 80 branches throughout Indonesia with a total membership of about 350,000. Its members were allowed to enter political organisations, so many SI members joined the *Indische Social Democratische Vereniging*, ISDV, which was founded on 9 May 1914 by the Dutch Marxist H.J.F.M. Sneevliet and other socialists such as J.B. Brandsteder, H.W. Dekker and P. Bergsma.<sup>23</sup> *Sarekat Islam* became more and more involved in revolutionary activities. Communist elements entered the organisation, and the struggle for power between the Moslem and the Communist leaders culminated in the division of *Sarekat Islam* in 1921. The split was caused by different objectives and tactics carried out by its right wing – which was moderate and more Islamicist – and its left wing which was Communist-oriented and radical.<sup>24</sup> The SI left-wing leaders were Semaun, Alimin and Darsono – who also became PKI Semarang branch leaders – while SI right-wing leaders were Abdul Muis, Agus Salim and Suryopranoto, who were in Yogyakarta. When the Moslem leaders of the SI right-wing realised that the Comintern, the Moscow-based international socialist organisation, was opposed to the concept of Pan-Islamism, Agus Salim and Abdul Muis of the *Centraal Sarekat Islam* in Yogyakarta (which attempted to exercise overall control over this very decentralised organisation) changed its statutes, forbidding joint membership of rival parties.

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<sup>22</sup> Mohammad Sidky Daeng Materu, *Sejarah Pergerakan Nasional Bangsa Indonesia*, Edisi ketiga, Jakarta: P.T. Gunung Agung, 1985, 15-18.

<sup>23</sup> Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto (eds), *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia V*, Edisi keempat, Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Balai Pustaka, 1984, 198-199; George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1952, 71.

<sup>24</sup> Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, 203-204.

## 11. *Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI (Indonesian Communist Party)*

Thus, the multi-racial radical association, *Indische Sociaal Democratische Vereniging* (ISDV or Indies Social-Democratic Association, established in 1914), attempted to build support among the broader Indonesian population by infiltrating *Sarekat Islam*, the largest mass movement in the colony. Under the direction of its Dutch leader, H.J.F.M. Sneevliet, who was a committed Marxist and a Comintern agent, members were encouraged to join *Sarekat Islam* and promote the ISDV's revolutionary agenda. This policy proved extremely successful for two main reasons. First was the inability of the *Centraal Sarekat Islam*, CSI, to exercise complete control over the party branches, which were recognised as autonomous units under Dutch colonial law. Second, since *Sarekat Islam* was not officially classed as a political party, every SI member was entitled to join other associations. Most intellectuals joined several organisations which accommodated their particular interests.<sup>25</sup>

Sneevliet successfully persuaded two prominent SI leaders, Semaun and Darsono, who had joined the Surabaya branch in 1916, to join the ISDV. Not long afterwards Semaun was transferred to Semarang, where the local SI branch was strongly influenced by the Marxist doctrines promoted by the ISDV. By 1917 it had grown into a mass organisation with 20,000 members and had become increasingly hostile towards the moderate, anti-Marxist policies of the CSI leadership. Since SI leaders considered that the basic cause of the conflict was the ISDV, the 1917 national congress of *Sarekat Islam* decided to break off all relations with the organisation, especially as it had become an avid supporter of communism following the Bolshevik victory in the Russian revolution of 1917.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 199 – 200.

After that time ISDV had become an even more clearly Communist body. Late in 1917 it had organised three thousand soldiers and sailors into soviets, mainly in the port of Surabaya. The colonial government crushed these soviets during 1918 and in 1919 exiled Sneevliet and arrested most of the other Dutch leaders of the party.<sup>26</sup> Although the Dutch radicals disappeared, ISDV did not collapse at all, but fell into Indonesian leadership which was able to recruit its mass base. During 1919 the Indonesian ISDV leaders were making every effort to infiltrate *Sarekat Islam* with the intention of making the latter more radical. Early in 1919 there were rural troubles in Surakarta led by Haji Misbach alias “red Haji”, who was Muslim but became Communist because he preached the doctrine that Islam and Communism were the same thing. There were Indonesian and Eurasian leaders involved including E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, the radical Indo-European who founded the *Indische Partij* in 1911. Misbach and Douwes Dekker were arrested while Tjipto Mangunkusumo was banned from all Javanese-speaking areas. ISDV was then led by Semaun and Darsono, the latter a young Javanese aristocrat.

When the *Sociaal Democratische Arbeids-partij*, SDAP (Social Democratic workers’ Party) in the Netherlands became a Communist Party, the ISDV in Indonesia joined them too and changed its name into *Partai Komunis Hindia* on 23 May 1920, soon after renamed the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI), with Semaun as chairman, Darsono as Vice-chairman, P. Bergsma as secretary, H.W. Dekker as Treasurer, and Sugono and his comrade-in-arms as members of the Central Committee.<sup>27</sup> Since the organisation could not pass its revolutionary ideology onto SI members any longer, they changed the name of the SI left wing organisation to *SI-Merah* (Red Islamic

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<sup>26</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 165

<sup>27</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, 74

Union), which became *Sarekat Rakyat* (people's Union) in April 1924.<sup>28</sup> They intensified their Communist propaganda without hesitating to use the prophesy of Joyoboyo<sup>29</sup> and the *Ratu Adil* (Just King) concept, as well as Moslem traditions and Koranic verses. The second congress of Comintern in Moscow of July 1920 agreed that the Indonesian Communist Party should work within the mass organisation of *Sarekat Islam*, because the latter became a great popular labour organisation, so that the Moslem religious factor became less important. The Comintern allowed the Indonesian Communist Party temporarily to work together with the bourgeois or middle classes to create a revolutionary situation. This was in accordance with the Comintern policy of "entryism", which also promoted cooperation between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang in southern China.

Some Communist leaders such as Alimin, Sardjono, Budi Sutjitro and Sugono were planning to revolt against the Dutch colonial government. This was not approved by Tan Malaka in his capacity of Comintern representative in East Asia, because the PKI was not strong enough to rebel, and the situation and conditions were not favourable for them to do so. But plans for the revolt had gone too far to be controlled so it broke out without complete preparation in Jakarta on 13 November 1926, followed by violent uprisings in West Java, Central Java and East Java. These were suppressed by the Dutch colonial government in one week. The Communist insurrection in West Sumatra which broke out on 1 January 1927 was crushed by the Dutch in three days. About 13,000 Communists were arrested, some were shot dead.

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<sup>28</sup> Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto (eds), *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia V*, Edisi keempat, Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Balai Pustaka, 1984, 207- 208.

<sup>29</sup> Joyoboyo was the King of Kediri (East-Java) in 1135-1157 who made a prophecy often interpreted as the deliverance of his people from colonialism by invading 'yellow' people. This prophecy was frequently evoked by Indonesian nationalists during their political campaigns in support of the Japanese occupation and for independence. See Bambang Yudoyono, *Sang Prabu Sri Adji Djojoboyo, 1135-1157*, Jakarta: PT.Karya Unipress untuk Yayasan Hondodento, 1984, 68-76.

Some 4,500 were jailed and 1,308 were exiled to Tanah Merah in the region of Digul Atas (Upper Digul River) in West New Guinea. The Dutch colonial government was always on the alert and ready to suppress any political movements and uprisings.

## **12. *Muhammadiyah***

Since the government kept an eye on political parties so much so that the leaders could be arrested or exiled to places on remote islands, the freedom activists and fighters were trying to educate the younger generation. They did this by setting up schools where they made the pupils or students aware of colonialism, imperialism and independence. *Muhammadiyah*, the most significant Muslim modernist organisation of Indonesia, was established in Yogyakarta in 1912 by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923) who went to Mecca in 1890 and studied with Ahmad Khatib and others. When he came back he tried to reform Islam in Indonesia and to resist the Christianising efforts of Western missionaries by founding educational and welfare institutions. Although *Muhammadiyah* “did not pursue a course of political action” it contributed to “the growth of the intellectual Muslim opposition to the colonial regime.”<sup>30</sup>

## **13. *Taman Siswa***

Another effort to alert people to the effects of colonialism was performed by Suwardi, now renamed Ki Hadjar Dewantara. In 1922 he founded the *Taman Siswa* (Garden of Pupils) school in Yogyakarta and in other places in the Archipelago. *Taman Siswa* had a truly indigenous (non-government and non-Islamic) educational

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<sup>30</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 162; J.A. Legge, *Indonesia*, Third edition, Prentice-Hall, Sydney, 1980, 65.

system, combining modern European-style education and traditional Javanese arts within an atmosphere of individual independence. Since *Taman Siswa* promoted feelings which logically linked personal and national independent outcomes, it appealed to many people. In this way it helped spur a national revival and soon spread to many places. By 1932, it had 166 schools and 11,000 pupils.<sup>31</sup>

## 14. The Great Depression

The Great Depression was an international economic slump that particularly affected North America, Europe, Asia and other industrialised countries. A long decline in economic activity ensued, until 1932 when one out of every four U.S. workers was unemployed. The depression caused millions of workers to become jobless in Germany, Great Britain and other industrial countries. The world economy did not completely recover until 1939 when World War II started.

Indonesia was also affected by the crisis. The price of raw materials dropped, big estates and plantations had to close. Some could continue their work but only after they cut the wages of their employees and workers. Lots of workers had to be retrenched.<sup>32</sup> Unemployment was rife on Java. The cane sugar mills in the residency of Cirebon had to stop operating, such as those in Sindanglaut, Karangsuwung, Palimanan, Jatiwangi and Kadipaten which had about 2,500 employees and workers who were all breadwinners for their families. The prices of peanuts and onions dropped as well. No exporters in Cirebon wanted to buy agricultural produce. There were no jobs in the fields either. The women who used to work in paddy fields, peanut fields and onion fields stayed at home, sitting idle whilst the men who used to work in the fields or cane sugar mills went fishing, hunting birds or gambling on cock

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<sup>31</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia* 168.

<sup>32</sup> de Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*, 476.

fighting. Many public servants were dismissed or had to survive on 25% of their former salary. Later some could return to their jobs with the government again but others were completely dismissed.

My parents' shop was also quiet. Some people came to buy rice on credit only to disappear and never pay the bill. Many people, male and female, were looking for jobs. Their aim was to have rice to feed their family at home. The government imported rice from Saigon. The quality of the rice was very low it and had an unpleasant smell. The price was three and half cents per kilo. People preferred to buy it rather than go hungry. Some people came with two chicken eggs and asked to exchange it for some rice, or even brought live chickens or coconuts to exchange. They were lucky when they could have one meal a day. Many small businesses had to close. My parents were lucky, since they could survive and make some money. "One man's death is another man's breath" is a proverbial expression. Our neighbours had to close their stores but my parents were still going strong. My father was still successful in planting peanuts and onions. Although the prices were low, my father could still make a profit. God blessed our family. During the Great Depression, my parents were able to build a stone shop building and a house in 1931.

The Open Door Policy, allowing foreign investment as described above, was only beneficial to the colonial government and foreign enterprises. The native people themselves were suffering a lot because they had to compete with foreign enterprises which had lots of capital and modern technology as well as a marketing system in their business operation. In Sumatra and Borneo, where the natives used to plant rubber trees for their living, they had to pay tax to the colonial government so that they earned almost nothing from their rubber planting. In December 1935, the rubber planters had to pay 95% tax for their rubber crop so that they received only 2 cents for

every kilogram they sold to the exporter or its agent.<sup>33</sup> The people were poor and hungry which caused riots among rubber planters in the area of Siak. A high-ranking Dutch officer was fired when he investigated the various reasons of the riots and revealed that the government tax levied on the peoples' rubber was not fair and was much the same as stealing their money

Lots of people in the Indonesian Archipelago were suffering from the great depression, including peasants cultivating pepper in Aceh, paddy in Lombok and coconuts in Halmahera. The Dutch colonial government paid more attention to the restoration of government enterprises and foreign business interests rather than to the welfare of the people. Therefore this depressing economic situation and the unfair Dutch colonial policy caused the native intellectuals seek to find a system and policy to release the Indonesian people from colonialism and imperialism.

The government did not have enough money to pay for the defence of the colony. Therefore it had to dismiss thousands of native sailors and navy officers, who had been inspired by the native sailors of the ship *Zeven Provinciën* who had resisted the government and mutinied against their captain, arresting him and other Dutch officers. The mutineers tried to seize control of the ship at sea but had to give up and surrender to the government in the Indian Ocean southwest of Sumatra, after the government threatened them with bombardment.

## 15. Pestilence

In 1928 the population of Java was afflicted by the bubonic plague, a deadly infectious disease that spread quickly throughout the residency of Cirebon, especially

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<sup>33</sup> W. O'Malley, 'Great Depression' in Colin Wild and Peter Carey (editors), *Gelora Api Revolusi*, (*Raging Fire of Revolution*): A Historical Anthology, Jakarta: BBC (Indonesian Section) and PT Gramedia, 1986, 72-78.

in our district of Cilimus. Symptoms include a high fever and swelling in the upper part of a person's thigh. People were unable to survive long with the plague and they often died one week after they were infected.

My 15 year-old cousin Swee Gin, who used to help my mother in the shop, was infected by bubonic plague. He suffered from a headache and a high fever for three days and he died before Dr Tan Ping Ie arrived to help him. My parents hesitated to send for a doctor since they were afraid that Swee Gin would be isolated in quarantine far away from home. They were afraid that Swee Gin's parents would accuse them of neglecting him. But at last my parents sent for Dr Tan Ping Ie, however his arrival was too late. The death of Swee Gin was a great tragedy for my parents, especially my mother. She was very sad and did not have an appetite for food and often had sleepless nights.

Almost every day I saw native people carrying and burying their dead while singing Muslim hymns. There was only one government public health doctor in the regency of Kuningan, aided by native district officers who were not familiar with pestilence or the bubonic plague. Because European doctors were well paid, the government never had enough funds to provide adequate medical facilities for its colonial subjects. There were four private doctors in the city of Cirebon, but few common people could afford a private doctor and medicine from the chemist.

One day my father developed a fever and his upper thigh began to swell. He took one aspirin tablet three times a day but his pain and fever failed to subside. My mother decided to send him to Dr Tan Ping Ie in Cirebon. Dr Tan said nothing but asked my father to come back in one week. Altogether it cost my mother 25 guilders including a taxi fare that a common native person could not pay. My father got an injection and a prescription to buy medicine from the chemist.

My father was getting better. Therefore he thought it unnecessary to consult the doctor again. On the ninth day after his visit to Dr Tan, our family was shocked by the arrival of the *Wedana* (district head), Wardmaster (head of Chinatown) and some district officers. They had received a telephone call from Dr Tan who told them that my father was suffering from the bubonic plague. He asked them to investigate and to isolate my father in a barracks if the disease was deteriorating. My father welcomed the officers and told them that he was getting better. He did not consult Dr Tan that week because his fever and headache were healed. He promised the public officers to see Dr Tan again as soon as possible if he thought it necessary to do so. The officers were satisfied with my father's response and left our family alone. The bubonic plague took a heavy toll on the regency of Kuningan including our district of Cilimus where thousands of human lives were lost.

#### **a) Clean Environment Campaign**

Each year the government carried out a Clean Environment Campaign in every village supervised by the village head who was assisted by all the village officials. All rubbish had to be thrown into a big hole and burned. The gutters had to be cleaned and the rivers had to run smoothly and all the rubbish had to be removed. There were to be no mice or rats in houses and all mice and rats had to be killed and burned. All palm leaf roofs had to be replaced by roof tiles. These roof tiles were available on credit from the village administration. The village head was responsible for the sale of the roof tiles to the *Wedana* and the latter was responsible to the *Bupati* (Regent). The Regent himself was a native, usually assisted by the *Assisten Residen* (Dutch Assistant to the head of Residency) who reported all matters to the Resident. A native building supervisor was appointed to control the houses of the regency of Kuningan including

the district of Cilimus. The building supervisor was a graduate of the Technical College in Bandung who usually worked together with the head of a district and the head of a village.

I appreciated this programme which certainly improved public health and amenity, but forcing natives to change their thatched roofs of palm leaves into roof tiles required many sacrifices. Farmers had to sell their paddy fields and other properties at low prices, whilst the economic depression was not yet over. The land of the natives was finally handed over to the people with money who usually were the Dutch and the Chinese. The native people became poorer whilst the Dutch and the Chinese became wealthier. So even a socially progressive and well intentioned programme in some ways worked against the very people it purported to help.

## **16. My Schooling**

This then was the overall situation in the Netherlands Indies when I was a child. My parents were Chinese, so I was a member of a minority. The Chinese people were considered second class citizens in the Dutch East Indies, both by the Dutch and the natives, and became agents or go-betweens, especially in trade and business. In spite of this, the Chinese were not allowed to enter certain places such as swimming pools, European primary schools, hospitals, first class train carriages and so on. Dr Kwa Tjoan Sioe, who had a Dutch wife, was not permitted to enter the “Manggarai” swimming pool because he was not European. The doctor became angry and set up “Chung Hoa” swimming pool in Mangga Besar Street with the help of the Chinese community. From that time Dr Kwa Tjoan Siu became a propagandist for the Republic of China and urged the Chinese community to love China and to support its language and its culture.

One evening, three important persons in the Cilimus Chinese community visited my father. They planned to set up a Chinese school for the Chinese community to enable their children to learn the Chinese language and culture. They said that China was independent and advised that a good Chinese person should be familiar with the Chinese language and culture. They added that China was a big country with hundreds of millions of people and a culture of more than five thousand years. They asked my father for donations and suggested that his children should be sent to the Chinese School.

#### **a) I Attend a Chinese School**

From that time, my sister and I went to the Chinese school in the afternoon. In the morning we attended the local Malay school until 1pm and in the afternoon we attended the Chinese school which ran from 2pm until 5pm. The system of learning Chinese was different to the systems of the Malay or the Dutch schools run by the Dutch East Indies government. I had to memorise every passage in our reader and learn the writing of every character. We had to learn the Chinese language through reading, memorising and writing. There was no conversation, composition or arithmetic at all. There was only one teacher who had to care for all the pupils of several levels. The system was not too bad for the overseas Chinese who did not speak Mandarin at home, but this system could not be implemented for pupils of higher degrees where the passages from the book were too long to be memorised. The consequences of this learning system was that the pupils were not able to engage in Chinese conversation and in the end forgot the reading, the writing and the memorising. Therefore there are some Chinese in Indonesia who can speak Mandarin, Fujianese or Cantonese but cannot write Chinese characters at all. The Chinese school

only lasted three years and had to be closed due to financial difficulties. Besides that, some pupils from rich families went to schools in Cirebon because their parents wanted more effective schooling for their children.

### **b) I Attend a Dutch Course**

My father also wanted a better education for me. He sent me to Mrs van Heimer in the afternoon to learn Dutch. I had to be with her at 2pm in a place called Sangkanurip, about six kilometres from my home. I used to go by *dokar* accompanied by a maid servant called Baenah. I had a classmate by the name of Chia Lee Choo, usually accompanied by Ahmad, who walked back home with me until we could find a *dokar* to take us back to Cilimus.

I loved learning Dutch and attended lessons regularly and was never absent. Since Mrs van Heimer wanted me to learn better conversational skills she asked me to attend the course in the morning. I was in year four at the local Malay school but since I loved learning Dutch I left the Malay school. In the morning course I sat with a Dutch girl by the name of Marietje who was regularly dropped off at 7.30am by her father. My Dutch was improving because I always had to speak Dutch with my teacher and my classmate. Marietje was nice and friendly to me. She loved to correct me when I made mistakes in my conversations and she always asked me to ride a scooter with her before and after class. I did not feel any discrimination at all and was happy learning Dutch with Mrs van Heimer. But one day she suggested that my father should send me to a Dutch school in Cirebon if my father wanted to obtain better schooling for me. She gave my father a letter of introduction for the principal of the school concerned. I said goodbye to Mrs van Heimer and Marietje, who had tears in her eyes.

### **c) I Attend School in Cirebon**

One day my father took me to the school of Mrs Drawnchef in Cirebon. He gave her the letter from Mrs van Heimer and told her that I was in year four of the Malay school in Cilimus. Mrs Drawnchef asked me to read a textbook and then was silent for a moment. Then she said “Mr Sun, your son is clever and I can put him in year three. To make it easy for me I will call him Piet (Peter). But do you mind paying 10 guilders for the school fee? If you agree with this condition your son can start tomorrow from 7am”. My father nodded and paid fifteen guilders to Mrs Drawnchef; ten guilders for the school fees and five guilders for my new textbook.

Since I was eleven years old and my parents thought I was not big enough to take care of myself I was entrusted to Nico, my 15 year-old cousin, who used to go to Cirebon to school. His parents were rich and he was spoiled. He always used to have at least fifty guilders in his pocket. This was a fortune in those days. He was a clever boy but lazy and naughty. I went to Cirebon with him on a bus called “Neutraal”. He often played truant or paid the bus driver to take him anywhere he liked. My parents became aware of this and were afraid that I would behave like Nico. They asked me not to go to Cirebon anymore. I was very sad although I could understand their concerns.

I did not know which would be the most useful, the Dutch or the English school. One thing that I had in my mind was that I wanted to go to Cirebon and attend any school. I asked my father if I could attend an English course at Cirebon English School, owned and supervised by Mr Hok Siu from Singapore. I said to my father that I could go with Lim Kwi Wan, a 17 year-old student at the English School. My father contacted Lim Kwi Wan and asked him some questions about the English school. The

next morning my father took me to Cirebon English School and spoke with Mr Hok Siu about me. I was permitted to sit in year two of the English School and start attending the same day. After that my father went back home earlier whilst I myself went home with Lim Kwi Wan whom my father asked to take care of me.

Mr Hok Siu was the only teacher at the school and he taught about eighty students who sat at big round wooden tables in accordance with the level of every student. Since I already knew the Dutch alphabet, my only problem was with the meaning and pronunciation of English. I had to teach myself and when I did not know a word, I asked my neighbouring student. I was trying to learn well so that I could read very well when Mr Hok Siu came to our table. The teacher was satisfied with me but my classmates were jealous of me. Some of them disturbed me when I was learning by pinching my bottom and hiding my reading book. Therefore I could not study the passage well so that when the teacher came to my table I was not ready to read well. My teacher reprimanded me and threatened to punish me when I failed for the second time.

I had the idea of making friends with a bigger boy by the name of Peng Chiang who was the cock of the walk. Peng Chiang was good to me. He looked after me and defended me when needed. He wanted nothing in return except for some assistance with his lessons. From then on nobody dared to disturb me again. I often went to Peng Chiang's home for a snack and drink and went back home one hour later. One day I went with Peng Chiang and his close friend to a village, just for fun, and looked for mangos to gather with a catapult. We were away for more than 2 hours and came back to school where I saw my father waiting for me. He said nothing and took me home by bus. At home he rebuked me for my wrongdoing and since he was afraid that I would become a delinquent, he said to me with a firm voice, "Liang Tek,

you will not go to Cirebon anymore! I love you so much. Go back to the local Malay school and be a good boy.”

I could do nothing but obey my father. I was re-enrolled in the year four class of the Malay school. In the beginning I was very sad but as I made progress I felt more comfortable, especially when I was ranked fifth in a class of 35 pupils. Since the lessons were so easy and involved very little learning I had plenty of time to play in the afternoon hours.

## **17. The Wandering Boy**

After lunch I used to leave home to play with Lie Pian Hong, Lie Pian Eng and Lie Pian Im who lived about 500 metres away from my home. We often went together to play by a river or a pool which had been built by the government to irrigate rice fields especially in the dry seasons. The pool was called “Kedung Jambe” and measured four by three metres and was about three metres deep. I could not swim and stayed on the pool bank watching my friends swimming joyfully. I often came home late which made my parents worried and they sent a male servant to find me. My mother reprimanded me and asked me to not come home late.

One day my friend Lie Pian Hong was visited by a martial arts master by the name of Master Toan Liang. He was looking for some boys and young men whom he intended to teach and train in a form of Chinese martial arts called Kung Fu. My friends and I wanted local Chinese boys and young men to join our Kung Fu training. In the beginning we succeeded in gathering ten trainees which later grew to twenty. I learned to ward off the blows and hits until my arms became swollen. Soon I was trained to step forward and kick. After that I had to practise this basic Kung Fu exercise with a friend until we both became very tired. I grew up a brave and healthy

boy who attended the local Malay school in the morning and underwent the Kung Fu training twice a week in the afternoon.

When we were free in the afternoons we went to “Kedung Jambe” to swim or to watch cock fighting organised by Mang Siti in his back yard. The cock fighting was performed twice a week as well as on the days when, by chance, we were free from Kung Fu training. In the beginning I just went for fun but eventually I was attracted to it and joined people in gambling. One day Lie Pian Eng asked me to go to Cibeureum, five kilometres from Cilimus, to buy a cock. The cock was red, strong and brave because he was the only rooster in the garden surrounded by five hens. The owner asked for five guilders for the cock. We concluded the deal for four guilders and Lie Pian Eng promised me that he would take care of the cock which was named Karcis.<sup>17</sup> Since the cock had two sharp hard projections on the back of its legs, we were sure that the cock would be able to hit its rival several times and emerge victorious.

One Sunday, a lot of people gathered in the backyard of Mang Siti to watch the cock-fighting between our cock, Karcis, and Sugih, a white-red rooster belonging to Mr Opzichter, a government official in the Department of Irrigation. The stake was two hundred guilders which was covered by many people. I myself bet five guilders, my friend Lie Pian Eng bet five guilders whilst Mang Siti bet three guilders on Karcis. We collected two hundred guilders as the stake for Karcis, whilst Mr Opzichter bet alone for his cock. It took Karcis only thirty minutes to achieve victory, leaving his opponent lying in a pool of blood with four holes in its head. I won five guilders and many other people also won money. They were very happy but I was not happy at all. I was deeply affected by the image of the dead cock lying on the ground. My heart went out to the poor animal. I had no appetite for two days and my mother was so

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<sup>17</sup> Karcis means a spectator ticket. The more enthusiastic people are about the match the more tickets can be sold. We were sure that our cock would be able to hit its rival several times with its spurs like somebody selling tickets to enthusiastic people.

concerned that she gave me medicine for stomach ache. She was worried about me because I did not tell her that I had an image of the dead cock in my head. My mother sent me to Doctor Liem Swi Lam who gave me medicine for my stomach. I recovered in one week but looked pale and became thinner.

Instead of wandering, I sat almost every afternoon next to my uncle Liem Po Teng, reading the *Sin Po* and *Keng Po* daily newspapers from Batavia. In the beginning I was attracted by the pictures and comments. Afterwards, I was interested in the daily events occurring in China. The newspapers told me that on 18 September 1931 Japan launched a surprise attack on the Chinese garrison at Mukden where between 70 and 80 Chinese soldiers were killed. Later, in January 1932, I read that Japan attacked the city of Shanghai. Attempts by the U.S. to end the war had failed. By reading newspapers my love for China began to develop whilst my knowledge of politics and history was developing.

## **18. A Good Choice of Schooling**

My parents received a circular that a Dutch Native School (HIS), *Pasundan*, was to be established. The classes would run between 2pm and 5pm. My parents agreed that I would attend HIS *Pasundan* in the afternoon after attending the local Malay school in the morning. When enrolments increased at *Pasundan*, the hours changed to 7am to 1pm. Therefore I had to quit the local Malay school again. I was thirteen when I joined the year three class at *Pasundan* with Mr Atang Gandasaputra as principal assisted by Mr Saleh and Mr Jaya.

Mr Atang was very close to the pupils and sometimes went with them on a picnic. One day he went on a picnic with the pupils to Situ Jaya (Lake of Victory) which was about fifteen kilometres from Cilimus. We left our school at about 7am

and arrived at the lake at about 11am. The girls started to cook meals and collect water whilst the boys were sent to find some wood and branches. The lake was very big and people there caught fish for a living. The scenery was beautiful. We saw the delta of the River Cilosari united with the Java Sea whilst dozens of seabirds were flying about to catch fish. When everything was ready, we started to have our lunch. It was really very nice to have our meal after having a long walk. We played hide and seek and sang songs until we had to go back home. We returned to school at 5pm and we were dismissed after saying goodbye to the principal.

Near the *Pasundan* school my cousin Goat Kwan from Jatitujuh lived with her husband in Cilimus and ran a shop. It was in August 1932 that her mother, my aunty San Nio, the wife of Uncle Gouw Chiaw Seng, visited my mother and told her that her daughter Goat Kwan had married and lived near the *Pasundan* School. She was coming to Cilimus with her son Sui Boon, who was twenty, and her little daughter, Goat Siok, who was ten years old. Aunty San Nio often came to Cilimus and visited us, so she became close to my mother. One day my aunty said to my mother: “Sister, I wish that we not only were relatives but parents-in-law as well. Look for Goat Siok before you ask for the hand of a girl for your son.” My mother smiled and nodded.

Mr Atang was a graduate from the Dutch Native Teachers’ Training College (HIK) in Bandung and knew a lot about Sukarno – the first President of the Republic of Indonesia – and the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI). He taught the pupils that the future Indonesian national anthem had been banned, and that Sukarno was a genuine hero of the quest for Indonesian independence. Sukarno refused to work with the Dutch colonial government after his civil engineering graduation, although he could have been a member of the *Volksraad*. Mr Atang added that Sukarno preferred to fight for independence even after he was arrested.

Sukarno was a clever and brave young man and when he was attending the HBS in Surabaya he loved reading, especially about politics, history and philosophy. He made use of the rich library run by the Theosophical Society of which his father, Sukemi, had long been a member. Sukarno's landlord was Umar Said Tjokroaminoto, the most prominent chairman of *Sarekat Islam*. Leaders of other parties or branches of *Sarekat Islam* came to visit Tjokroaminoto for several days at a time. While his fellow boarders were out watching a football or volley-ball game, Sukarno would sit at their feet and listened to their explanations about the struggle for independence. He learnt from them about capitalism, colonialism and imperialism, which made the Indonesian people very poor.

As an active nationalist, Sukarno's first positive steps were taken in the Surabaya branch of the youth organisation *Tri Koro Dharmo* (Three Holy Objectives), formed on 17 March 1915 as a subsidiary organisation of *Budi Utomo*. It was mainly a social organisation of secondary school students and devoted itself to perpetuating indigenous culture, such as the teaching of Javanese dances or the instruction of the *gamelan* orchestra (Indonesian percussion orchestra). As *Tri Koro Dharmo* was considered Java-centric by the youth of West-Java and Madura, its name was changed to *Jong Java* (Young Java) on 12 June 1918 with the purpose of avoiding a split among its members.

The non-political nature of *Jong Java*, which was almost completely concerned with the educational and cultural problems of Java and Madura, did not appeal to the more radical-minded Sukarno. He said – when he was older – that independence must be achieved by revolution without waiting for people to be educated completely. The revolution must be carried out at once, because the forces of

colonialism, capitalism and imperialism would never give up their power. They had to be overthrown by force.

Sukarno needed power to fight colonialism and imperialism. The power which he thought was effective was mass power, created by the people and for the people. Therefore on July 4, 1927, Sukarno and his Bandung Study Club took the initiative in setting up a new political party, the *Perserikatan Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Association) with Sukarno as chairman. This party was later changed to *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist party, PNI) in May 1928. The party aimed to achieve a complete *Indonesia Merdeka* (a completely independent Indonesia) with nationalism as the common denominator and worked together with Moslems as well as Marxists. This unity of political doctrine later involved into the concept of NASAKOM, from *Nasionalisme, Agama, Komunisme* (Nationalism, Religion, Communism) which Sukarno would implemented much later in the period of Guided Democracy from 1957 until 1965.

The ideas of Sukarno were already in the mind of Mr Atang when I entered the school. HIS *Pasundan* was a private school established by Sundanese people, living in West Java. Their educational organisation was called *Paguyuban Pasundan* (Sundanese Institution) and it had established many Dutch Native primary schools in West Java to promote and improve the education of the natives. One of the most prominent figures to emerge from the *Paguyuban Pasundan* was Mr Oto Iskandardinata. He was in favour of a federation where West Java could become a state rather than a province of the Republic of Indonesia. He was in danger of being assassinated by his rivals during the turmoil between 1945 and 1950 when the government of Sukarno demanded a united system whilst the Dutch government offered a federal system of state.

When Mr Atang had to leave our school for Bandung, he was replaced by Mr Achmad who was a graduate of the European Teachers' Training College in Batavia. He was a clever teacher and spoke Dutch fluently. Since Indonesia was suffering from the Great Depression, Mr Achmad could not get a job at a government primary school. He had to take a job as primary teacher at *Pasundan*. We were lucky to have him in our class. Our speaking and writing skills were very much improved. I was amongst the best pupils in language, arithmetic, history and geography. Mr Achmad liked me very much and I owe a lot to him for my Dutch literacy skills and we remained friends for many years until he passed away on March 13, 1994 at the age of 82.

I was in the fifth year of *Pasundan* when I moved, in August 1935, to the same level of the Dutch Chinese Mission School in Jalaksana about 5km from Cilimus in the direction of Kuningan. Mr Achmad felt regret about my departure. When I said goodbye he said: "Liang Tek, I will miss you very much, furthermore you are among the best pupils in your class." I said nothing since I was thinking about my future. I wondered: "How can I continue studying at a government recognised school? Can I get a good job with a diploma from an unpopular private school?" Since my parents agreed with my opinion, I did not go back to HIS *Pasundan* but enrolled myself as a fifth year class pupil of the Dutch Chinese Mission School.

I was the only pupil in the class. My teacher, Mr Sie Kok Tjiaw, drilled me in Dutch composition and arithmetics. I worked alone since I did not have brothers, sisters or friends who were in a higher class of a Dutch primary school. I loved to study and work by myself. I worked hard and forgot the Kung Fu training as well as the cock fighting. I concentrated on my studies and grew to love it very much. For once at last I was fond of staying at home and reading a lot of books. When Mr van

der Meulen, the school inspector, found out about me, he called me to his room and gave me a one hour special lesson in Dutch.

It was in December 1935 when I visited Mr van der Meulen to request whether I could attend the seventh year class of the Dutch Chinese Mission School in the city of Cirebon. He promised to discuss it with the principal, Mr Davidse. When we were celebrating Christmas in 1935, Mr van der Meulen called me and said: "Merry Christmas to you, Liang Tek. God is with you. You've received a valuable present from Him, that is, you may attend the seventh year class in Cirebon and work for the coming examination in June 1936. You may start next year on 6 January 1936. Give this letter to Mr Davidse, the principal. I wish you all the best and I am sure that you will pass the examination in June 1936. Do not forget, pray and work hard!" I thanked Mr van der Meulen very much and told my parents about the news. They were very happy and promised to buy me a leather school bag and a new pair of shoes.

At 6am on January 6, 1936 I was standing in front of my house waiting for a coming bus going to Cirebon. I saw the bus "Neutraal" coming which soon stopped when I signalled it. The conductor opened the door and invited me to sit next to a schoolgirl by the name of Dinah. The girl smiled at me and said "Hello." She asked me which school I was going to. I answered that I was going to the Dutch Chinese Mission School to attend the seventh year class. "Congratulations to you, brother," she said. "You are clever and lucky as well. We are at the same school and can be dropped off at ten minutes to seven. Please, do not get off at the bus station but go with me to school." I was happy to have a nice schoolmate.

Mr Davidse seemed to know me already. He let me sit alone in the second row of the class. He asked me what my name was and introduced me to the class which consisted of twenty pupils. I was very proud and thanked God in my heart that He had

helped me with my studies and in the end allowed me to study at the highest level of a popular Dutch primary school with a native Dutchman as principal and teacher. Mr Davidse told the class the life story of the famous Dutch painter Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Ryn (1606-1669). Mr Davidse asked me to retell the story in front of the class and I was able to do so, although I made some mistakes. Mr Davidse seemed to be satisfied with my oral skills and was sure that I could understand, speak and write Dutch. From that time I was never chosen to speak again. He trained the class in language, arithmetic, history and geography for the coming final examination in June 1936. I went to school every morning on the Neutraal bus (the bus company had a Dutch name celebrating Dutch neutrality in the First World War) with Dinah next to me. In the afternoon I often went home with her as well. So that was my school life with Dinah every school day until I sat my final examinations with good results.

When Dinah heard that I had achieved high results in the examinations she congratulated me and said “Brother, please do not forget me. Send me a letter wherever you are and I will write to you too.” I answered: “Don’t worry, Dinah, of course I will send you a letter wherever I am. I will visit you next Sunday, Dinah, about noon, to say goodbye to your parents. I am leaving for Solo next month to attend the Dutch Teachers’ Training College.” Our conversation occurred in a bus taking us home from school but had to be broken off when we arrived at Cilimus bus station. We said goodbye to each other and were waving our hands until we could not see each other any more.

The Dutch Chinese Mission Schools were well equipped not only with books and stationery supplies but with Dutch native teachers as well who taught the pupils grammar, composition and speaking skills. The mission schools usually obtained a

financial subsidy from the Dutch East Indies government and were able to pay for Dutch native teachers. The government had to subsidise the mission schools in order to help the mission to spread Christianity. Therefore the Dutch Mission School graduates spoke and wrote better Dutch and were considered better qualified for entry to high schools or working with the government and European enterprises.

## **19. My Father was a Fireworks Dealer**

One month before *Idul Fitri*, the Muslim feast celebrating the end of the fasting period, my father used to sell fireworks assisted by my uncle Kwa Peng Ho and three native friends. Since there were lots of people buying and admiring fireworks the place where the fireworks were displayed was fenced in by bamboo. Not many people could afford fireworks, especially the children. They were coming at first only to admire the fireworks and then to listen to them explode when somebody set them off. People liked fireworks and were trying to get money to buy them. As exploding fireworks became a popular pastime, people were proud of having them. Therefore the fireworks trade used to enjoy a boom ten days before the end of the fasting period. At that time people were coming back from Palembang – where they worked as houseboys, waiters, cooks, servants, drivers etc. with the European families – to visit their families in their home villages. These people were extravagant and bought many fireworks as gifts for their relatives. I often put some fireworks aside for celebrating Chinese New Year and hid them in a small wooden box.

## **20. Far Away from Home**

Students of the Dutch Teachers' Training College in Solo used to meet at the home of a Dutch Protestant clergyman by the name of Sibold van der Linde. We

would spend the night in the city of Cirebon because the train left for Solo at 7am. There were about fifteen students altogether who came from many places within the residency of Cirebon, including Cilimus, Kuningan, Losarang, Indramayu, Cileduk, and Cirebon. We were at the Parujakan railway station at 6am when I saw my father waiting for me since he wanted to see me off.

Our train left Parujakan railway station at 7am. I said goodbye to my father and waved until I could not see him any more. We sat together in one carriage, singing songs and playing the guitar. It was the first time that I had gone on a long train journey without my parents. Although I was comforted by the songs and guitar playing of my friends, my parents were always visible in my mind and tears began rolling down my cheeks. I heard them whispering to me, "Be a clever and good boy, my son. Do not stay away too long, we miss you very much! It is not necessary to go so far away from home and study to be a Dutch teacher with a salary of 90 guilders a month. We can give you a shop with a capital of 3000 guilders from which you can earn 150 guilders a month. You will be successful with our guidance. We can give you the capital and introduce you to our business relations in Cirebon. When you are successful, please marry Goat Siok, your cousin, the daughter of your rich uncle in Jati Tujuh. This way is better and shorter to success than teacher training which takes five years full time and takes you far away from home."

"No father, I will not get married. I want to be a clever man. I am too young to be a husband and a father. No, father, no!"

When I said the last "no" to my father and wept, I awoke. All my friends were laughing at me. They comforted me and said, "Don't worry, Liang Tek. It happened to us as well when we left home for the first time some years ago. We were thinking

of everything at home. Now, we have become accustomed to travelling alone. You will also become accustomed too.”

I did not tell my friends about the dream I had but I thanked them very much for their care and attention. I did not realise that we had passed Tegal and Pekalongan where people speak Javanese and relied upon the *batik* industry for their living. We could see people’s houses along the road where people sat printing coloured designs on a cloth by waxing the parts that are not to be dyed. At about 11am we arrived at Poncol railway station in Semarang. We had three hours to look around Semarang and went by *dokar* to Gang Pinggir (Pinggir street) where we enjoyed rice with several kinds of Chinese cooking. Gang Pinggir is an old street where many Chinese people used to live and run businesses. Near Gang Pinggir is Gang Lombok where the Chinese temple *Tay Kay Sie* (Temple of Great Realisation) was built by the Chinese community in 1771 with a duplicate idol of Admiral Zheng He called Sam Po Kong. The original idol of Sam Po Kong was kept in the temple of *Gunung Batu* (stone mountain) in the area of Simongan which was owned and managed by Mr Johannes who asked for 2000 guilders a year from the Chinese community. The original idol of Sam Po Kong was made on the orders of Wang Jing Hong – a Chinese Muslim Rear Admiral who was deputy to Zheng He – to commemorate Zheng He, the Ming Dynasty admiral who had landed in Semarang in the early fifteenth century. The Chinese in Semarang had moved the statue to Gang Lombok to avoid paying rent to Mr Johannes.<sup>18</sup>

We enjoyed *bapauw* (meat bun), *lumpia* (meat rolls) and several kinds of Chinese cuisine in Gang Pinggir. Afterwards we went to Gang Lombok to visit the temple of Sam Po Kong and looked at antique Chinese statues dating from the 18<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kong Yuanzhi, *Sam Po Kong dan Indonesia*, edited by H.M. Hembing Wijayakusuma, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Jakarta: C.V. Haji Masagung, 1993, 44- 52.

century which had been worshipped by the Chinese community. At about 1pm we went to Tawang railway station to catch the 2pm train for Solo (Surakarta). We were happy to leave Semarang for Solo because our train journey would finish at about 4pm. Then we could take a rest till 6.30 in the evening, the time for dinner before doing our assignments for our classes for the next morning.

From the Solobalpan railway station we travelled by *andong* to the Dutch Teachers' Training College in the street of Margoyudan, a beautiful lane with palm trees along the sides of the road. In the office I saw my name on the list of students. My boarding-house was about 75m from the college building and my landlord was Mr Eigenraam who was also the mathematics teacher in our college.

## **21. Dutch Christian Teachers' Training College**

I went to the "Eigenraam" boarding-house and got a bed in the corner near a window in a room for 12. Beside my bed was a cupboard for my clothes as well as a table and a chair. Senior students usually shared the room with junior students with the purpose that the seniors could help the juniors. There were 42 students of several levels living altogether in the boarding-house.

At 6:30pm the bell rang for dinner and when I entered in the dining room, Mr and Mrs Eigenraam were standing at the door shaking hands with all the students. Our landlord prayed before the meal and thanked our Lord for protecting all of us during the holidays and ensuring that we all arrived safely at the boarding-house. Mr Eigenraam also prayed for the new students and asked our Lord to help them in their studies so they could become good teachers. After prayers we sat down to dinner consisting of white rice, fried fish, fried chicken, *rendang* (meat simmered in spices and coconut milk), chicken soup and one banana for each student.

After dinner we had to stay in the study hall, a large room where the students could study, read and write till 10pm. Nobody was allowed to stay in the sleeping room unless he was unwell. The landlord inspected every sleeping room and investigated any student who was lying in bed. When a student was sick he gave him some medication or sent him to see a medical doctor. All students had their clothes and dishes washed for them. All we had to do was study and to behave well. There were two native male servants who looked after our boarding-house, meals, snacks, washing and cleaned the toilets. Every hour in the evening a landlord walked along the corridors and helped students who had trouble with their lessons. At 10 pm the bell rang, a sign that all students had to stop working and had to get ready for bed. The last inspection of the landlord occurred at 11 pm. At this time all lights had to be turned off and nobody was permitted to stay up.

All students usually woke up at 6am to get ready for breakfast and school. We said “good morning” to each other when we entered our dining room after the bell rang at 6:30am. Our breakfast consisted of fried rice and one fried egg. We drank boiled spring water as much as possible. Before starting breakfast we usually read a passage from the Bible and thanked our Lord for being with us during the night and gathering us together that morning in good shape. We said, “bon appétit” to each other in French and ate our breakfast. Before leaving the dining room we prayed again and went to our room to get ready for school.

## **22. My School Activities**

The school started at 7am after the school bell rang. There were 20 students in our class, 15 male and five female students. They came from Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, Timor and the Moluccas. Our class mistress was Juffrouw Kunst (Miss

Kunst) who was responsible for our class and the welfare of the students. Miss Kunst came four times a week to teach us Dutch and English. Every student had to consult her for advice or if we had any problems. Dutch language classes consisted of, grammar, composition, speaking, reading and dialogue. Dutch was considered the most important discipline. The students needed to score at least six for Dutch Language otherwise he or she could not pass the grade examination. Miss Kunst called every student and asked about their family and the reason why he or she wanted to be a teacher.

When I was asked about my family and the reason why I wanted to be a teacher, I answered, “I want to be a Dutch school teacher because I wish to teach the Dutch and European civilizations in order to make the younger generation clever people. I also wish to be a clever young man because knowledge is power and there is always room in the world for a clever man.” Miss Kunst smiled happily and thanked me.

Afterwards each student got a piece of paper and had to write in Dutch his or her impression of their first day at school. The composition had to be about 200 words in length and had to be finished in 40 minutes. At 9am Miss Kunst taught us English with an English textbook called *Britannia*, Volume 1. We had to repeat Miss Kunst’s reading in order to become familiar with English pronunciation. After grammar and dictation, the school bell rang again, the sign for a break. At 10:15am classes started again. Mr Eigenraam came to our class to teach geometry whilst Dr Kroeskamp came to teach algebra and world history. At 1:15pm we returned to our boarding-house to get ready for lunch at 1:30pm. Lunch consisted of white boiled rice with fried chicken or fried fish, *gudeg* (young jackfruit cooked in coconut milk with spices), *sambal* (spicy sauce containing chilli peppers) and one banana for every student. We prayed

before and after lunch. At about 2pm we finished our lunch and had a rest. We could study our lessons, go out shopping or visit friends. We were free until 6:30pm, the time for dinner.

I usually stayed in the boarding-house and prepared myself for classes for the next day. Afterwards I would often go to the football field with some friends for a run or to throw the javelin and discus. When we were back in our boarding-house a cup of tea with a snack was served to us. There was plenty of water for showers and every student was usually ready for dinner at 6:30pm. During dinner our landlord knew which students were sick, late or absent. He always said to obey the rules of the college. "You are to be teachers, young men, and you have to educate your children and your pupils to be good people. How would it be with your children and pupils if you yourself cannot obey the rules of the house where you live in, if you cannot obey the law of the society and the state? The best method of teaching is not only telling how to do something or what to do, but being good examples as well for your children and pupils and show them that you are a good father and teacher!"

I used to receive a letter from Dinah once a month with the pseudonym of 'Willy Tjoa'. No student was allowed to have a lover because falling in love with someone could weaken their study and disturb the education planning of the government. The college did not send the student concerned away but tried to let him or her fail in his or her grade examination. It was the job of the class mistress who taught Dutch to discipline her students. All teachers had to be Christian and they should have known that love is the most important thing, more important than faith and hope. In 1 Corinthians 13:2, 3 Paul said: "...if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have no love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have no love, I gain nothing." The teachers did

not practise love. They obeyed the law of the government more than the teaching of Jesus Christ. They were more easily swayed by bootlicking and smooth words rather than by honesty and love.

I was 17 at the time and considered that love was the most beautiful thing in my life. Falling in love with Dinah supported my studies. It intensified my efforts to finish my studies and it increased my longing to be united with Dinah. If I was loafing around in bed I stood up and started all at once with my study because I thought of Dinah who was waiting for me. I would never cheat on her and make her unhappy. In May 1937 we had our grade examinations. Afterwards we had two months of holidays and we were allowed to go home. Most students went home and had to come back in the first week of August. There were students permitted to stay especially those who came from the islands outside Java. I passed my grade examination and was happy to go home.

I did not forget Dinah and went to see her the following day after my arrival home. She was happy to see me and her family welcomed me with *ketupat* (rice cake boiled in a rhombus-shaped packet of plaited young coconut leaves), tofu (soybean curd), *sambal kacang* (peanut with red chilli pepper sauce) and *kecap* (soy sauce). It was very nice seeing Dinah in good shape and having a long chat with her. Dinah had three younger sisters and one little brother who were close to me. At about 2pm, after playing rope jumping, I left Dinah and went to see my mother's family in Kadugede, a little country place about 20 kilometres from Cilimus and went back home at 6pm.

During my holiday I helped my father plant onions and buy peanuts. I often sat with my uncle Lim Po Teng reading the Chinese daily newspapers *Sin Po* and *Keng Po*. The papers reported that Japan was preparing to liberate Asia from the colonialism and imperialism of Great Britain, France and the Netherlands. They

suggested that the Asians wake up and oppose colonialism and imperialism and that Japan would help them by providing military training and weapons. Already many Indonesians believed that Japan would be a mighty political power in Asia. However, during these holidays Japan invaded China and the Chinese language newspapers became more hostile towards Japanese ambitions.

### **23. Dinah was Forced to Marry a Rich Man**

After enjoying two months holiday at home I went to Solo again as a second year student when our school restarted in August 1937. I was happy to be at school again and was trying to work hard since I wanted to be a teacher and be reunited with Dinah. My love for Dinah and my desire to be with her encouraged me to study harder for a better life and a bright future with Dinah. One night I dreamt of her. She went away with a man and waved goodbye to me. I saw tears rolling down her cheeks and heard her crying and calling, "Brother, do not forget me!" I answered, "Dinah!" and I woke up. It was three in the morning. I could not sleep anymore. I stayed in my bed imagining what Dinah was doing. I could not believe that Dinah would leave me for another man, because she often said to me, "I love you so much, brother, and I will never forget you." When I came back from school that afternoon I wrote to Dinah and told her about my dream.

I received Dinah's reply ten days later. She told me that she had been forced by her parents to get engaged to a rich man from Tegal, about 40 kilometres east of the city of Cirebon. She did not want to, but her parents scolded her almost every day and told her to break off her relationship with me. She did not know what to do. She said, "My dear brother, I still love you. I will not forget you. But I can do nothing because my parents arranged everything without my consent. They've kept your

letters and do not allow me to read them. Please, forgive me, brother. I myself do not mean this. I will never hurt you and I love you so much till the end of this world.”

I was very sad after having read Dinah’s letter. I stayed in bed after having my lunch until dinnertime at 6:30pm. I did not have the desire to read and study my lessons anymore. I would have a quick look at the lesson we would have in class the next morning. I had a bad appetite and often could not finish my meal. I gradually became thinner and looked rather pale. My test results dropped; one day we had a test in the Malay language. The class had to write the language in Arabic characters. I used to get scores of 8 and 9, but that time I only got 4. I was shocked and had tears in my eyes. I never had a score like that before. I had a headache and asked Mr Jonkman, the head of the class, for permission to go to my boarding-house to have a rest. He gave me permission but came to my room 20 minutes later and asked me what was wrong. I was an innocent young man and believed that my teacher would be eager to help me. I told Mr Jonkman that I had a girlfriend who had just left me to marry a rich man. “The problem is,” I said, “that Dinah was forced by her parents to marry him, whilst she is still in love with me.” Mr Jonkman only said, “Be a brave young man. Pray, and take good rest.” He said goodbye and returned to the classroom again.

## **24. An Ailing Broken-hearted Young Man**

I was unhappy and unmotivated in my studies. I stopped writing letters to Dinah because I knew that she could never read them. Her parents were keeping my letters and trying to break off our relationship. I kept to myself and did not like to have any contact with girls. I started to hate girls and found that I could not easily trust them. I did not want to make a second mistake and be cheated again. I thought

that all girls were like Dinah; disloyal and fickle. I was afraid to fall in love with a girl like Dinah again.

At that time I blamed Dinah for our separation. Dinah could have refused to marry a man she did not love, even though it was her parents who forced her to marry him. I thought Dinah was disloyal to me and that she was egocentric. She could not imagine the psychological aftermath and my suffering; I felt that her love for me was not pure or strong enough, and it therefore collapsed at the first hint of a problem that forced her to change her mind. I concluded that Dinah was not the girl I thought she was and that I would not fall in love again so easily. I would think and rethink before I said to a girl, "I love you!" again. I would never hurt my lover by leaving her and by being disloyal because I had suffered so much when Dinah left me. I had to quit the Christian Teachers' Training College, I did not trust girls, I had to see a medical doctor several times for treatment and I became a problem for my parents, who just wanted me to get married and settled. Later, when I was older and wiser and when I was aware of the Chinese culture and tradition, I forgave Dinah. She was not free and was still bound to the Chinese traditions. She had to obey her parents and to honour their wishes and my attitude towards Dinah and other girls gradually started to change.

Mr Jonkman was our Dutch language teacher and supervisor of our class. I used to get good scores from him in speaking, reading and composition but at the end of our school year I got 5-6 for Dutch language. Because of this I failed and was not approved to continue on to 3<sup>rd</sup> year. I had two choices open to me; to repeat the 2<sup>nd</sup> year or find another school. I could not understand why I got 5-6; I was sure that my speaking, reading and writing ability was as good as other students. There was also no examination score of 5-6 at the time. The score should either be 5 (fail) or 6 (pass).

Mr Jonkman could have given me 6 for my Dutch final examination if he wanted to because my score was more than 5. According to the rules, if my examination score was more than 5, it should have been scaled to 6. I think that Mr Jonkman wanted me to leave the college. If Mr Jonkman had given me 6 for Dutch, I am sure that I would have passed the examination and would have been promoted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Mr Jonkman was not fair. Instead of helping an honest young man in trouble he smashed him down. Mr Jonkman had treated and taught me against the objectives of the Dutch Christian Mission at that time, which was to convert the pagans to Christianity by spreading faith, hope and love among them.

This experience changed my trust in everybody, including Christians. Mr Jonkman was not suitable as a Christian teacher. I remember a passage in the New Testament where a Samaritan saved the life of a man who was attacked and stripped by robbers. (Luke 10: 30-37). The Samaritan put the man on his donkey and took him to an inn nearby and asked the owner of the inn to give the man medical treatment and lodging whilst he paid the bill. Mr Jonkman was not such a man, which shattered my belief that all Christians should be like the good Samaritan. In the beginning this caused me to doubt Christianity but later on I changed my mind because it was not the fault of Christianity but the fault of the one person concerned.

## **25. Staying Home and Continuing to Study**

I did not go back to the Teachers' Training College in Solo but stayed at home thinking about what to do. My best friend Kwee Tiong An encouraged me to write a letter to Dinah telling her that I was ill and staying at home. My friend was willing to go to Dinah and handed her my letter himself. I did as my friend advised me, but he could not see Dinah because her parents forbade her to meet him and sent my friend

away. I thanked Kwee Tiong An for his help and he remained my best friend until he died in 1958.

I began looking for another school and applied to the School of Commerce of the Ksatrian Institute in Bandung founded by the popular Eurasian Dr Dowes Dekker (Dr Setia Budi) who was in favour of the independence of Indonesia. Accompanied by my mother I went to Bandung to find lodging with my mother's relations. However, when I heard that the graduates of Ksatrian Institute could not find jobs I cancelled my enrolment and went back home. I did not know what to do. I was a broken-hearted young man who had failed in his studies. Nobody in my family advised me to continue with my studies. They preferred me to get married and run my own business as my father was doing at that time. My parents suggested that I get in touch with Gwat Siok, the daughter of my uncle Gouw Tjiaw Seng in Jatitujuh and ask her to marry me. I did not want to because I was still agonising over Dinah. I had the feeling that I needed encouragement, medical treatment, love and patience. If I got married too soon I was worried that I would end up hating married life and resenting all women.

## **26. I Study by Correspondence**

I studied commerce by correspondence with the *Sumber Pengetahuan* Institute (Institute of the Source of Knowledge) in Bandung. In one year I finished bookkeeping and Dutch commercial correspondence. I obtained two commercial diplomas which made it easy for me to apply for many jobs. My uncle Tan Eng Po – who had just set up a shop of clothes for children – called me to come to Malang (East Java) to help him with his business. He encouraged me also to become familiar in a bigger city. Since I considered his advice to be good, in September 1939 I went to

Malang to help my uncle in his business. I tried to find evening commercial courses there but was unsuccessful so I continued with my commerce course with the *Sumber Pengetahuan* Institute and the Success Institute in Den Haag (The Hague), Holland. I helped my uncle with his business in the afternoons and studied in the evenings. Sometimes I regretted that I did not repeat the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Teachers' Training College or enrol as student of the *Ksatrian* Institute of Dr Dowes Dekker but it was the knowledge that was more important to me rather than the diploma itself. But I decided not to regret my decision and move forward instead. I did not want to go home because if I were at home my parents would insist that I get married. I thought I'd better stay far away from home in order to try to pave my own future.

## **27. I Work as a Shop Assistant**

One day I got a job in Surabaya (East Java) as a shop assistant in the Aurora shop, the biggest shop in Indonesia at the time, selling fabrics and sundries for men and women. I learnt many things including how to serve clients. I became a confident young man who knew how to dress and behave in modern society. I spoke Dutch fluently and was not afraid or shy to make new associations. Some girls were attracted to me, which made the supervisor of the shop want to keep an eye on me. A pretty girl who often came to our shop to buy lots of fabrics always asked me to serve her. She was attracted to me and tried to communicate this to me. When I was serving her and measured out 20 metres of her chosen fabric, the supervisor came over to remeasure it. He did not trust me and suspected that I gave this customer more fabric than what we charged her. Nothing was wrong and the supervisor went away without making any comment. Since then I tried to avoid her by always being busy with another job. Another pretty girl used to ride her bicycle and waited for me near the Whiteway

building on the corner of Genteng Kali Street and Tunjungan Street. She always tried to get my attention when I passed that corner to cross Tunjungan Street. I was not attracted to her and considered her way of approaching me as a little unusual. Also, I was still hurting from my affair with Dinah.

During my time at Aurora, I lived with my cousin Lim Djie San in Gang Genteng Kali where his younger sister-in-law, Ati, also lived. My cousin and his wife thought that perhaps Ati and I could fall in love. Since I was still heart-broken I always avoided any close association with her. I was not attracted to her and had no intention of marrying her. My cousin's wife became impatient with me and made it clear that she disliked me. For this reason, I moved out and found another lodging.

I moved to Sawah Besar Street and rented a room in the office of the Chinese Salesmen Association. I met Tan Tjin Siang who became my best friend in Surabaya until 1960. I still had the longing to continue my studies, to study history or politics sometime, somewhere, somehow. I received a letter from my sister telling me that my mother was ill. She asked me to return home to try to comfort my mother. I loved my mother so much and went home to Cilimus immediately. When I came home I saw that my mother was very ill. She was thin and looked pale. She cried and wept for me. I promised not to leave her as long as she was unwell. I remembered how she nursed and treated me when I was a little boy suffering from dysentery and eye disease. I went everywhere with her; I accompanied her to the doctor and visited her family and relations. She was proud of me and became gradually better.

My sister An Nio got married to a young man from Cirebon by the name Tjoa Bok Toan, a cousin of Dinah's. The bridegroom arrived at about 10am accompanied by his two best men. He wore a Western style dress and approached the bride near the Chinese altar. The wedding couple knelt and bowed seven times to the Lord of

Heaven and Earth. Afterwards they knelt and bowed three times in front of the altar of my grandfather and approached my parents and other older members of the family to offer them *arrack* (rice wine) to drink and received payment folded in red paper. After the prayer ceremony finished, my sister An Nio left by car with her new husband for Cirebon, accompanied by close family members.

## **28. I was Baptised and Became Christian**

With the help of the Reverend Sibold van der Linde I got a job in Malang (East Java) as an assistant to the bookkeeper with the rice mill *Oen Ie Boen*. I stayed with my aunty Sam Nio and her four children on Java Street. On Sunday I went to a church nearby managed by the Rev Hwan Ting Kiong, a young married graduate from the Dutch Theological College in Batavia set up by Professor Dr Kramer and his associate Dr Rasker. I often helped Rev Hwan Ting Kiong and his wife with Sunday school and discussed with them ways to encourage more Chinese youth to attend our church. I also came to know Rev Hilderling in Surabaya who was the head of the Chinese Church Synod in East Java.

I was very happy to be in Malang among the Christian Chinese community and had left my mother in good health. She had recovered completely and I thanked God that I had been with her during her medical treatment with Dr Thio Swi Lam in Cirebon. I thanked God as well that He had released me from my family's insistence of getting married to my cousin Goat Siok. I felt the freedom of life in Malang among my fellow Christians and modern Chinese society. I always prayed to God for a better life and higher education and I also wanted to know more about life and eternity. I had been trying to understand the teachings of Confucius, but there was no explanation

about eternity. Confucius just said to his student Ming-tze, “Let us forget the problem of the life after death, because there are many things to be done in this world.”

Once upon a time, after praying before going to bed, I dreamt that Jesus came to me and put a crown of thorns upon my head. I woke up and tried to decipher it but I could not figure it out. I visited Rev Hwan Ting Kiong the following day and told him about my dream. He said to me that I had to be Jesus’ follower and that I had to be baptised. I agreed with Rev Hwan’s explanation and was ready to be baptised on the first Sunday of February 1941. Nobody in my family was a Christian, therefore I went to church alone without telling my aunty and uncle that I would be baptised that day. Some close friends welcomed me in the church and we sat together at the front. After the sermon Rev Hwan Ting Kiong invited me to stand up and asked me some questions. Afterwards I knelt and the Reverend sprinkled some holy water upon my head. He said, “Brother Sun, I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen.” He congratulated me and we shook hands. After the service the church organised a tea party to celebrate my baptism where the congregation congratulated me.

## **29. I was a Student of a Dutch Theological College**

While I was studying at the Theological College, Rev Hwan Ting Kiong and I founded a Chinese youth association called *Ta Tung* (*Datong* in pinyin or Great Association). I was elected chairman of the *Ta Tung* Malang branch. We had 30 members who often came together for Bible study, to play badminton and to go on picnics. Although I had many friends I never fell in love with any of the female members of *Ta Tung*. I still felt pain in my heart and was trying to be careful in relationships in order not to be broken-hearted for a second time.

I received a scholarship from the Chinese Church Synod in East Java to study theology at the Dutch Theological College in Yogyakarta. If I could pass the first year, I would be sent to Batavia to continue my theological studies with the Protestant Theological College under Professor Kramer and Dr Rasker. It was a good opportunity for me to continue my studies and achieve my goal which was to receive a Doctor of Philosophy in history or politics. I still remember Dr H.J. de Graaf and Dr H. Kroeskamp, who were really keen on history and could attract their students to the discipline.

In August 1941 I went to Yogyakarta and visited Dr Bakker, the Director of the Dutch Theological College on Klitren Lor Street. Dr Bakker was very friendly and asked me some questions about my family and my future. I answered that I was helping Rev Hwan Ting Kiong in Malang set up a Chinese Youth Association by the name of *Ta Tung*. I told Dr Bakker, "I have the gift of making friends and for public speaking. I want to develop this gift and I am sure that the spreading of Christianity will be my way to serve God and the Chinese community. Therefore I am eager to study theology with your Theological College in Yogyakarta."

Dr Bakker was very pleased and asked his secretary to take me to the boarding house situated behind the college building. The next morning my Dutch language and Bible knowledge were tested. I had to prepare a Dutch composition and answer about ten questions. I completed it in two hours and had to wait for the results. At 11am Dr Bakker, accompanied by two senior lecturers, came to me and declared that I had passed the entrance examination. They shook hands with me and asked me to join the class.

The disciplines of the day were Bible reading and Greek. I liked Bible reading and the explanations of my lecturer. It was the first time for me to learn Greek and I was

proud to learn this language. The Dutch Theological College in Yogyakarta belonged to the Reformed Church denomination and considered John Calvin (1509-1564) to be the true reformer of Christianity. The Reformed Church and the Protestant Church agreed to a division of Java into their “spheres of influence”. The Reformed Church would spread Christianity in Central Java while the Protestant Church would do so in West and East Java. The University of Amsterdam in Holland had a faculty where John Calvin’s teachings were taught and most scholars of the Reformed Church had studied theology there. In contrast, the Protestant Theological College in Batavia put more emphasis on the teachings of Martin Luther (1483-1546). The Reformed and Protestant Churches used to work together in spreading Christianity throughout the Netherlands East Indies.

Every Sunday I went to a Chinese Reformed Church where Rev Pouw Ie Gan was minister. I enrolled as a member of the Church and as a member of the Chinese Youth association. One day my parents visited me in Yogyakarta and asked me to leave the Theological College. They told me that they were running a shop in the city of Cirebon and wanted me to run a business as well. It was too hard for me to leave the Theological College. At last we came to an agreement that I would ask Dr Bakker for two weeks leave to comfort my mother who was physically unwell again and of course he consented. I said goodbye to Dr Bakker and went to see my parents in the hotel ‘Trio’. I got ready to return home to Cirebon the next morning with my parents.

In Cirebon I did nothing but assist my mother and visit my friends and relatives. I did not know what to do when my leave of two weeks was up. I wrote to Dr Bakker requesting another two weeks leave. Dr Bakker agreed and I was allowed to stay in Cirebon as long as I needed. He advised to come back to school as soon as I could leave my mother because it would be hard for me to prepare for the coming

grade examination when I stayed away too long. I understood Dr Bakker's advice and thanked him very much. I wrote that I was still concerned with my Theological studies and said that I would never disappoint our Heavenly Father, the Chinese Church Synod, nor Dr Bakker or Rev Hildering who were so good and friendly to me.

My parents persuaded me to run a shop with the hope that I would be willing to leave the Theological College and marry Goat Siok, my cousin. In November 1941 I wrote to Dr Bakker asking him whether I could come back and join my class again. Dr Bakker responded that the Theological College would be closed shortly because of the serious political situation in Asia. He promised to let me know when I should come back in Yogyakarta, which would be if the situation changed and if the College could reopen. Dr Bakker added, "The lecturers would leave the College to defend the country whilst the students would be sent home until the school reopens . Let us pray that God would be with us and that we may united again in our Theological College to serve our Lord. God be with you." I was sad and disappointed not only because had I lost the opportunity to study again but also lost the chance to achieve my goal as well. I never accused anybody and considered that the situation was inevitable. It was fate that not only changed my life but the lives of all the people in Asia as well. What I did not know was that this was the last month of peace the Netherlands Indies would ever experience.

### **30. Japan Attacks South-east Asia**

On 8 December 1941 (Java time) Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, the great Pacific Ocean fleet base of the USA. Soon after Japan attacked Luzon in the Philippines, where the USA had its second biggest fleet in the Pacific. I was on my way home from visiting my uncle and relatives in Kadugede, about 45 kilometres

from Cirebon with my brother-in-law, Tjoa Bok Toan. I heard people talking about the Japanese coming to occupy Asia. The common people continued to work innocently in their paddy fields and sell vegetables in the markets. The businessmen were shrewd and bought gold and other commodities which they expected to be able to sell again in war conditions for higher prices. Thus the price of gold, radios, watches and fabrics increased. Businessmen and rich people began to buy and hoard commodities without realising that they could be severely punished for it, especially in a time of war. Most Europeans and the Eurasians, who were loyal to the Dutch government in exile in London, were very alarmed. However, there was a pro-German minority, many of them members of the NSB<sup>19</sup>, who were very glad because they expected their cooperation would be welcomed by the Japanese. Members of Indonesian nationalist political parties also seemed to be happy because they believed that the Japanese would release them from Dutch colonialism and imperialism. They believed that Japan would fulfil its promise to send away the Dutch colonialists and make Indonesia independent. Almost all native people – educated and uneducated – believed in the prophesy of Joyoboyo who foretold in the twelfth century that the people of Indonesia would be freed from colonialism by invading ‘yellow’ people.<sup>20</sup>

The Dutch and residents from Allied nations such as Britain and the United States were not happy at all. They sent their wives and children to Australia or the United States. Most of them did not have relations abroad – except in Holland which was occupied by Germany – but they had to go because they were afraid of the Japanese. They became confused and did not know what to do when they heard that the Japanese military were torpedoing and bombing British and Dutch ships sailing from the Indies. They had to stay and surrender themselves to their fate. It also

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<sup>19</sup> Nationaal Socialisch Bond (National Socialist Association). A Dutch Political Party which followed the lead of the German Nazis led by Adolf Hitler.

<sup>20</sup> Bambang Yudoyono, *Sang Prabu Sri Adji Djojobojo, 1135 – 1157*, 68 – 76.

happened that Sukarno could not embark on a ship in Padang because the ship, which was to send him to internment in Australia, had been attacked and sunk by the Japanese.

Some Chinese were also afraid of the Japanese military because they heard how cruel and wild the Japanese military were in Shanghai and Nanking in 1937 and 1938. Some of them believed that the Japanese military would do the Chinese no harm because Wang Ching-wei, who had defected from Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang government, was cooperating with the Japanese military at the head of a puppet government in Nanking. Many Chinese people from Cirebon were fleeing the city and looking for hiding places in the remote districts of Cilimus, Jalaksana, Kuningan and Kadugede. They rented simple houses from the natives far away from the highways.

After attacking the Philippines, Saigon, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, the Japanese military attacked Makasar, Palembang and Padang south Sumatra. In March 1942, the Japanese military landed in Tanjung Priok and were trying to capture the cape of Indramayu, 40 kilometres north of Cirebon. On 7 March the Japanese military occupied Kalijati, 40 kilometres north of Bandung.

When the Dutch military were fighting in Tanjung Priok and Jakarta and they were trying to retreat to Bandung, the Japanese military occupied Kalijati after landing in Hanjatan, a little place in Indramayu, near the river of Cimanuk. The Japanese advanced towards Subang immediately – a mountainous region near Purwakarta – and occupied Ciater. When they did not encounter resistance they continued to Lembang, a mountainous area on the southern slope of Mount Tangkuban-perahu. From there the Japanese military planned to attack Bandung whilst waiting for the Japanese troops coming from the direction of Batavia,

Buitenzorg, Puncak and Padalarang. When the timing was favourable the Japanese military moved towards Bandung in order to attack the castle of the Dutch military commander. There was heavy fighting in some parts of the city but the Dutch East Indies government surrendered unconditionally after the Japanese ultimatum. Lieutenant General ter Poorten went to Kalijati to begin negotiations for surrender to the Japanese military whilst the 15 most senior members of the Dutch government and armed forces, led by Dr van Mook – the Lieutenant Governor General of the Indies – escaped by air to Australia from the last Allied-held airstrip.<sup>21</sup>

When the Japanese military landed in Hanjatan, Indramayu, my parents and I were evacuated to Ciketak, three kilometres from Kadugede, on the slopes of Mount Mayana. From this hiding place I could see the red flashes and hear the booming of the canons of the Japanese troops advancing to Bandung via Subang, Ciater and Lembang. Our hiding place in Ciketak was quiet and peaceful. There was enough food to eat and work to do. The native people were friendly to the Chinese refugees. As long as we were good to them they welcomed us because they realised that they were in the same danger as we were and we were both looking for protection. As long as they loved their neighbours, they expected that would save us all from the dangers of war.

After the Dutch East Indies government had surrendered to the Japanese military on 9 March 1942, we went back home to Kadugede. I saw people coming from Bandung, mostly those who had been working for the Dutch military. They were afraid of being captured by the Japanese and were fleeing Bandung. We decided to stay in Kadugede and rented a house there rather than go back to Cirebon. We were anxious to see how the Japanese military would treat the Chinese community.

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<sup>21</sup> Legrand, *Chronicle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, 278.

Ideas about China's role in the Japanese attacks were spread among the Chinese community in Java by the weekly paper *Kung Yen*. In a series of articles written before the Japanese attack, Kwee Kek-beng, editor in chief of *Sin Po* daily newspaper, argued that Japan had been lured into war by the apparent defection of Wang Ching-wei from the Kuomintang to the Japanese side.<sup>22</sup> Thus, Japan considered the Nationalist retreat to Chungking in 1937 as a sign of defeat and put a lot of trust in Wang Ching-wei.

Although Wang promised to keep the Nationalists and the Communists at bay, the Japanese military should have been more suspicious of him and not so naïve as to take his word. Wang had been China's great freedom fighter who had worked under Dr Sun Yat-sen. The articles argued that he would never sell China to imperialist or colonist forces. Kwee's theory, widely believed among Chinese in the Indies, was that the Japanese military had been deceived by Wang who, in order to save China from Japan, had pushed them into a war which he knew they would lose. Wang doubted Chiang Kai-shek's ability to defeat Japan, but he knew that Japan could be beaten by the USA and Britain.

This, of course, was exactly how it turned out, but whether or not this was Wang's plan can only be speculation. The Chinese community in Java was fearful of the Japanese, despite Wang's status as a Japanese ally. What the community could not predict was how completely the Indies would be transformed by the Japanese occupation.

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<sup>22</sup> The author kept copies of these articles for many years.

## Chapter 2

### Experiencing War and Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945

#### 1. The Japanese take Java

On the day the Japanese attacked the Philippine Islands, I was on holiday with my brother-in-law Tjoa Bok Toan in Kadugede, Kuningan, about 40 kilometres from Cirebon,. We hurried home to Cirebon in order to prepare for evacuation to a remote hiding place. On the road to Cirebon we did not see many vehicles and people because they already knew that war was coming. They preferred to stay at home and listen to radio broadcasts about the Japanese attack. Some ethnic Chinese groups were afraid of the Japanese because they had heard about Japanese cruelty in Nanking, China where more than 200,000 people were killed and raped, but some Indonesian native people were happy that the Japanese were coming because they were convinced that the Dutch would surrender and Indonesia soon would be independent. Most Dutch people were afraid of the coming Japanese attack. They knew that Japan was strong and an ally of Germany which had occupied the Netherlands. They did not know what to do as there no more ships sailing to Australia.

After capturing Hong Kong from Britain, Japanese troops invaded Malaya from Thailand and advanced down the Peninsula to Singapore, which surrendered on 15 February 1942. Japanese troops then captured Sarawak, Brunei, Borneo, Timor, Sumatra, Celebes and Java. From its Southeast Asian bases, the Japanese launched attacks further into the Pacific and even on Australia.

On February 25, 1942 two Dutch cruisers, *De Ruyter* and the *Java*, were sunk during a major battle in the Java Sea. Karel Doorman, the Dutch Admiral and commander of the combined allied naval force was lost in the *De Ruyter* together with 344 of his men.

My family and I were in hiding in Ciketak, on the hill of Mayana about 45 kilometres from Cirebon, West Java. The only news we got was from a radio broadcast from Jakarta. On 28 February 1942 Japanese troops occupied Batavia, the capital of Netherlands East Indies, which they renamed Jakarta. From Batavia the Japanese advanced to the south via Buitenzorg (Bogor) to attack Bandung, the headquarters of the Dutch defence forces headed by Lieutenant General ter Poorten.

In the meantime, the Japanese also landed in the village of Hanjatan, by the bay of Cimanuk, a big river near the city of Indramayu, about 50 kilometres north of Cirebon. I saw the fire and flames of the advancing Japanese troops and also heard the booming sound of the cannons far away. The Japanese advanced to the village of Ciater and on 7 March 1942 occupied Lembang, a mountainous village on the slopes of Mount Tangkuban-perahu. From there, the Japanese moved down to the city of Bandung, about fifteen kilometres from Lembang. They intended to attack Bandung from the north at the same time as they attacked from the west from Batavia and Buitenzorg.

Heavy fighting occurred in Bandung where Japanese troops outnumbered the Netherlands East Indies troops. The Japanese attacked and killed native soldiers and were very cruel to the white soldiers of the KNIL, *Koninklijke Nederlands Indische Leger* (Royal Dutch Indies Army). The people of Bandung fled the city and their offices, shops and houses were closed down. The Japanese were brave, experienced and were equipped with better weapons. The Netherlands East Indies government did not see any chance of victory and wanted to surrender in order to avoid further bloodshed of their army and people. Therefore the Dutch Commander in Chief, Lieutenant General ter Poorten, accompanied by a convoy of cars displaying white

flags, drove to Kalijati, 30 kilometres to the north, on the evening of 7 March 1942 to open negotiations for surrender with the Japanese.

Hours earlier, the fifteen most senior members of the Dutch government and armed forces had escaped by air to Australia led by D.R. van Mook, the Lieutenant-Governor General of the Dutch East Indies. At noon on the same day as ter Poorten drove to Kalijati, the Netherlands News Agency in Bandung transmitted its last bulletin to the outside world, ending with: “Now we shut down. Long live our Queen. Goodbye till better times”.<sup>1</sup>

When the battles in Bandung ended, my family and I left our hiding place in Ciketak and moved to Kadugede, a village on the main road about 45 kilometres from Cirebon. We met our relatives and people in Kadugede who had fled Bandung and had seen the heavy fighting themselves. They wanted to stay in Kadugede for some weeks and planned to go back to Bandung when the situation was favourable.

## **2. The Japanese in Kuningan**

Kuningan is the capital of the regency of Kuningan and was part of the residency of Cirebon. Kuningan has four district territories: Kuningan, Cilimus, Mandirancan, and Lurahgung. Kadugede is a subdistrict territory of Kuningan, and was the place where I met Japanese troops for the first time on 10 March 1942 after the battles in Bandung.

An armed convoy of trucks, full of Japanese soldiers, suddenly stopped me in front of my house. The commander of the Japanese troops called me to come to him and asked me to read loudly in front of the crowd of people an Indonesian translation of a Japanese text which read as follows: “To all people of Indonesia. Do not be

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Legrand, *Chronicle of the Second World War*, London: Chronicle Communications, 1990, 278

afraid. The Japanese are coming to help you. They will release you from the Dutch colonists and imperialists. Please work together with the Japanese.” After saying “arigato” (thank you) the commander and his armed convoy of trucks drove off in the direction of Cirebon.

One day in April 1942, I went to the town of Kuningan to buy vegetables in the markets. The market had four main entrances to the building, each of which were guarded by a Japanese soldier who had to be greeted with a bow by all people passing by. Anyone who did not bow before a Japanese soldier or who did not do it properly was slapped in the face. It seemed that the Japanese wanted to instill fear and respect of the Japanese army.

In May 1942 my brother-in-law Tjoa Bok Toan, my friend Tiong Hie and I went on a bicycle tour to Cilacap, a seaport town on the Indian Ocean in the southern part of Central Java. We went to the south visiting the town of Ciamis; to the east visiting the town of Banjar and Kroya; and spent one night in a hotel in Cilacap. We heard people saying that there was lots of flint available in Cilacap, a very hard kind of stone that can produce fire when used in a lighter with a wick and gasoline. We did not buy any flint because the city of Cilacap was closely guarded and every passer-by was searched thoroughly. We wanted to buy flint there and sell it in Cirebon because we could make a lot of profit. I remember that we were so bold; imitating Japanese soldiers in order to be respected by people and be greeted with a bow by village peasants passing by. We did it just for fun. Although the road was quiet, with no motorcars at all and just some horse-drawn carts, the town of Cilacap itself was busy because their fishing industry carried on as usual. Harbour and traffic policemen were standing on street corners to examine suspicious passers-by. From Cilacap we went

back to Kadugede along the north of central Java visiting the towns of Kroya, Bumiayu, Wangon, Ciledug, Waled and Kuningan.

### **3. Registration of the Ethnic Chinese**

Every ethnic Chinese male or female above 17 years of age had to be registered at the regency headquarters of the Japanese army. The registration for all ethnic Chinese in the regency of Kuningan took place in the office of the Regent, who governed the territory under the auspices of a Japanese Lieutenant-Colonel, assisted by a troop of *Kenpeitai* (Japanese military police). The registration fee was 50 Dutch guilders per person, the same value as 25 grams of pure gold, which was very hard to earn. The Chinese people had to sell their gold jewellery, rice fields, houses and other assets. The Chinese in the territories of Kuningan had to come to the town of Kuningan by *dokar* (horse-drawn buggy) or on foot since there were no motorcars at all. The registration took place over a few days, since there were thousands of people forming a queue waiting for their turn to be registered. They had to go from one building to another and they at last received a registration card as proof of their loyalty to the Japanese. All ethnic Chinese in Java had to have an identity card issued and signed by the Japanese army so that they were not accused of being a spy for the Allied forces.

### **4. Confiscation of Private Motor Vehicles**

Motor vehicles including trucks, buses, motorcars and motorcycles in the residency of Cirebon were confiscated by the Japanese army. This was done by a Japanese army officer assisted by an employee who was familiar with the area and knew the Indonesian language. From the motor transport office the Japanese army

could obtain the details of the motor vehicles they wanted, and then approach the owners to deliver them to the local Japanese army headquarters. The owner only received a receipt from the Japanese officer stating that his motor vehicle was borrowed by the Japanese army; no money was exchanged at all.

There were many motor vehicles confiscated in the territory of Cirebon, especially buses and long-bodied passenger vehicles. I know there were at least four bus transport enterprises in the territory of Cirebon; the “Betul”, “Neutraal”, “Goede Reis” and “Morning” bus transport enterprises, owning in all more than one hundred passenger buses which had operated between the cities of Cirebon, Kuningan, Kadipaten and Indramayu. It is an interesting reflection on culture in the last decades of the Netherlands Indies, that two of these bus companies had Dutch names, one an Indonesian name, and one an English name. There were also many truck transport enterprises carrying raw materials and export commodities to the harbour of Cirebon as well as import commodities from the harbour of Cirebon to the remote areas of the territories.

Since motor transport vehicles were confiscated, many bus and truck transport enterprises went bankrupt and their workers became unemployed. These events greatly increased poverty among the people. Poverty and unemployment in turn led to an increase in crime. The prices of commodities and daily necessities were rising. Corruption in public and private enterprises was spreading, business was flat and the economic situation was terrible.

## **5. My Journey to Jember in East Java**

On November 1942 I made a journey by train to Jember, a city in East Java about 200 kilometres east of Surabaya. I had a Dutch friend, Rev Sibold van der Linde

who had been a minister in Cirebon as well as my teacher in the Christian catechism. He had since been transferred to Jember. I left Kadugede very early in the morning for Cirebon by *andong*, a horse-drawn buggy, because there were no longer any buses, and from Cirebon took a train to Semarang at about noon. There were not many passengers on the train since business was poor and people could no longer afford to make long journeys. The train went slowly and stopped at many small stations. There were no longer any express trains for long journeys.

A glass of ice tea water cost one guilder whilst a pack of boiled rice with a slice of meat and tempe or tofu cost five guilders. All of this had to be paid with Japanese coins or paper money issued by the Japanese army. The price of these simple refreshments was one hundred times the price before the arrival of the Japanese.

No one had new clothes or shoes. Everyone wore old or worn out clothes and most wore rubber Japanese-style sandals. I saw a family of five sitting in the corner of the carriage. They bought nothing since they had brought some packs of boiled rice themselves. They were happy and got off at Tegal station after a journey of about 40 kilometres. At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the train arrived in Pekalongan, a city well known for its *batik*. According to a *batik* vendor who was sitting beside me, a beautiful handmade *batik sarong* – a Javanese skirt-like garment – cost about 500 guilders at the time, because good *batik* material was not imported anymore and very hard to get. This was a huge increase on pre-war prices. Fine handmade *batik sarongs* were sold in black markets.

At about 6pm, after a slow and tedious journey, the train arrived in Semarang, a harbour city and capital of Central Java. I spent one night in a small hotel and went to Surabaya the next day by train. In Surabaya I had to spend one night in a hotel again because there was no train to Jember that afternoon. The city of Surabaya was

quiet. There were no imported commodities on display and no private motor vehicles on the roads at all. *Becak* (tricycle) and *andong*s (four-wheeled carriage drawn by two horses) were the common public vehicles. The train to Jember left Surabaya at 10am and arrived in Jember at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Rev Sibold van der Linde was waiting for me at the railway station of Jember and took me by *becak* to his home.

Rev Sibold van der Linde had no job since all churches had been closed and there were no religious services at all. He taught German and French to some private students and got enough money to buy his daily necessities. He had a bank account of one hundred thousand Dutch guilders but it was frozen by the Japanese and his motorcar had been confiscated. He realised that at anytime he could be interned in a camp together with his fellow countrymen. He felt lonely and was sometimes afraid and he needed a friend who could comfort him. Rev Sibold van der Linde was a man of faith and often asked me to pray with him to God for the safety and welfare of the world, the Netherlands and himself. He also asked God to forgive the sins of his enemies.

After one week in Jember, I went back home via Surabaya and Semarang again. In Tegal the locomotive broke down, which was common on the railways during the Japanese occupation, and I could not continue my journey home. Although I did not have enough money to pay for a hotel room, I was brave enough to ask the manager of a hotel for a room where I could spend the night. Early the next morning I went to a pawnshop to pawn my diamond gold ring and got 25 guilders which I used to pay my hotel bill. I then went quickly to the railway station to catch the train to Cirebon. The train arrived in Cirebon at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon and I went home to Kadugede by a horse-drawn buggy. It had taken me four days and four nights

for a journey previously done in a day and a half. A month later I came back to Tegal to redeem my diamond gold ring from the pawnshop.

## **6. We Moved to Kuningan**

In February 1943, my parents and I moved to the town of Kuningan. We lived in Chinatown and rented a house from Mr Ciauw Lian. In that house my mother ran a small shop selling candied fruits and salted vegetables whilst my father engaged in the local tobacco trade. I rented out books with stories in Sundanese, a language spoken by the people of West Java and often rode a bicycle to sell dried tobacco to the people in the villages.

Once I had to travel to the town of Banjar, in southern West Java, and to Bandung, to buy books with Sundanese stories. During the Japanese occupation we did not have much trouble getting our daily bread because we all worked hard to make a living. But most people, especially those who lived in villages, could not afford paddy rice. They only ate once a day and often had cassava or maize for lunch. They did not have a variety of side dishes except boiled cassava leaves and *sambal*, a chilli pepper sauce. My family could not afford new clothes since the prices were too high. A new cotton shirt cost about 100 guilders. They were only available on the black market but I never bought clothes since fortunately I had enough of them in stock to last me through the occupation.

## 7. The Japanese Military Government in Java

From 8 March 1942 Indonesia had been divided into three military governments which worked together in ruling the archipelago and defending it against Allied forces.

1. The Army Military Administration for Sumatra with its headquarters in Bukittinggi.
2. The Navy Military Administration for Celebes, Borneo and the Moluccas with its headquarters in Makasar.
3. The Army Military Administration for Java and Madura with its headquarters in Jakarta under Lieutenant General Hitoshi Imamura.

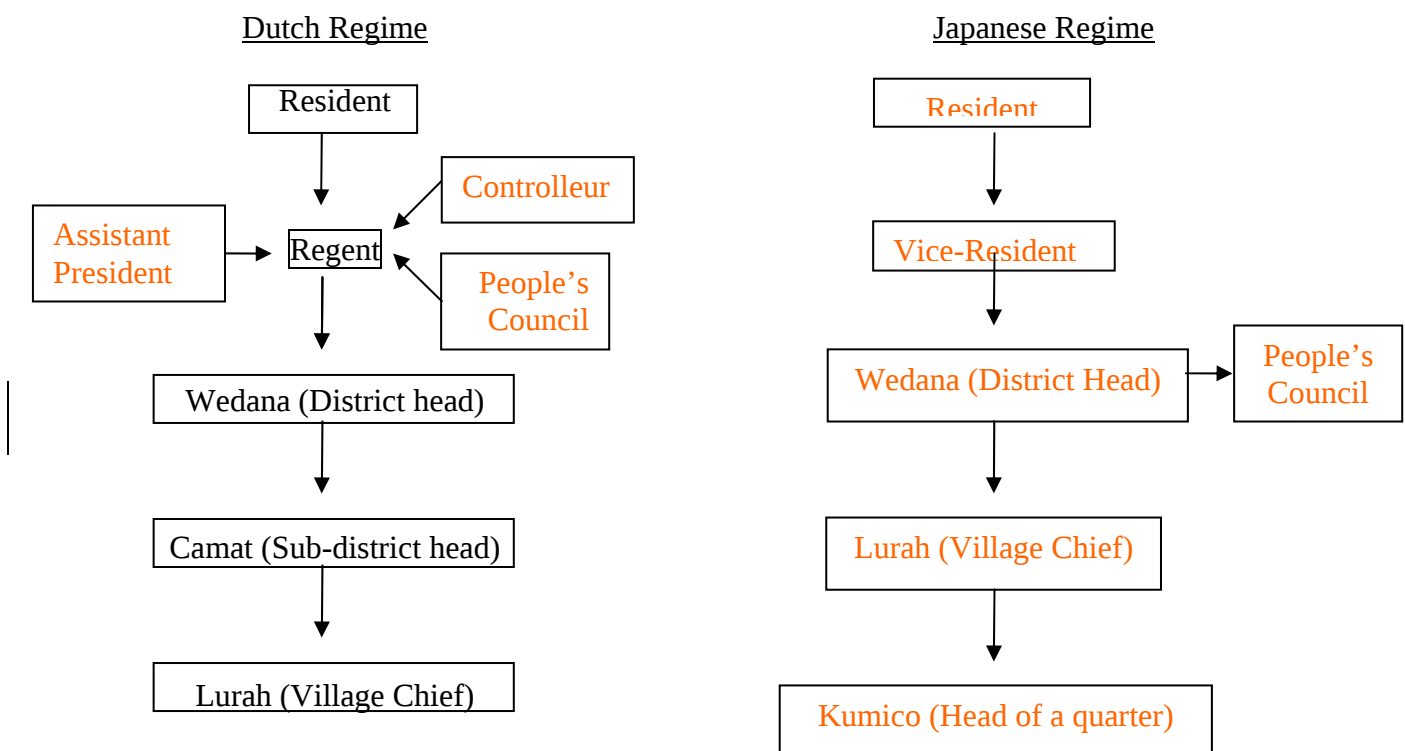
Lieutenant General Hitoshi Imamura was the Army Commander-in-Chief for Java and Madura with the Japanese title of *Saiko Shikikan*. He was in charge of military officers and was accountable to the War Office in Tokyo. Under Lieutenant General Hitoshi Imamura was Major General Seitaburo Okasaki. He was the Head of the Military Government with the Japanese title of *Gunseikanbu*. He was in charge of the military public administration of Java and Madura. There were five *bu* (department) under the *Gunseikan* (Military Public Administration): *Somubu* (Department of General Affairs), *Kaimubu* (Department of Finance), *Sangyobu* (Department of Business, Industry and Handicraft), *Kotsubu* (Department of Traffic) and *Shibu* (Department of Justice).

Java and Madura were divided into *syu* (residency), which consisted of *syi* (municipality) and *ken* (regency). *Ken* (regency) was divided into *gun* (district) which was further divided into *son* (subdistrict) and again into *ku* (village). The head of each

*ku* was a *Kucho* (village chief) who was assisted by some *kumicho* (head of a quarter).<sup>2</sup>

Kuningan was a regency territory governed by a Regent and assisted by a People's Council. The members of the People's Council were appointed by the Japanese army from the candidates nominated by government officials and social communities. Under the Regent was the *Wedana* (District Head), *Camat* (Sub-District Head) and *Lurah*, a Village Chief. There had been something of a political reorganisation under the Japanese, although in general the same Javanese officials who had worked for the Dutch now worked for the Japanese.

### **The Dutch and Japanese Regimes Compared<sup>3</sup>**



During the Japanese occupation there was a new level of administration headed by a *Kumico*, a head of a quarter (a group of families) appointed as a possible

<sup>2</sup> Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VII, Jakarta: PN Balai Pustaka, 1984, 5-7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

source of information about the population and to help the Japanese control it. The positions of Assistant Resident and Controlleur were completely removed. The Japanese Resident only needed a Vice-Resident who helped the Resident when he was busy. Under the Japanese occupation, the People's Council did not have any power at all. The Japanese military had all the power and the Indonesian officials had to obey them.

However, the Japanese military did not intervene very much. They used interpreters and translators when they had to meet with Indonesian officials and just gave orders to supply Japanese demands for various commodities and sent troops in when there was disorder. The Japanese military's primary aim was victory over the Allies and everybody was forced to make many sacrifices for their cause.

The ethnic Chinese had their own communities as well, each of which was headed by a Chinese *Sibuco* (Chinese district head). These Chinese *Sibucos* in the residency territories of Cirebon had to obey the orders of the head of *Kakio Sokai* (chief of the ethnic Chinese) in the city of Cirebon, who was appointed by the Japanese army and who had to work together with the Resident of Cirebon. This system of a separate administration for Chinese was also based on Dutch practice.

## **8. Prominent Chinese Figures were interned**

One morning in April 1943 I saw four Japanese officers in two motorcars visiting some prominent Chinese figures in Kuningan. They already had the names and addresses of the Chinese figures who they wanted to detain. Mr Thio Pak Chan, Mr Poey Hok Boen, Mr Chia Teng Koey, Mr Cho Su and Mr Eng Gwan were detained that day and taken to an internment camp in Cimahi, 10 kilometres west of Bandung. The detainees were accused of supporting the Kuomintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party of General Chiang Kai-shek, with war assistance funds collected

from the ethnic Chinese community in the regency of Kuningan. I heard that all Chinese political figures in Java were interned. Some of them were released as long as they were willing to help and support the Japanese army by becoming the head of *Kakio Sokai*. In this role they would have to collect war assistance funds for the Japanese from ethnic Chinese. When required, they would also have to mobilise workers for the Japanese army or to assist in carrying out Japanese public and military orders. Obviously, this was not a popular job.

## **9. An Airstrip was built in Jatiwangi**

The Japanese ordered an airstrip to be built in Jatiwangi, a district 35 kilometres west of Cirebon. The Japanese expected the Allied forces to land on the bay of the river Cimanuk near the city of Indramayu. They needed this airstrip for their planes which they hoped would prevent the Allied forces landing and could defend Bandung and Jakarta, the two most important centres for the Japanese army in Java under General Imamura. Thousands of forced labourers, mobilised from the villages of Kuningan regency territory, were put to work. Each group of workers, consisting of about 50 men, had to work for one week in Jatiwangi and each person was awarded one pair of cotton shorts and fifty guilders. They were happy when they could return home to their families. The Regents, the *Wedana* and other government officials had to work hard to mobilise the workers that the Japanese army needed. They could be fired if they failed to do so, or, worse, be detained and accused of spying for the Allied forces.

A similar system of forced labour was used to build a soccer field opposite the Regent's office in Kuningan. This might seem a strange priority for the Japanese military, but it was also a training field for military marching and drills. The ethnic

Chinese of Kuningan also had to support the task by working voluntarily and without pay. I heard later that the soccer field could also be used as an airstrip in emergencies.

## **10. A Chinese Business Cooperative was established**

Early in the occupation, the Japanese did attempt to give the people some support by supplying necessities from their own resources. Often coconut oil, kerosene, laundry soap and other commodities were distributed to the Chinese in the Kuningan territory. The prices were very low, 10 to 20 times lower than the prices on the open market, since they were obtained and distributed with Japanese authority. The Japanese military delivered the commodities to the Regent and asked him to distribute them to his community. This responsibility was given to the heads of the Chinese communities who set up business cooperative systems. Each had a board of management which was held accountable to the head of their community. No licence was required to distribute the commodities and any problems or rivalries were sorted out by community forums. A committee was appointed to this business cooperative system and a fund of about two thousand guilders was collected from Chinese businessmen who wanted to be members. These members had the right and privilege to obtain such commodities from the Japanese and distribute them to the Chinese community.

I was appointed secretary of the business cooperative system and asked to store the commodities at home. Nothing was distributed to the members without the authorisation of the chairman and vice chairman of the business cooperative. Since prices on the open market were so much higher than the prices of the goods made available to the business cooperatives, it was hard to avoid corruption. The chairman and vice chairman of the business cooperatives were often bribed to issue orders to

hand some commodities over to certain businessmen, who were not members of the business cooperative system at all. This resulted in quarrels and hostility among members. Our business cooperative was quickly liquidated when the Japanese army ceased distributing commodities, as they required the decreasing supply for their own forces.

## **11. Two Ladies Visited Me in Kuningan**

Auntie Gouw Loen Seng and Auntie Louis, who were Gouw Gwat Siok's aunts, visited me in Kuningan. Gouw Gwat Siok's parents had sent them to make an inquiry about me. In 1932 Gouw Gwat Siok's mother told my mother that she was willing to have me as her son-in-law. "Come and see Gouw Gwat Siok, sister, when you are looking for a girl later as wife for your son," she said to my mother. I brought the two ladies to my parents in Kadugede, where they spent the night and went home the next morning.

On April 1943 my brother-in-law Tjoa Bok Toan and I went on a bicycle tour to the village of Jatitujuh via Cikijing, Talaga, Maja, Majalengka and Kadipaten, villages and towns on the western slope of Mount Ciremai, which was about 3000 metres high. It was a respite from the rigours of wartime life. The scenery was beautiful and it was peaceful. I did not see any motor vehicles or signs of Japanese army activities. At about noon we arrived in Maja. After the war, all Maja's ethnic Chinese would be slaughtered in August 1947 by the Darul Islam army of Kartosuwiryo, who hoped to build an Islamic state of Indonesia. According to my friend Tiang Oen, who lived in Maja at the time, all Chinese men, women and children were arrested and escorted to a cave in Mount Ciremai and slaughtered.

We arrived in Jatitujuh at about 4:00 pm and visited the family of Gouw Tjiauw Seng<sup>4</sup> to pay homage and introduce myself to the family. Uncle Gouw Tjiauw Seng was very rich. He lived in a beautiful house with twelve sleeping rooms and owned six warehouses full of paddy rice (unhusked rice). He owned many *sawah* (paddy fields) and was a great paddy supplier to many rice hulling factories in the regency territory of Indramayu. After spending one night with Uncle Kwa Sow Kiang, we went back home via Jatiwangi, Jamblang, Cirebon and Cilimus. My uncle Gouw Tjiauw Seng disagreed with his wife's idea and preferred to marry his daughter off to Kwa Tjin Lan, a young man of Jamblang, because he did not know me very well; it was Aunt Gouw Tjiauw Seng who often visited us since 1932 but my Uncle stayed at home.

## **12. The Chinese Prepare for Japan's Defeat**

In June 1943 a Chinese sports club was set up in the town of Kuningan where ethnic Chinese young men could play badminton and learn kung fu. We also secretly learnt Chinese from Mr Sun Tjeng Po, a Chinese teacher who came to Kuningan once a week to teach us. Mr Kwee Kwan Lok, a kung fu Fu Kien style instructor and Mr. Kiang Hong Seng, a kung fu Shan Tung style instructor, also came once a week to teach kung fu in the Chinese temple. There was no Japanese sponsorship of these activities, although the Japanese army did tolerate them.

The ethnic Chinese, especially in Cirebon, were expecting that either a revolution on Java, carried out by Indonesian political figures to achieve independence, or heavy fighting between the Japanese army and the Allies would break out. The Chinese felt very vulnerable in this difficult political situation. There

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<sup>4</sup> In Jatitujuh Uncle Gouw Tjiauw Seng and his family of twelve would all be slaughtered by the Darul Islam army in August 1947.

could be either a war or a revolution, or probably both, and in the fighting Chinese victims could lose their wealth and their lives. This possibility prompted ethnic Chinese youths to unite to protect their communities. They were eager to learn kung fu, swimming, running and marching, and in general to imitate the Japanese army. Once in a while some Chinese youths would gather to discuss the general political situation and the Japanese progress in the Pacific. They got information from a secret broadcasting office, from which they learned the Allied side of the story, and also from the *Asia Raya*, a daily newspaper approved by the Japanese army.

Not everybody had a radio set. Most radio sets had been confiscated by the Japanese army to prevent the people from listening to Allied broadcasts. A friend of ours had a hidden radio set and when he heard that the Allies made progress in the Pacific, he invited some of his close friends to listen secretly to the Allied broadcasts. The more they heard, the more ethnic Chinese youths were convinced that the Allies would win the war.

The ethnic Chinese were yearning for an Allied victory because they remembered how prosperous their businesses were before the war, and they wanted the Japanese army to leave China. On the other hand, the Indonesian political figures supported the Japanese struggle as they hated their colonial history and desired independence. The common Indonesian people were forced to support the Japanese or face punishment. They suffered a great deal during the Japanese occupation from constant hunger and from their forced labour campaigns.

Mr Kwee Kwan Lok also offered kung fu courses in Cikijing, a district village about 20 kilometres from Kuningan. He had about fifteen students there. Since Mr Kwee Kwan Lok was busy and old, he asked me to help him. Therefore I travelled to Cikijing twice a week to teach kung fu to the Chinese youth as an assistant instructor.

*Fu Jin Kai*, women's social clubs, were also set up in the town of Kuningan and district territory capitals such as Cilimus, Ciawigebang and Lurahgung. The clubs had their own committees which reported to the *Kakyo Sokai* (Foreign Chinese Association) in the city of Cirebon. The *Fu Jin Kai* had to assist the *Kakyo Sokai* when there were meetings with the Japanese and when the Japanese army needed feminine help and entertainment for their troops, like hospital nurses and regional dancers. The Chinese women were careful in their association with the Japanese since there were rumours going around that the Japanese army had recruited dozens of Javanese girls with a promise to educate them in Tokyo to be teachers and instructors in Japanese language, but that the girls were in fact forced into prostitution for the Japanese officers. This case was one of the reasons that the PETA (Indonesian auxiliary troops) in Blitar, East Java, rose in revolt against the Japanese Government on 14 February 1945.

### **13. The Economic Situation of Java**

Under Japanese occupation the people of Indonesia had to work together with the Japanese forces to defend *Asia Raya* (Great Asia) against the Allied forces. All funds and manpower had to be made available for the battle against the colonialism and imperialism of the West. Indonesia was promised independence after the war. The Japanese told the Indonesian people that they had to realise that independence could not be achieved without hard work and sacrifice. Manpower was needed for the war, as was their rice and money. The lives of every single citizen of Indonesia were required for the fight for the independence of Indonesia. The Japanese were there to help and release their Asian brothers who had been colonised for more than 350 years. Without the help and sacrifice of the Indonesian people the struggle for independence

could have failed. Anybody who did not help the Japanese was considered a war criminal and had to be punished according to the law.

The Japanese said that Japan had great concern for its suffering brothers in Asia. They said repeatedly that Japan had come to Indonesia to release the Indonesian people from the colonialism of the Dutch and would bring them freedom when the Japanese won victory in the war. Therefore the Indonesian people had to work hard; in fact they had to sacrifice their lives for the independence of their fatherland. They said this to get more help from the Indonesians and to lighten their own psychological burden. They also knew that the Indonesians were longing for independence and intended to use this to persuade them to support the war with enthusiasm.

Rice and clothes had to be made available first for the soldiers. In fact, the army was given priority in access to all commodities, and every piece of land had to be productive. Fields were planted with paddy, maize, cassava or with castor oil plants which produced much-needed machine lubricating oil. Thousands of hectares of rubber, tea, coffee and sugar plantations were neglected, since the Japanese army considered rice to be the most important commodity which the people had to sell to the Japanese army for a fixed low price. Moreover, these commodities, previously exported to Europe and America, now had no markets.

As every paddy was for the Japanese army and the delivery of it was controlled by the government officials and the army, the Indonesian people became poor and hungry. They also no longer had any income from the agricultural products previously exported to the West. Java, which was once a prosperous island, became an island of famine and unemployment. The people did not have enough food to eat or enough money to buy anything. The price of commodities skyrocketed and differed across several regions. For example, brick salt, which in the regions of Cilimus and

Ciawigebang was twenty guilders a box, cost forty guilders in the town of Kuningan and its villages. I bought lots of bricks in Cilimus and Ciawigebang and brought them by horse-drawn cart to the Kuningan territories and made a good profit. The price of tapioca (flour made of cassava) was one hundred guilders for a one hundred kilogram bag in the area of Ciledug, but only cost 50 guilders per bag in the areas of Kuningan. My Uncle Kwa Peng Ho collected the tapioca from the peasants there and I brought the bags to Ciledug by horse-drawn cart. I also collected coconut oil from a village 20 kilometres south of Kuningan, which was in great demand in the city of Cirebon. The price in the village was 20 guilders for a tin can of 20 kilograms, which I sold for 50 guilders in Cirebon.

My family was able to survive during the hard times of the Japanese occupation since we were successful in doing business. But many people in the villages were hungry and several even died of hunger. There was no food or jobs for them. They were lucky that they were religious people who were obedient and faithful to God. The Indonesian people, especially in Java, were used to fasting and to praying five times a day and were already accustomed to obeying authority figures; otherwise they would have suffered even more mentally and psychologically.

#### **14. *Romusha* (Brutally Exploited Labour)**

The Japanese required a lot of labour for building bunkers, highways and airfields. They also needed workers for factories and harbours. In the beginning they recruited poor unemployed people and wanderers which the Japanese called *romusha*. At first, the recruiting was voluntarily and plenty of young men were willing to sign up, since other sources of employment had disappeared, but when the Japanese army could no longer find labour among the unemployed people and wanderers they forced

healthy young people to become *romusha*. When the Japanese army could not find any more young people in the cities, they pushed the government officials to recruit labour in the villages. When this happened many young people moved back to the cities and wandered around leaving only old people, women and children in the villages. This meant the cultivation of paddies was neglected, which consequently hampered the production of rice. The *romusha* had to work not only in the Indonesian archipelago but also in Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaya as well. They were very badly treated. From early in the morning until late in the evening, the *romusha* were brutally forced to work hard without adequate food, clean water or basic care. Therefore they quickly became physically weak and sick and did not have enough strength to work. Nobody was allowed to take a rest whilst doing their job. If they disobeyed orders or broke the law they would be scolded or hit with sticks. Many *romusha* workers succumbed to malaria and dysentery and often died from these diseases.

There were no Chinese *romusha* workers from Indonesia at all because the Japanese military knew that the Chinese were businessmen. By 1943 most Chinese hated the Japanese and did not want to work with them. However, there were many naive Indonesian youths who were jobless and eager to help the Japanese military instead because they were promised independence for their fatherland. Instead what they often got was brutality and an early death from starvation and maltreatment far from home. Some of the worst abuses were committed against the *romusha* building the two Japanese wartime railways, across Sumatra and linking Burma and Thailand, which were designed to avoid Allied attacks on Japanese shipping.

## 15. I Found My Prospective Wife

About the end of 1943 I started paying attention to a Chinese girl who often visited her cousin next door to me. Her name was Elizabeth Tan Tjoei Hiang. She was about 21 years old and used to study at the Dutch Training College for teachers in Batavia before the war. When the Japanese army occupied Batavia she fled to Kuningan and lived with her parents. My parents suggested that I get married and recommended a girl in Tanjung – 45 kilometres east of Cirebon – the daughter of a rich family who owned the ‘Gotri’ *kretek* factory.<sup>5</sup> I hesitated to make any decisions because I was still influenced by my failures with Dinah and Gwat Siok. My parents wanted me to stay close to them and urged me to marry any girl I chose. They agreed to investigate the situation with Elizabeth and, if reassured, I would ask for her hand.

My parents and my sister Sun An Nio did their best. They learned that Elizabeth was the granddaughter of Mr Loa Djan Liong and Mrs Tan Kim Nio, part of a rich and popular family in Kuningan territory. Her mother was Loa In Nio, the only daughter of Mr and Mrs Loa Djan Liong, and married Mr Tan Kit Lay, the son of Mr. Tan Seng, a popular bakery owner in Kuningan. Everything was running smoothly. Elizabeth’s parents accepted the marriage proposal and gave our family the honour of fixing the engagement date. When my parents were to visit Elizabeth’s family, Mr Tan Kit Lay came to see us and said that Elizabeth had to leave Kuningan for Blitar, a city in East Java, for the purpose of learning how to bake cakes and do sugar-butter decorating. “Therefore,” he said, “would you please do us a favour and postpone the date of the engagement until my daughter comes back from Blitar?” My parents were quiet, thanked him for the news and wished Elizabeth all the best. I could not do anything and considered this outcome as a failure. I wanted to wait and see, rather

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<sup>5</sup> Cigarettes containing chopped cloves.

than look for another girl in a great hurry. After that I ignored any proposals for getting married, although my parents were always secretly looking for another girl as my prospective wife.

## **16. My Bicycle Tour to Bandung**

I was fortunate in that I could be a tourist during the war, even though there were no taxis, no private cars, no public buses, and the trains were crowded. I rode a bicycle and had an identity card from the Chinese *Shibuco* and *Lurah*, which meant I had no restrictions at all on personal travel. As there was not a lot of work to do, I decided to go on a bicycle tour.

In January 1944 I set out with my friend Kwee Tiong An on our bicycles for Bandung via Tasikmalaya and Garut. We left Kuningan early in the morning and pedalled through Cikijing and Kawali, two small places south of Mount Ciremai. The road from Kuningan to Cikijing was good, asphalted but very steep. We passed the dam of Darma, a huge water reservoir which had been built between 1930 and 1937. The dam of Darma could irrigate thousands of hectares of rice fields and produce electricity for factories and housing in the territory of Cirebon. The road from Cikijing to Kawali was much worse, it was rocky and uneven. At noon we arrived in Kawali and had our lunch in a native food stall.

The road from Kawali to Tasikmalaya was quiet. We did not see any motor vehicles. Most people were on foot and were poorly dressed. We did not see any rice fields, only forests and woods alongside the road. The road sloped downwards and we arrived in Tasikmalaya at about five o'clock in the afternoon. We visited Kwee Tiong An's cousin in Cihideung Gede street who was running a sugar business. I also met Tan Seng Tjoan, a friend of mine from the Dutch Training College for teachers in

Solo, Central Java, from before the war. The sky was getting dark and we went to our lodging for the night.

The family who gave us lodging was kind and friendly. The head of the family was my former teacher in Cilimus who had taught me Chinese when I was a little boy. In Tasikmalaya he worked as secretary of a trading company. The city was celebrated for its handicrafts and woodcrafts and the beautifully decorated umbrellas of Tasikmalaya were well known in West Java. West of Tasikmalaya was a place called Singaparna. The people there were good Muslims who did not like the Japanese military government and, on 14 February 1944, the peasants of Sukamanah, Singaparna broke out in revolt under the leadership of Kyai Zainal Mustafa and Kyai Emas.<sup>6</sup>

We left Tasikmalaya for Garut early in the morning via Singaparna. Although this road was quite good, it was steep so we mostly walked while pushing our bicycles. The road was quiet, and we did not see any motor vehicles or Japanese soldiers at all. The Japanese seemed to be very busy outside Java and the Indonesian Archipelago, especially in the Pacific where the Japanese navy had been weakened after losing a large proportion of its fleet and many expertly trained pilots. We knew that the war had turned against Japan from listening to Allied broadcasts.

We arrived in Garut at about five o'clock in the afternoon and spent the night with my friend's relative, Oen Liang. Garut was bigger than Tasikmalaya and popular for its oranges, *dodol*<sup>7</sup> and dried *kasemek*.<sup>8</sup> We set out from Garut early in the morning and headed for the city of Bandung via the villages of Malangbong and

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<sup>6</sup> *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VII, 26; Peter Liang Tek Soey, *Sukarno: Hero of the Quest for Indonesian Independence*, Thesis M.A. Honours, University of Sydney, 1992, 127.

<sup>7</sup> A kind of taffy made of sticky rice, coconut milk and palm sugar.

<sup>8</sup> A kind of smooth-skinned sweet fruit the size of an apple and eaten fresh.

Rancaekek. We arrived in Bandung at about three o'clock in the afternoon and spent two nights with Uncle Kwa Ouw Lian and Auntie Kwa Nie Nio.

We went back home via Sumedang, Kadipaten, the cities of Cirebon and Cilimus to Kuningan. The road from Bandung to Sumedang was mountainous, rocky, and winding. The people called the road “Jalan Cadas Pangeran”, meaning the rocky road built by the prince. I had travelled over this road before by bus with my father when I was a young child and knew the story of its construction on the orders of Governor General Daendels.

The road from Kadipaten to Cirebon was asphalted and flat. We arrived at the city of Cirebon at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Cirebon was a *Syu* territory during the Japanese occupation. From Cirebon we went up the slope of Mount Ciremai. Once again, we did not see any motor vehicles or Japanese, and arrived back in Kuningan at about 7 o'clock in the evening via the village of Cilimus, my hometown.

## **17. Japanese Mobilisation of the People of Java: *Heiho*, *Seinendan*, *Keibodan* and *Kakyo Keibotai***

The Japanese military administration made serious efforts to win the support of Indonesia's youth for their war effort. Propaganda was intensive and they set up organisations which kept the youth of the country busy, since there was so much unemployment. These organisations also trained local youths who could be used both to resist the expected Allied attack (which in fact never came) and control the population, which increasingly disliked the war. *Heiho* were indigenous Indonesian militia during the Japanese occupation. They were military forces, especially trained as soldiers and available to supplement the regular Japanese army and navy in an emergency. They had to be healthy, well-behaved and between the ages of 18 and 25

years. They also had to have completed primary school. There were about 42,000 *Heiho* soldiers in Indonesia (Java 24,873; Timor 2,504 and other territories 15,000).<sup>9</sup>

*Seinendan* and *Keibodan* were two youth organisations set up on 29 April 1943. The members of *Seinendan* and *Keibodan* were young Asian men aged between 15 and 25 years. The organisations were under *Naimubu Bunkyo* (Department of Internal Affairs, Education, Sport and *Seinendan* Sections) and were not only set up in villages but also in schools and factories as well. In October 1944 *Seinendan* for girls was set up and all members underwent military training in the Institute for Youth Military Training. Whereas the *Seinendan* were reserve military soldiers, the *Keibodan* were reserve police forces under the Police Department. The members of *Keibodan* underwent military training in Sukabumi, a regency capital in West Java, 120 kilometres south of Jakarta.

*Kakyo Keibotai* was a Chinese youth organisation under the *Kakyo Sokai* (Overseas Chinese Association) which was responsible to the Japanese *syucokan* who was the highest authority because he managed the legislative and executive branches of the Japanese residency government and was responsible to the *gunseikanbu* (Head of Military Public Administration). Social, business and military affairs in connection with the Chinese were carried out and carried forward through the *Kakyo Sokai* and assisted by the Chinese *Shibuco* (Head of Chinatown). The Japanese army was trying to separate Chinese affairs from indigenous affairs. They did not want the Chinese and indigenous peoples working together because they were afraid of any possible uprising against their authority. Therefore the separation between Chinese and indigenous affairs continued until the independence of Indonesia.

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<sup>9</sup> *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VII, 33.

At first, the Japanese were more sympathetic to the natives because they expected Indonesian help in their occupation. The arrival of the Japanese military was welcomed by the natives because of the Japanese promise of independence for Indonesia. During the military occupation the Japanese realised that the Indonesian leaders wanted to have their independence granted instantly without having to aid a Japanese victory. Therefore the Japanese tried to gain the sympathy of the Chinese community to help them win the war. These Japanese attempts to mobilise the youth of Indonesia were reasonably successful with the natives, who found Japanese propaganda compelling. However, the Chinese were always unsympathetic and their collaboration, including my own, was at best half-hearted. Many of the Japanese officers were talented and sincere, which meant that there was some genuine loyalty and respect for them, but the Chinese generally hoped for their quick defeat.

### **18. The Three A Movement**

This movement was founded in April 1942 based on the slogan “Nippon the Leader of Asia, Nippon the Protector of Asia, Nippon the Light of Asia.”<sup>10</sup> The movement was chaired by Mr. Syamsuddin who was assisted by K. Sutan Pamuncak and Mohammad Saleh. While it appeared to be an Indonesian organisation and carried out by the Indonesians themselves – in order to cover the Japanese colonialism – it was dominated and manipulated by the Japanese Military Department of Propaganda under Shimizu Hitoshi and served Japanese interests.<sup>11</sup> Sukarno, who came back to Jakarta from exile, did not like the Three A Movement because it was too Japan-centred. No Indonesian interests and aspirations were involved. Even though he did

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<sup>10</sup> George Sanford Kanahale, *The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia: Prelude to Independence*, Cornell University, Ph.D., Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1976, 48.

<sup>11</sup> M.D. Sagimun, *Perlawanan Rakyat Indonesia terhadap Fasisme Jepang*, Jakarta: Inti Idayu Press, 1985, 33-34.

not like it, Sukarno would have wanted to persuade people to take part because if Japan won the war Indonesia would have been granted independence from the Japanese. Although Sukarno was outwardly cooperative with the Three A Movement, he did not involve himself in it completely and had been deprived of any direct control over the movement. It was said that Sukarno was exploring its dissolution with the *Gunsei* (Military government) headquarters.<sup>12</sup> There was also internal friction among the Japanese authorities concerning this movement since it seemed to have been hastily thrown together by the Japanese Department of Propaganda.<sup>13</sup>

### **19. *Putera- Pusata Tenaga Rakjat* (Centre of People's Power)**

The Three A Movement was dissolved in September 1942 and its role was taken over by *Putera* or (*Pusat Tenaga Rakyat* or Centre of People's Power) which was proclaimed on 8 December 1942, although its inauguration was delayed until 9 March 1943. As its chairman, Sukarno formed the "Four-leafed Clover" (*Empat Serangkai*) leadership, the top four administrative members of the Three A Movement, with Hatta, Ki Hadjar Dewantoro (Suardi Surjaningrat) and Kijai Hadji Mas Mansur. They were also assisted by Amir Sjarifuddin, Oto Iskandar Dinata, Samsuddin, Sartono, Soekardjo Wirjopranoto, Mr. Soemanang and Soetardjo.

The original plan of *Putera* seemed to have been Sukarno's, although the *Gunsei* (military) officials had made some changes and decisions on how and when it should be operated. During the preliminary conversation with Colonel Nakayama, Miyoshi and Saito Shizuo at the Hotel Selabintara, near Sukabumi, Sukarno and Hatta insisted on four points:

1. the term "Indonesia" be inserted in the title of *Putera*;

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<sup>12</sup> Kanahele, *The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia*, 50.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

2. the anthem of “Indonesia Raja” and the “red and white” flag be allowed;
3. the membership should be restricted to indigenous people;
4. public officials should also be admitted for membership.<sup>14</sup>

The Japanese military representatives rejected the Indonesian leaders’ proposals except for one of the points. They approved of the stipulation for an all-Indonesian membership, hence barring Chinese, Arabs and Indians as well as Japanese. The Japanese military representatives pointed out that the *Gunsei* was only responsible for the island of Java while the future status of Java would be decided by the government in Tokyo. They also indicated that the participation of the Indonesian civil servants in *Putera* might be in conflict with their official responsibility. Since Sukarno and other leaders of *Putera* did not agree at once with the Japanese military, the inauguration of the movement had to be postponed. This left thousands of people, who had poured into Jakarta from all over Java to attend the meeting, disappointed.

The main Japanese purpose of *Putera* was to increase the Indonesian sense of duty and responsibility towards the victory in the Greater Asian war and the Greater Asian Co-prosperity.<sup>15</sup> The Japanese military was still unwilling to comply with Indonesian leaders’ demands for independence because they needed the rich Indonesian resources of oil and rubber for the war. They criticised the Indonesians for not being capable of organising their own government and accused Sukarno of including too many details in his speeches rather than only speaking about important matters.<sup>16</sup>

After that proclamation of the *Putera* on 8 December 1942, the movement was not initially active because, for its inauguration, the Japanese military on Java needed

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 73

<sup>15</sup> C.M.L. Penders, *The Life and Times of Sukarno*, London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1974, 72.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 73. Penders quoted I.J. Brugmans’ comments from I.J. Brugmans, *Nederlands Indie onder Japanese bezetting, over de Jaren 1942- 1945* (Franeker 1960) No.410, p.561, No 409,560-1.

the consent of the Japanese government in Tokyo. In the proclamation of *Putera*, Sukarno saw the open road to the “Golden Bridge” of independence. At the mass meeting that had been staged, Sukarno declared:

On this day I announce the birth of a new people’s organisation, a new people’s movement whose leadership has been assigned by the military government to me, Mohammed (sic) Hatta, Ki Hadja Dewantoro, and Kijai Mansur...

For that reason we now cooperate with the government and the government cooperates with us. Long live the cooperation between Japan and Indonesia...<sup>17</sup>

Sukarno saw in *Putera* a united front of several Indonesian national streams in one form, one determination and one objective: independence for Indonesia. He also saw in *Putera* the resurrection of the PPPKI (*Permufakatan Perhimpunan-perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia*).<sup>18</sup> It was the united movement where all Indonesian people (non-Indonesians were not to be included in the organisation), both old and young, nobles and Marhaens, Moslems and non-Moslems, were to be forged into one unity. The Moslems were represented by R.H. Mansur, the “European” Nationalists by Hatta and the nationalists concerned with indigenous culture by Ki Hadjar Dewantoro. They all joined Sukarno in the leadership of *Putera*. The only political stream which was not represented in the *Putera* was Marxism.

The word *Putera* has a double meaning. It was an abbreviation of *Pusat Tenaga Rakyat* (The Centre of People’s Power), with which the Japanese military expected to obtain the support of all Indonesian people to win the Great Asian War. However, it is also a rather aristocratic word for “son”. *Putera* then could symbolise to each son of Indonesia the importance of love for his mother country and the need to fight for independence so long as blood still flowed in his veins and a soul still lived in his body. It could also suggest that Indonesia was an honours child of Japan.

<sup>17</sup> Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesia Independence*, Translated from the German by Mary F. Somers Heidhues, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969, 237-238.

<sup>18</sup> Association of the Indonesian National Political Organisations.

Therefore, the chant of “Long Live Nippon! Long Live *Pusat Tenaga Rakyat*!” could also mean “Long Live Nippon! Long Live *Putera* (the Son, meaning Indonesia, or the youth of Indonesia)!”<sup>19</sup> This linguistic play suggested that the time was coming to proclaim independence.

Sukarno attempted to suggest hidden meanings in his speeches through the use of ambiguous language, regional and colloquial terms and allusions to *wayang* stories (shadow plays with puppets). It was necessary for Sukarno to do so because most of the Indonesian people were not formally educated and were therefore unfamiliar with Latin characters and Western civilisation. Sukarno had to use different methods in his speeches from those of the other great orators of his time like Hitler and Mussolini. He had to repeat the most important words in his speeches and explain or illustrate them with examples such as *wayang* stories in order to make his speeches clearer to his local audience. The mixed slang of Indonesian, Sundanese and Javanese language which Sukarno used in his speeches was easier for the common country people to understand but was hard for foreigners. The Japanese military officers seemed not to have understood Sukarno’s veiled meanings.

The Japanese military restricted the movement of *Putera* for fear that it would harm their victory in the Great Asian war.<sup>20</sup> When Colonel Nakayama was ordered back to Japan at the end of March 1943 and was replaced by General Yamamoto Moichiro, the position of *Putera* was in jeopardy. Yamamoto, who became the chief of *Gunseikan* (Chief of the military government in Java), took a harder line with *Putera* and did not hesitate to describe the Indonesians as “natives” and to speak of Java rather than of Indonesia. He offered *Putera* the following two-point summary of his “suggestions”:

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<sup>19</sup> J.D. Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1972, 166.

<sup>20</sup> Sagimun, *Perlawanan Rakyat Indonesia terhadap Fasisme Jepang*, 33.

1. The aim of *Putera* to organise all the people's efforts "means nothing more than to work for final victory in the war for Greater East Asia..."<sup>21</sup>
2. Because all the work of the movement was closely connected with the military government, "the decision and plans of the military government must be carried out exactly by the leaders."<sup>22</sup>

Yamamoto was trying to oust, step by step, the influence of the nationalists which had been established during the time of Imamura and Nakayama, because he considered *Putera* to be more an independence movement than an instrument of Japanese propaganda. Since the decision had been made by Tokyo in May 1943 to incorporate Indonesia into the Japanese empire, *Putera*'s influence was declining.

## **20. *Djawa Hokokai* or *Perhimpunan Kebaktian Rakyat* (People's Loyalty Organisation)**

By the end of 1943 the Japanese military was convinced that *Putera* favoured the Indonesian nationalist movement more than the Japanese war effort. Apparently there were also more anti-Japanese than anti-Allied attitudes developing among the *Putera* supporters and the educated youth. Therefore the Japanese military banned *Putera* and on 1 March 1944, they replaced it with a new organisation called *Djawa Hokokai* or *Perhimpunan Kebaktian Rakyat* (People's Loyalty Organisation). The Japanese military insisted that the movement, representing the Chinese, Arab and Eurasian as well as Indonesian communities, was not specifically nationalistic in character. They also urged that the movement be put under much closer supervision and control than the *Putera* had been. The central leadership of the *Djawa Hokokai*

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<sup>21</sup> *Asia Raya*, 16 April, 1943, 1.

<sup>22</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 246 See also *Asia Raya*, 16 April 1943, 1.

was in Japanese hands while Sukarno and other national leaders were made advisors who therefore were not free to manipulate the organisation for the aims of the nationalist movement. The movement was therefore directly under the control of *Gunseikan*, the Japanese commander in chief, while the *priyayi* (nobles) and the government officials were to play a predominant role.<sup>23</sup>

*Djawa Hokokai* was trying to gain the favour of the *Kyais* (Islamic teachers) and other Islamic leaders in order to gain support in their propaganda campaign. The Japanese had not been successful in building strong anti-Allied feelings among the Moslems, because they were already upset by the Japanese military orders to bow towards Tokyo rather than Mecca and to glorify the Japanese Emperor as God. *Djawa Hokokai* was also trying to embrace the Chinese communities by setting up Chinese Associations known as *Kakyo Sokai* in every city and town where the Chinese community could assemble and listen to the Japanese military instructions. The Japanese did not succeed in befriending the Chinese communities because of their invasion of China in 1937 and the continued notoriety of ‘The Rape of Nanking’ where more than 100,000 civilians were massacred indiscriminately.<sup>24</sup> ‘The Rape of Nanking’ was well-known in the Dutch East Indies through the daily newspapers *Sin Po* and *Kong Po*. The Chinese in the Dutch East Indies were angry with the Japanese and refused to buy Japanese goods. The Chinese leaders collected money to help the war victims in China. When the Japanese military occupied Java in 1942 the Chinese were at first apathetic towards Japan. When they saw how cruel the Japanese military

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<sup>23</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1952, 110; Penders, *The Life and Times of Sukarno*, 79.

<sup>24</sup> Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1983, 582-585

It is hard to determine an accurate figure of the number killed in Nanking especially at the time of war where the Japanese military killed and raped people cruelly. The troops of General Chiang Kai-Shek had fled to Wuhan while war correspondents dared not appear in the battlefield. Moreover, the communication media were not as good as they are today. So that controversy continues today.

was and the Chinese leaders were arrested, the Chinese communities changed their behaviour towards the Japanese. Even though they hated the Japanese military, their approach was friendly as a painful necessity.

## **21. Peta (*Tentara Sukarela Pembela Tanah Air* or Volunteer Army of Defenders of the Homeland)**

On 3 September 1943 the Japanese military agreed to the formation of a volunteer military force to be composed of, and officered by, Indonesians. Its formal inauguration by General Harada occurred a month later. It had the support of Sukarno and other Indonesian nationalist leaders formerly represented in *Putera* and later in the Central Advisory Council.<sup>25</sup> In practice, however, the organisation of PETA was completely in the hands of the Japanese military. The nationalist leadership of Sukarno and Hatta was not involved in any way, as the Japanese sought to prevent or at least minimise any nationalist infiltration into PETA. Sukarno and Hatta were totally unaware of the 16<sup>th</sup> Army's real intentions with PETA<sup>26</sup> with the result that the public endorsements by Sukarno and Hatta appeared belatedly.

The Japanese military motive for the formation of the volunteer Indonesian military force was the need for defence forces to assist Japan against possible Allied landings since the Japanese military position in the Pacific had begun to deteriorate. Heavy fighting occurred in the south-west of the Pacific between Japan and the Allies for the Solomons-New Guinea Zone. Japan expected an Allied landing in the Philippines and Indonesia after the Battle of Midway turning-point when American divebombers struck and sank four Japanese fleet carriers of Nagumo's First Carrier Force on 4 June 1942.

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<sup>25</sup> Legge, *Sukarno*, 170.

<sup>26</sup> Kanahele *The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia*., 120

The Indonesian PETA officers were trained by the Japanese officers in Bogor, 60 kilometres south of Jakarta. After the training they were sent back to their home cities and ordered to recruit and train their own troops, assisted by Japanese officers.<sup>27</sup> By the formation of the PETA military force the Indonesian youths became acquainted with the knowledge and practice of warfare which later proved very important for the defence of their independence from the Dutch after the Japanese surrender.

During the Japanese occupation, the Indonesian people were dying of starvation, and often suffered from brutality and ruthless exploitation from the Japanese military. Open acts of defiance of the Japanese began to occur. On 26 July 1942 the peasants of Pancur Batu in the regency of Deli Serdang, East Sumatra, rose in rebellion. On 2 October 1943 the peasants of Kandang Haur in the regency of Indramayu, West Java, revolted against the Japanese military government. On 14 February 1944 the peasants of Sukamanah, Singaparna, West Java, under the joint leadership of Kyai Zainal Mustafa and Kyai Emas, broke out in revolt. One of the most violent insurrections was the armed revolt in the PETA garrison at Blitar, East Java, which broke out on 14 February 1945, led by Supriyadi, Muradi and Suparyono. The Japanese military made use of heavy artillery under the leadership of Colonel Katagiri who had extensive combatant experience. Almost all of Supriyadi's men were killed while Supriyadi himself and the rest of his troops retreated to Mount Kelud and never reappeared or surrendered to the Japanese military. Muradi, Suparyono and the remainder of their troops surrendered to the Japanese military. They were tried by court martial and some of the leaders were sentenced to death.

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<sup>27</sup> Departmen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Biro Pemuda, *Sejarah Perjuangan Pemuda Indonesia*, Jakarta: P.N.Balai Pustaka, 1965, 110-12.

## 20. *Hisbullah* (The Army of Allah)

During the Japanese occupation I also saw many Indonesian young people marching with the banner of *Hisbullah*, the only armed Islamic youth organisation set up by the Japanese-sponsored *Masyumi*<sup>28</sup> in December 1944. In the beginning the youth received Islamic teaching from Kartosuwiryo at the Suffah Institute which included some military training exercises. After the consent of the Japanese government to include the Islamic youth in the Japanese propaganda and defence system, the Suffah Institute was banned and the *Hisbullah* was given unarmed military training by the Japanese military.<sup>29</sup> From the Japanese point of view, this Islamic youth organisation was very important and potentially helpful as a precaution against Allied landings in Java. Since the Dutch had colonised Java, the Japanese military expected that the *Hisbullah* would be willing to wage a holy war against the “infidel Allies”. The *Masyumi* regarded the Islamic military training as providing an opportunity for the youths to participate in the formation of the Indonesian military forces which were needed to defend the independent homeland against the Dutch. In practice, however, liaison between *Masyumi* leaders and many of the *Hisbullah* commanders was frequently very casual.

There also existed the *Sabillah*, a type of territorially-based home guard where all *Masyumi* members were liable to serve. In some areas its units were armed and very important to the Japanese military defence system. The setting up of the *Hisbullah* and the *Sabillah* was the main concern of the Japanese military to the Indonesian Islamic organisation. This concession became clearer when K.H. Hasyim Asyari was nominated for the position of *Shumubucho* (Chief of the Office for

<sup>28</sup> Majlis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia – the Council of Indonesian Moslem Association set up with the consent of the Japanese toward the end of 1943.

<sup>29</sup> Cornelis Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam (The Darul Islam in Indonesia)*, translated into Indonesian by under the title of *Darul Islam, Sebuah Pemberontakan*, Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1988, 33.

Religious Affairs) in August 1944.<sup>30</sup> The Japanese military also intended to use the *Hisbullah* and the *Sabillah* as weapons against the secular nationalist organisations of which the Japanese military was suspicious. The Japanese declared that the *Hisbullah* was established not at their command but at the wish of the Islamic community itself.<sup>31</sup> It was claimed to be wholly autonomous under the sole direction of the *Masyumi* and its membership numbered around 50,000 men who received military training in Cibarusa, Bogor, under the leadership of Captain Janagawa.<sup>32</sup>

### 23. *Tonari Gumi*, Neighbourhood Organisations

The Japanese military set up neighbourhood organisations (*Tonari Gumi*) to spread their military ideas more deeply into the villages, led by lower *priyayi* and village chiefs in order to make the people more productive for the Great East Asian war and more willing to supply the army with their agricultural produce.<sup>33</sup> Mr. Thio Keng Hie was chief of Kuningan Chinatown at the time of the Japanese occupation. I was appointed head of the Chinese youth under the chief of Kuningan Chinatown, who was in turn responsible to the head of *Kakyo Sokai* in the city of Cirebon, Mr. Kwee Zwan Loan. The *Tonari Gumi* was important to the people as long as coconut oil, petroleum, granulated sugar, textiles and rice were distributed from the government to the people. But the *Tonari Gumi* was more important for the Japanese army rather than for the Indonesian people when the tide of war began to swing against the Japanese and the *Tonari Gumi* was used as an agency to recruit labour forces and collect agricultural produce. I saw working for the Japanese as a painful necessity and could do nothing to resist. Some Chinese thought that it was better to be

<sup>30</sup> H.J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, V. Hoeve, The Hague and Bandung, 1958, Chapter 7, 150 ff.

<sup>31</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 284, 285

<sup>32</sup> *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VII*, 32-33.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

involved in Japanese affairs in order to know more about the Japanese military progression in the war. If we knew more about the Japanese military situation, we could inform the Chinese community of what steps should be taken in order to protect them. I agreed with this idea and was enthusiastic for the development of the Chinese youth.

## 24. Independent Indonesia in the Making

On 7 September 1944 in the 85<sup>th</sup> special sitting of Japan's Parliament (*Teikoku Ginkai*) in Tokyo, Prime Minister Kuniaki Koiso announced that the East Indies (Indonesia) would be granted independence. Japan was motivated to make this announcement because of its setbacks in its battles in the Pacific zone. The island of Saipan, which is close to the islands of Japan, fell into American hands which caused the Japanese population to panic.<sup>34</sup> Japan's naval bases in Ambon, Macassar, Manado and Surabaya as well as the oil depots in Tarakan and Balikpapan were often bombarded.

After several months, during which time nothing had been done to realise the promises of Koiso's declaration, the occupation authorities announced the creation of BPKI (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*) was announced on 1 March 1945. This announcement was made without waiting for prior consent from Tokyo or Saigon (where the Japanese military had their southeast Asian headquarters), since Japan's military situation was critical. Either Allied landings or an internal revolution could happen at any time. The armed revolt of the PETA garrison at Blitar on 14 February 1945 induced General Harada and the *Gunsei*

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 66.

officials to attempt to concede the Indonesian desire for independence as soon as possible.

The investigating Body for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence, BPKI, consisted of a Negotiating Body and an Administration Office. Their aim was to study and investigate several important matters concerning the formation of an independent Indonesia. Dr. K.R.T. Radjiman Wediodiningrat was appointed Chairman with the consent of Sukarno who was only a common member of the body.<sup>35</sup> Members were also appointed from among Chinese, Arabic and Eurasian organisations.

The political figures who played the most important part in the BPKI in enunciating a Concept of Principles to guide the new state were Sukarno and Muhammad Jamin. Both proposed very similar principles which only differed in particular terms.

Sukarno's concept was:

1. Indonesian nationalism;
2. Internationalism or humanitarianism;
3. Consensus or democracy;
4. Social prosperity;
5. Belief in one God;

Sukarno first unveiled the five principles of *Pancasila*<sup>36</sup> in his speech on the State's Principles concept. He added that he could squeeze the principles from *Pancasila* (Five Principles) to *Trisila* (Three Principles) and from *Trisila* to *Ekasila* (One Principle).<sup>37</sup> The two first principles, nationalism and inter-nationalism, nationalism and humanitarianism, could be compressed into one socio-nationalism, a

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 70.

term which Sukarno had frequently used in his earlier writings. The second two principles, consensus or democracy and social prosperity could also be composed into one; socio-democracy. Therefore socio-nationalism and socio-democracy together with the principle of belief in God could be called *Trisila* (Three Principles). But these three principles could be compressed further to form one principle, the genuine Indonesian term of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation). His statement of 1 June 1945 was as follows:

I call this with the advice of our friend, a linguist, Pantja Sila...  
Pantja Sila becomes Trisila, Trisila becomes Ekasila. But it is up to you, which one you choose: Tri Sila, Eka or Pantja Sila?<sup>38</sup>

Sukarno's draft of the *Pantja Sila* had to be further assessed by another body – the Committee to Prepare for Indonesian Independence (*Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*, PPKI). The new body was formed by the Japanese military on 7 August 1945.<sup>39</sup> In a radio speech the next day, Sukarno hailed the formation of the new committee and spoke jubilantly of the approach of the independence of Indonesia. He referred to the old Joyoboyo prophecy which told that at the end of a “year of corn”, the little yellow-skinned conquerors would return to their homeland. And “before the corn is ripe, Indonesia must be independent”.<sup>40</sup> On 9 August 1945, Sukarno, Hatta and Dr. Radjiman Wediodiningrat left Jakarta for Saigon to visit Marshall Terauchi, Commander-in-Chief of Japan's Southern Expeditionary Forces.<sup>41</sup>

Sukarno's draft of *Pancasila* was presented to the BPKI committee of nine persons which changed the principle of “Belief in One God” into “Belief in God with the obligation for the Moslems to practice the Islamic laws.” The committee called this occasion the “Jakarta Charter”. The *Pancasila* draft which had been accepted by

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 69,70.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>40</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 308.

<sup>41</sup> Legge, *Sukarno: a Political Biography*, 192, 193.

the committee had to be changed again on the suggestion of the Christian communities of East Indonesia. “Belief in God with the obligation for the Moslems to practice the Islamic laws” was changed back into “Belief in One God”. This draft was accepted by the session of the Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence on August 18, 1945. Thus the Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence, PPKI, accepted the draft of the *Pancasila* as follows:

1. *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*;
2. *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab*;
3. *Persatuan Indonesia*;
4. *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan/perwakilan*;
5. *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh Rakyat Indonesia*.<sup>42</sup>

In English this is:

1. Belief in One God;
2. Righteous and civilised humanity;
3. Indonesian unity;
4. Democracy guided by respect and wisdom in consultation/representation;
5. Social justice for all Indonesian people.

## 25. My Experiences in *Keibotai* Military Training

The increasing attempts of the Japanese to mobilise the population of Java for military purposes extended to the Chinese. As a young man of military age, it was inevitable that I would become involved. It was about August 1944 when I was asked to appear before the *Shibuco* (Head of Chinatown) of Kuningan who showed me a

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<sup>42</sup> *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VI*, 73.

letter from *Kakyo Sokai* in the city of Cirebon. The Japanese army needed about 200 Chinese young men in *Syu* territory of Cirebon to be trained as *Keibotai* in Linggajati, a beautiful village on the slope of Mount Ciremai, about 15 kilometres north-west of Kuningan.

The *Keibotai* was created at the end of 1943<sup>43</sup> to involve Chinese youth in the Japanese Great East Asian war. There were two *Keibotai* training centres in West Java at the time - Linggajati, a mountainous village near Cirebon, and Tangerang, west of Jakarta. The Chinese youth in the residency areas of Cirebon were recruited by the *Kakyo Sokai* of Cirebon with the assistance of the regency, district and sub-district branches. *Kakyo Sokai*, led by Oei Tjong Hauw and Dr. Jap Tjwan Bing, was the only Chinese Union on Java which was used by the Japanese military as an instrument to collect money from the Chinese Community and persuade the Chinese to participate in the Japanese war.

The *Keibotai* training centre in Linggajati was headed by Mr Watanabe who was responsible to Colonel Kuriya of the 16<sup>th</sup> Army. Mr. Watanabe's assistants included Akano, Fukuda and Tomita. I received *Keibotai* training in Linggajati from September 1944 until 15 August 1945 and came into frequent contact with Mr Watanabe during this training.

I was unwilling to join the *Keibotai* military training and to participate in the war because I could not forget the Japanese attack on China in 1937 and especially the rape of Nanking. In spite of that, I promised the Chinese *Shibuco* to recruit young men for the *Keibotai* military training, especially when I heard the *Shibuco* saying: "If we fail to recruit young men for the *Keibotai* training the Japanese army will think that we, the Chinese, are against them or are at least unconcerned about the Japanese

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<sup>43</sup> S.H. Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Volume 2, Jakarta: Grafika, 181.

arrival to release Asia from imperialism and colonialism.” Although I hated working for the Japanese, I knew it was better to be involved in Japanese affairs and be able to inform the Chinese community how best to protect themselves. I sometimes secretly ran home at night to inform the head of Chinatown and my family about the Japanese military progress in the Pacific War.

When the Japanese cabinet adopted the Allies’ proposal of peace on 11 August 1945, two friends of mine – both of whom were in training in Jakarta as telegraphers – went back to our training camp in Linggajati. They told me about the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the coming Japanese surrender. I secretly ran home that night to inform the head of Chinatown and my family. I told them to be careful about a possible uprising of the natives for Indonesian independence.

There were 60 young Chinese men from Kuningan, Cikijing, Ciawigebang, Lurahgung and Cirebon who came to Linggajati to undergo *Keibotai* military training. We stayed in a big building with lots of rooms situated near the river of Cibacang. In front of the building was a large expanse where we learned marching and fighting. We did not use any real weapons and even only used wooden ones in combat. We learnt how to attack enemy fortresses and defend our bastion. We also learnt and practised how to climb a hill and jump down paddy fields. We practised how to fight in water and how to save our friends, how to cross a river and defend a bridge. We often listened to speeches about the Great East Asian war and the purpose of the Japanese in coming to southeast Asia. The Japanese paid no attention to any accidents that occurred during the training. They did not stop the training of climbing coconut trees even after our friend Lim Po Seng fell from a 30 metre high coconut tree. Instead of helping him, our poor friend was slapped repeatedly by Mr. Fukuda and abused for being stupid.

More young Chinese men arrived at our training camp from throughout the Cirebon residency. Four troops and a *Honbu* (council) were created. The troops were headed by a troop commander who had to obey the orders of the council. The council consisted of ten members and was headed by a *Honbuco* (chief of the council). I was appointed *Honbuco* and was responsible to Mr Watanabe, head of the training camp. The *Kakyo Sokai* of Cirebon had to provide everything we needed: medication, clothes, uniforms, beds, blankets, food, drink, cooks and kitchen utensils. The Japanese forced the Chinese community to pay the expenses of the *Keibotai* training and take care of the young men. The Japanese army wanted the Chinese community to take an enthusiastic part in the Great East Asian War.

The Japanese Resident (*syucho*) was trying to recruit prominent Chinese figures as government officials in his office. He organised an advisory council where such prominent figures were employed. Orders for the Chinese communities were not transferred through the native Regent, the *Wedana* (district head) and the *Lurah* (Village Chief), but through *Kakyo Sokai* (Foreign Chinese Association), *Sibuco* (the chief of the ethnic Chinese) and the Chinese *Cumico* (head of a quarter). As explained earlier, commodities, like laundry soap, coconut oil, petroleum, granulated sugar and wheat flour – which were not available in the market – were distributed through the *Kakyo Sokai*, *Sibuco* and the Chinese *Kumicho*. An identity card and a travel pass for the Chinese had to be signed by the *Sibuco*. In doing so, the Japanese were trying to create close ties with the Chinese community and to attract Chinese loyalty.

When I went home for a holiday, I received a letter from Elizabeth telling me that she was back in Kuningan and asking if our friendship could be continued. The next day, Elizabeth's father Mr Tan Kit Lay, visited us to tell my parents that my engagement to Elizabeth could now be organised. My father and Elizabeth's father

agreed that our engagement would be organised on the first Sunday of July in 1945. When I went back to the training camp, I took a letter from the Head of Chinatown for Mr. Watanabe asking him to grant me a one week holiday. The Head of Chinatown told Mr Watanabe that I was to be engaged to Elizabeth and that the party would be organised on the first Sunday of July in 1945. Mr Watanabe said nothing. He did not seem happy with the news that I was to give priority to myself rather than to the interests of the state, especially considering the critical state of the Great East Asian War. Perhaps Mr Watanabe knew more than he admitted. Perhaps he knew that all he was doing was a waste of time and that soon he would have to surrender.

When the time to take leave had come I appeared before Mr Watanabe to ask for his consent. He answered that I had to give priority to the interests of the state rather than to myself. He even pretended to believe it. "Getting married is good", Mr Watanabe said, "but the interests of the Great East Asian war are more important than your own. You have to love your country; you have to love Asia and to be willing to sacrifice for the benefit and independence of Asia. The Japanese have been fighting to release Asia. You have to, as a good citizen, take part in this war. Without your sacrifice it would be very hard for the Japanese to win the war. I cannot give you permission to leave."

I could do nothing to change his mind. He was Japanese and had come to Indonesia with the sole interest of the Japanese army to conquer the Allied forces. Mr. Watanabe was an army officer, and had to obey the Japanese government. But I was a common citizen and had my own interests. We had promised Elizabeth's family an engagement party which had been organised for the next morning. If we did not attend the engagement party our family could be accused of not being loyal to our promise to their family.

My decision was to leave the training camp without Mr Watanabe's consent. I had to save our engagement and my family's good reputation at any cost. I realised that the Japanese army was harsh and cruel but I did not care about that. It was midnight, and the next morning would be Sunday, the date of our engagement. Everybody was in bed. I woke a friend of mine, Sian Hoey, and told him that I was going to run away from the training camp. He agreed to accompany me to the rice field nearby. I said goodbye to him and disappeared into the dark. I ran along small dykes of rice fields and came to a Moslem cemetery full of trees with white flowers. The cemetery was dark and quiet but I went on along until I reached the main road. I ran and ran until I got home safely at about 2 o'clock in the morning.

When I was talking to my father about my escape and the engagement party, somebody knocked at the door. When I opened the door I saw Mr Fukuda and Nizar, the driver, at the door. I invited Mr Fukuda to come in and told him frankly of the reason for my escape. I promised Mr Fukuda I would return to the training camp and would apologise to Mr Watanabe. Mr Fukuda, whose enthusiasm for the Great Asian War was limited, agreed with my decision and, turning his back so he could see nothing, went away.

It was 11 o'clock in the morning on the date of my engagement with Elizabeth. The engagement party took place at Elizabeth's home in Cijoho, a village about three kilometres north of Kuningan Chinatown. Almost all members of Elizabeth's family were present. I was accompanied by my parents, my sister and brother-in-law. Mr Nio Tek Tjiang, an elder of our community, had speech on behalf of my family and thanked the audience for their presence at our engagement party. After the exchange of rings and dinner everybody went back home.

After one week at home I went back to the training camp and visited Mr Watanabe in his office. I apologised and told him the reason for my escape. I said that everything had been organised for the engagement party and many people and relatives had been invited. We would have been blamed by our community if we had to cancel the celebrations. We could also be accused of not being loyal and serious. That was the reason for my escape – to honour my parents and to pledge allegiance to Elizabeth's family. Mr Watanabe agreed with me but said that I had broken the law and deserved disciplining by the army. My punishment was one week indoors arrest in the training camp. I was not allowed to smoke and had to stay alone in a small room. At night I had to sleep with the Japanese instructors. It was hardly the severe punishment for which the Japanese army was notorious. After all, I had been a deserter, yet the worst part of the punishment was not being allowed to smoke. Mr Watanabe certainly knew something.

After one week I was given my freedom and did my job again as *Honbuco* until I heard from my friend Kwee Tek Liang that the Japanese had surrendered unconditionally to the Allies. Kwee Tek Liang had been sent to Jakarta for marconist (wireless operator) training but was sent back when the Japanese army received the Emperor's instruction to "accept peace". That night, 15 August 1945, I ran away from my Japanese military training for the second and final time. I never saw Mr Watanabe or Mr Fukuda again. I snuck home to tell my parents about the Japanese surrender to the Allies and advised them to be careful of the Indonesian uprising which could harm the Chinese community.

I had not liked the war. I did not like the Japanese occupation of Java. I would have preferred it if the Dutch had granted independence to Indonesia in the manner that Great Britain granted independence to India and Pakistan in 1947. I was a young

man of 20 when the Japanese arrived in Indonesia. I lived with my family who ran a business with the hope that I would one day go back to China as my grandfather wished when he was alive. I had a good life; I was Dutch-educated and mixed well with the Dutch community. At that time the Chinese were middle-class citizens. The Dutch used the Chinese as middlemen to the natives and had a good life in Indonesia. At the time of Dutch rule some Chinese preferred that the Dutch would stay in Indonesia. But there were also some Chinese who did not like the Dutch, such as Dr Kwa Tjoan Sioe who had been refused entry to the Manggarai swimming pool. He recommended that the Chinese learn the Chinese language and culture and learn to love China. His motto was: "Be Chinese if you are Chinese". There were also Chinese who wanted the independence of Indonesia, like Mr Siauw Giok Tjan, who worked under President Sukarno to unite the Chinese in support of Indonesian independence.

During the Japanese occupation most Chinese were neutral; they supported neither Japanese nor the Republic of Indonesia. Almost all hoped for an Allied victory. When some Chinese were working with the Japanese it was because they were forced to do so and accepted it as a painful necessity, or they wanted to know the Japanese policy of war for the sake of China and to learn how to protect their Chinese communities, by force if necessary, if an uprising broke out against the Japanese. What we did not know was that the next uprising in Java would not be against the Japanese, but against the Dutch.

## Chapter 3

### Making a Life in a Time of Revolution, 1945-1949

#### 1. Indonesian Independence in the Making

Just before the surrender and unaware that it was coming, Sukarno, Hatta and Dr Radjiman Wediodiningrat were summoned by General Terauchi to come to Dalat in Vietnam. They arrived in Saigon at midnight and continued their trip the next morning to Dalat where General Terauchi had set up his headquarters. On 11 August 1945 the General astonished Sukarno by announcing, 'It's up to you now. The Imperial Government now puts the process of independence in your hands... The big question is how exactly do you wish to proceed?'<sup>1</sup> Sukarno did not understand Terauchi's announcement until he heard about Hiroshima and the bomb. Then he saw that the independence he had been dreaming of for years was at hand. He was convinced that he would soon be able to release his people from colonialism and imperialism.

On 14 August 1945 Sukarno, Hatta and Wediodiningrat were back in Jakarta. The rumours of a Japanese surrender to the Allied Powers were spreading quickly. Back home that afternoon, Sukarno received Hatta and Sjahrir to discuss the political situation and the future of Indonesia. He was also surrounded by lots of friends and journalists asking him what news he brought from Saigon. They asked him too what ideas he had, what steps he wanted to make. The next day, Sukarno, Hatta and Subardjo visited Rear-Admiral Maeda to ask him whether the rumours of the Japanese surrender were true. The Admiral bowed his head in silence, a sign that the rumours

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<sup>1</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, as told to Cindy Adams*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Hong Kong: Gunung Agung (HK), 1966, 204.

were right. Later that night Chaerul Saleh, Sukarni and Wikana, all of them representatives of the youth organisations, generally known as *pemuda*, visited Sukarno's house at 56 Pegangsaan Timur and urged Sukarno to make a large-scale revolution the same night.<sup>2</sup> They attempted to persuade him to topple the whole Japanese army and seize their weapons.

Sukarno refused to do so since he intended to proclaim independence first and did not want to risk unnecessary bloodshed. When Wikana made a surprise move and bluffed that bloodshed would occur in any case if Sukarno refused to accept the responsibility for a revolution that night, the great leader revealed his bravery and shouted,

Don't you threaten me. Don't you dare command me. You will do what I want. I will never be forced in your will!... Here is my neck. Chop it off...go on, cut my head off...you can kill me: but I will never risk unnecessary bloodshed because you want to do things your way.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, by his own account Sukarno thus showed the youth and the people around him how great his love was for his people. He wanted to protect hundreds of thousands of innocent people from any foolhardy action, which could lead to chaos. He was trying to free his countrymen without unnecessary bloodshed. His bluff suggested he was ready to die for the sake and safety of his people and had already formulated a plan to release Indonesia from colonialism. Therefore he refused the way of revolution as favoured by Wikana and the *pemuda*. The leaders of the *pemuda* became confused; they could not force Sukarno and did not want to because they needed him for the proclamation of independence. Sukarno was their great leader and they could not proclaim it without him.

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<sup>2</sup> Benedict Richard O'Gorman Anderson, *The Pemuda Revolution: Indonesian Politics 1945-1946*, Cornell University, Ph.D. 1967, Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 81.

<sup>3</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, as told to Cindy Adams*, 208.

In the meantime Hatta and Subardjo appeared at the scene of the quarrel. The situation became worse when Hatta joined Sukarno against Wikana. The *pemuda* did not want to tell them what the consequences would be if the proclamation was not made the next morning at noon. They did not make a move when Sukarno and Hatta challenged them to act on their own without Sukarno and Hatta's endorsement. There was stunned silence. They were frightened, embarrassed, angry and frustrated. When Sukarno confirmed his intentions to them, the youth and their leaders, one by one, slipped away. Sukarno was relieved that the threat of the youth had evaporated and thanked God that he and his people were saved from danger.

## **2. The Rengasdengklok Affair**

The *pemuda* had felt humiliated by Sukarno and Hatta in the fruitless confrontation at 56 Pegangsaan Timur. In a meeting with their colleagues in which Chaerul Saleh and Adam Malik were leading figures, it was decided that a more drastic attempt should be made in order to force Sukarno's hand. Sukarni, Singgih, Muwardi and Kunto were assigned to the task of kidnapping Sukarno. Chaerul Saleh and Wikana were made responsible for alerting the youth elements in the capital city and preparing them if necessary for rioting or even for some kind of putsch. At about 4.00am On 16 August 1945 Sukarno, together with his wife Fatmawati and their infant son Guntur, were picked up and told that an uprising led by the *pemuda*, the *Heiho* and PETA was imminent in the city. The *pemuda* declared that they wanted to save them from possible Japanese arrest or execution. The kidnappers then moved on to collect Hatta and the party drove on to Jakarta's outer suburbs in the direction of Rengasdengklok, a remote district north of Krawang. The kidnappers kept them in a house vacated for the occasion by a Chinese trader where the argument between the

two leaders and the *pemuda* ignited again. Sukarno and Hatta were firm in their passive opposition to the kidnappers and would not take part in the *pemuda* uprising against the Japanese military. They refused to budge from their position of the previous night. They wanted to protect hundreds of thousands of innocent people and prevent unnecessary bloodshed. In the end the leaders of the youth disappeared. They were happy enough to have given details of their plans to Sukarno and Hatta as an attempt to atone for the incident at 56 Pegangsaan Timur the night before.

After nightfall on August 16, Subardjo and Jusuf Kunto arrived at Rengasdengklok. They informed Sukarno and Hatta of the new situation in Jakarta and assured them that the declaration of independence would be made soon since Marshal Maeda had offered them his fullest cooperation<sup>4</sup> Sukarni was also convinced- largely by Jusuf Kunto's confirmation- that Japan had really surrendered to the Allies and that the proclamation of independence could be carried out since Maeda had promised his support.

### **3. The Proclamation of Indonesian Independence**

At about 8p.m. on 16 August, Sukarno, Hatta, Subardjo and their captors drove back to Jakarta where they were welcomed by the members of the PPKI as well as the *pemuda* leaders at Maeda's residence on Jalan Diponegoro. The *pemuda* leaders contacted the leadership of PETA and other youth organisations asking them to be prepared for an emergency situation, because they were still afraid that the Japanese military would arrest Sukarno and Hatta as well as the most prominent of the youth leaders.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *The Pemuda Revolution*, 86.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 87.

Maeda kept his promise to help the Indonesian leaders make their independence proclamation. He offered his residence as a safe place for the freedom fighters to discuss and arrange the proclamation of independence. Then Maeda took Sukarno and Hatta to visit General Nishimura – head of the General Affairs section of the military administration – to discuss the preparation of the independence proclamation. This happened because General Yamamoto – the chief of military administration – had refused to receive Sukarno, Hatta and Maeda. He was following orders from Tokyo that he was not allowed to change the status quo in occupied territories, which meant that he had to freeze all political programmes. They returned to Maeda's residence after having heard from General Nishimura that the Japanese military would not intervene as long as the independence proclamation would be made 'without his knowledge', outside the framework of the Japanese-nominated PPKI, and did not result in disorder.<sup>6</sup>

Sukarno's idea to prevent confrontation with the Japanese military and unnecessary bloodshed among his people became a real fact. It was a victory for Sukarno that he was able to do things with the consent of the Japanese military and to calm the *pemuda* who sought to persuade him to revolt. His cooperation with the Japanese military was not a traitorous endeavour at all. It was really Sukarno's great heroic service to his people and country since he was able to bring all independence elements into agreement so that civil war and unnecessary bloodshed could be prevented.

While Sukarni, Sajuti Melik and other *pemuda* leaders, accompanied by Nishimura, moved hastily through Jakarta streets to call for the uprising arranged for

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 91-92.

that night, a small group gathered about Sukarno in the living room to prepare a draft independence proclamation which stated:

We, the people of Indonesia, hereby declare Indonesia's independence. Matters concerning the transfer of power and other matters will be executed in an orderly manner and in the shortest possible time.

In the name of the Indonesian People,

Sukarno – Hatta  
Jakarta, 17 August 1945<sup>7</sup>

At 10 o'clock in the morning of 17 August 1945 a simple ceremony was held at No 56 Pegangsaan Timur where Dr. Muwardi read out the opening of the draft constitution drawn up by the Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence a month before. Flanked by Hatta on his left, Sukarno enunciated the text of the Proclamation of Independence followed by Lieutenant Latief Hendraningrat, the senior PETA officer, who raised the Dwiwarna, the Red and White national flag. All those present, moved by the historic event, joined in singing the national anthem Indonesia Raya.<sup>8</sup> General Yamamoto and General Nishimura refused to permit the radio station to be used to announce independence to the outside world, since this would be in contradiction with the Allied orders. Nevertheless with the help of the Domei news agency the news of the independence proclamation reached Yogyakarta and Bandung at noon. The youth of Bandung succeeded in broadcasting the Independence Proclamation in English and Indonesian to the outside world at about 7.00pm by hooking up the local radio system to the Central Telegraph Office's shortwave transmitter. While the news of Indonesian independence was spreading all over the world, Admiral Maeda held a celebration banquet for the members of the PPKI.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Departmen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* VI, 86.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, *The Pemuda Revolution*, 96.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

#### 4. Sukarno and Independent Indonesia

Some people – among them Adam Malik – praised the kidnapping of Sukarno and Hatta because they thought that without the kidnapping there would have been no proclamation.<sup>10</sup> Hatta agreed with Sukarno in arguing that the kidnapping on 16 August in fact postponed the proclamation by a day.<sup>11</sup> Hatta revealed that the PPKI meeting was called for the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> and had Sukarno and Hatta been there to lead it, a proclamation would have been made then.<sup>12</sup> In fact, the decisive factor in the successful proclamation of independence, without provoking violence, was the diplomacy used by Sukarno, Hatta and Subardjo who cultivated Admiral Maeda's sympathy so that the Admiral understood the passionate Indonesian desire for independence.

Maeda provided his home to the Indonesian leaders for their meeting to discuss and develop the terms of the proclamation. He contacted the *Gunseikan*, sought its support and accompanied Sukarno and Hatta to see Colonel Nishimura, the head of the general affairs office of the military administration. Although Nishimura kept refusing to formally permit any Indonesian independence action, it is quite plain that Japanese military consent had been won. Nishimura would do nothing against independence action so long as the action was carried out in the framework of the PPKI and did not cause disturbances. It was not the Indonesian youth that Sukarno, Hatta and the PPKI were afraid of, but the Japanese military, which were well-trained, well-organised and still had the equipment to combat and destroy the uncoordinated youth.

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<sup>10</sup> Adam Malik, *Riwayat dan Perjuangan sekitar proklamasi Kemerdekaan Indonesia*, 17 Agustus 1945, 1948.

<sup>11</sup> J.D.Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1972, 203.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 203

Sukarno was the most prominent figure in the effort to prepare the proclamation both in the discussion with his countrymen and in the dialogue with the Japanese military. Since he was able to calm the *pemuda* and proclaim independence safely without unnecessary bloodshed, Sukarno was the real hero of independence. Hatta, the PPKI, and the leaders of the youth had also contributed their share which was of great value at the time. They had formed a team with Sukarno.

On August 18, 1945 the PPKI (Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence) elected Sukarno by acclamation as the first President of the Republic with Mohammad Hatta as the Vice President. The constitution drafted during July 1945 was accepted with some changes such as the removal of passages referring to the Japanese military from the preamble to the constitution. It was not possible for all regions of Indonesia to be represented in delegates at Jakarta because of the abrupt end of the war therefore Sukarno was given the sole authority and responsibility for six months.<sup>13</sup> Assisted by Hatta, Sukarno appointed the members of the Central Indonesian National Committee, KNIP (*Komite Nasional Pusat*) which was to sustain the President in his work. It immediately replaced the Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence. Soon an agreement was also reached for the establishment of a single party, *Partai Nasional Indonesia*, PNI, so that Sukarno's idea of unity as conceived in the PPKI and the *Putera* was fulfilled.

Everywhere in the country national committees were being established to represent popular leaders from all schools of thought and all classes including the *Priyayis* (nobles) and *Ulamas* (Moslem Scholars). The national committees had four objectives, which can be summarised as the achievement of national unity and

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<sup>13</sup> Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, translated by Mary F. Somers Heidhues, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969, 319.

independence.<sup>14</sup> On September 5, 1945 Sukarno formed a presidential cabinet which was responsible directly to himself as provided for in articles 4 and 17 of the Constitution of 1945, article 4 and article 17. He was his own prime minister.<sup>15</sup>

Sukarno issued a decree that only the orders of the republican government were to be obeyed. A great disagreement occurred at the time between Sukarno and Tan Malaka, a top Communist figure, over how best to defend the independence of the Republic. Sukarno did not want to have an armed clash with the Japanese but preferred to have a diplomatic agreement with them for negotiating a gradual transfer of power into Indonesian hands. Tan Malaka and the radical youth were not in favour of a gentleman's agreement with the Japanese. They wanted to fight the Japanese military to seize power and weapons from them for the Republic. Assisted by Adam Malik and his followers, Tan Malaka succeeded in persuading the youth and the people to come together in what was then Ikada Square (formerly Koningsplein, and now Taman Merdeka) in Jakarta on September 19, 1945. The vociferous crowds expressed their displeasure with the Japanese although the well-armed Japanese troops had been stationed about the square ready for combat.<sup>16</sup> Sukarno saw the danger because if the militant youth incited the innocent crowds to attack the Japanese there would be a great deal of bloodshed among the people and this would also threaten his diplomacy. He addressed his people calmly but firmly, saying:

Saudara-Saudara, I said, we will continue to defend our Proclamation. Not one word is withdrawn...

I know you came here to see your President and to hear his orders. Well, if you still have faith and confidence in your President, follow the first command. Go home quietly. Leave this gathering now in an orderly fashion and wait to hear from your district leaders. Now... disband... go home...quietly<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 320.

<sup>15</sup> S.H. Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, *Sedjarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Volume 2, Jakarta: Grafica, 31.

<sup>16</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 322.

<sup>17</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, as told to Cindy Adams*, 225.

The gathering dispersed at Sukarno's order. Tan Malaka's effort, assisted by the militant youth, petered out. The Japanese military did nothing but watch the people leaving quietly with respect. A few days later General Yamamoto warned the Allies not to undervalue Indonesian nationalism and not to punish Sukarno and Hatta as war criminals. He said that they had worked together with the Japanese because they wanted to protect their people and to advance the cause of Indonesian independence.

## **5. Allied Forces Netherlands East Indies (AFNEI) Land on Java**

The Republic of Indonesia had to face the Allied Forces who were responsible under the terms of the Japanese surrender for occupying the Netherlands East Indies (as the Allies still considered it) and strip the Japanese forces of their weapons. Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten was Commander of Allied Forces South East Asia Command and organised Allied Forces Netherlands East Indies (AFNEI) under Lieutenant General Sir Philip Christison. The AFNEI arrived in Jakarta on 29 September 1945. It comprised three divisions of the British Indian Army, one each responsible for West Java, East Java and Sumatra. AFNEI's tasks were:

1. to receive transfer of authority from the Japanese army;
2. to release prisoners of war and Allied internees;
3. to strip the Japanese of their weapons and send them back home;
4. to maintain peace and order as well as organise a civil government;
5. to collect information about war criminals and prosecute them in court.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949*, Jakarta: Cetakan Kelima, 1981, 44-45.

The AFNEI were only responsible for Sumatra and Java whilst Australian task forces were responsible for the East Indonesian territories. The landing of the AFNEI was welcomed by the Indonesian leaders and society. But they were suspicious when the Dutch troops also landed under the Allied military command beside the British Indian troops. The situation became tense and fighting between the Allied troops and Indonesian freedom fighters broke out throughout Indonesia. Lieutenant General Christison soon realised that he had to work together with the leaders of the Republic of Indonesia in order to accomplish his mission. Therefore he contacted the government of the Republic of Indonesia to discuss the problem. Its leaders agreed to discuss the problem with the Allied Forces as long as the Allied Forces recognised the fact of the Republic of Indonesia. Therefore, on 1 October 1945 Lieutenant General Sir Philip Christison made an official statement as follows:

The NRI (Negara Republik Indonesia or the Republic of Indonesia) Government will not be expelled and will be expected to continue civil administration in the area outside those occupied by British Forces. We intend to see the leaders of various movements and shall tell them what they are coming for. I intend to bring Dutch representatives and Indonesian leaders together as a round-table conference, which the Dutch have steadfastly refused to do hitherto.<sup>19</sup>

After Christison's statement the landing of the AFNEI proceeded smoothly because the leaders of the Republic of Indonesia respected the tasks of the Allied forces. Although Christison explained that he did not want to interfere with the status of the Republic of Indonesia and recognised it for practical purposes, heavy fighting between the Allied troops and the Indonesian freedom fighters developed in many cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya and Bandung, since Dutch forces were returning with the British.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 45.

## 6. I was slandered as a Japanese Spy

These dramatic events at the end of the war had an impact on my own life. Dutch broadcasts resumed immediately. In these few days after the war ended I used to listen to the news broadcast by the Dutch from Jakarta with my friend Loa Wei Goan. On the evening of 18 August, my friend Loa found an anonymous letter on the table in his lounge. The letter said that I was a spy of the Japanese and was hiding firearms in my home. The same anonymous letter was also sent to the Kuningan branches of the BKR (*Badan Keamanan Rakyat* or People's Security Body, a forerunner of the Indonesian National Army) and PESINDO (*Perserikatan Indonesia* or Indonesian United Party).

Two days later I was summoned by the Kuningan BKR to appear before its political committee and a week later I was also visited by the Chairman and the Secretary of PESINDO. They asked me almost the same questions, namely whether I was a Japanese spy and whether I was hiding firearms in my home. I gave them almost the same explanation. I answered:

No, I am no spy of the Japanese and I am nothing to them at all. I have no firearms hidden in my home. I feel that I have been slandered. Japan was defeated in war and surrendered to the Allied Forces. It is a contradictory remark when somebody is working for a country defeated in war. I am not Japanese, my country of origin is China. How can I work for the Japanese who has attacked China, my country of origin? No, it is slander when somebody accused me to be a spy of the Japanese. I have no firearms hidden in my home. I do not need firearms because I do not have any enemy.

The political committee of the BKR as well as the Chairman and the Secretary of PESINDO believed me because my explanations were reasonable. They thanked me and released me.

After the accusations I was careful in my social associations because I felt I had an enemy in disguise. I stayed in Kadugede, a little village on the main road from

Kuningan to Tasikmalaya, and saw many trucks full of locals and youths going to the town of Majalengka to take weapons from the Japanese by force. Apparently the youth did not listen to Sukarno and Hatta, who had refused to take weapons from the Japanese by force in order to prevent an armed clash with the Japanese. The youth obeyed Tan Malaka and their leaders who were in favour of seizing weapons from the Japanese. Heavy fighting occurred in Majalengka between Indonesian regular troops (ex-PETA soldiers) and the *pemuda* against the well-trained Japanese soldiers. I heard there were many casualties among the regulars and the youths. The Japanese troops did not want to surrender and stayed in their fortress. They fought against all attacks until the arrival of the Allied Forces to whom they surrendered and handed over their weapons.

When the Indonesian regulars attacked the Japanese troops in Majalengka to take their weapons by force, I was afraid that this incident would spread to other places and cause harm to the Chinese community. Luckily, the Japanese stayed calmly in their fortress and only fired when they were attacked. The native freedom fighters needed weapons to drive out the oncoming Dutch soldiers and support the independence of their fatherland. In the beginning, the Japanese were persuaded by the native freedom fighters to work and fight together against the oncoming Dutch soldiers. While the Japanese senior command in Jakarta had tolerated the declaration of independence (and Maeda had certainly facilitated it) Japanese officers throughout Java were unwilling to surrender their weapons to local forces. The terms surrender demanded they do this to Allied forces. Most Japanese officers could accept surrendering to a British officer, and they also had the legal obligations of the terms of the Unconditional Surrender to consider, but they were unwilling to surrender to a Javanese they had probably trained. The native freedom fighters, needing weapons to

fight the returning Dutch, were forced to attack the Japanese and take their weapons by force. The Chinese were neutral in this incident and only took care of themselves.

I was thinking about who my enemy was and trying to discover the cause of any hostility. I remember that Uncle Swee was slapped by Mr Watanabe when he visited the *Keibotai* (Intelligence Agency) headquarters in Linggajati and asked Mr Watanabe to relieve his son from military training. The Japanese resented the fact that Uncle Swee did not want to take part in the great Asian war through which Asia could be released from colonialism. Uncle Swee supposed that I had persuaded Mr Watanabe to summon his son Hong Tjoan to undertake *Keibotai* military training. Apparently Uncle Swee wanted somebody to wreak vengeance upon for his suffering and was making every effort to bring misfortune to me by slandering me a Japanese spy.

## **7. The Origins of the Indonesian National Army (TNI) and Heavy Fighting Between Indonesia and the Dutch**

To defend the Republic and its people Sukarno ordered the leaders to set up a security force called the *Badan Keamanan Rakyat* (BKR or People's Security Body). Several uncoordinated bodies of troops were also established, such as *Lasjkar Rakyat* (People's Troop), *Lasjkar Merah* (Red Troop) and *Sabilullah* (Sabilullah Troop). The landing of the Allied forces on Java occurred on 28 September 1945. They faced heavy resistance from BKR troops, who attacked British, Indian and Dutch forces throughout the island. Bloody battles raged in Jakarta, Bandung and Surabaya. Confronted with the violent and confusing situation in the Republic, on 5 October Sukarno decided to establish the People's Security Army (*Tentara Keamanan Rakyat*, TKR). The duty of this army was to protect and defend the independence of the

Republic.<sup>20</sup> Thousands of people fled Jakarta because the Allied army started to occupy the city and open fire when they faced Indonesian troops. Since the Republic needed professional troops which had to be firmly coordinated under one command in defending its independence, the TKR was transformed into the Indonesian People's Army, TRI. This organisation was transformed again into the Indonesian National Army, TNI, on 3 June 1947.<sup>21</sup> The situation in Jakarta was dangerous for Sukarno since there were calls among the Allies, mainly from some of the Dutch, to 'execute Sukarno as a collaborator.' He was worried and spent each night in a different house.

The Netherlands Indies Civil Affairs Administration, NICA, ordered its soldiers to kill Sukarno on sight. They searched the villages of Jakarta for Sukarno and so-called Indonesian extremists. Thousands of people were fleeing the city to seek refuge from the disturbances caused by the brutal actions of the Allied soldiers or by the fighting between Indonesian troops and the invaders. Violent struggles for weapons occurred at Klender, Krandji and Pondok Gede, which lie east of Jakarta.<sup>22</sup> The most popular Indonesian force was the *Barisan Pemberontakan Rakyat Indonesia*, BPRI (Indonesian People's Revolution Troop) in Surabaya led by Bung Tomo (Sutomo). Since the situation in Jakarta was not safe for Sukarno and the ministers, on 4 January 1946, the Republican government was moved to Yogyakarta,<sup>23</sup> whose population of 170,000 inhabitants quickly swelled to 600,000.<sup>24</sup>

The youth of Surabaya were militant and fiercely resisted the landing of Dutch troops who had arrived with British or Gurkha contingents. On 25 August 1945 a youth resistance organisation was set up by Sumarsono and Ruslan Widjaja. So

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<sup>20</sup> Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, 43-44.

<sup>21</sup> Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VI*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Jakarta: PN Balai Pustaka, 1984, 110.

<sup>22</sup> Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, 47.

<sup>23</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka 1945-1945-1949, 1950-1964, 1965-1973, 1974-1975*, Jakarta: Cetakan Kelima, 1981, 79.

<sup>24</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As Told to Cindy Adams*, 235.

militant were the youth that in September 1945 they ripped the blue horizontal stripe from the Dutch pennant which had been hoisted by a group of recently released prisoners over the Hotel Yamato (previously and briefly once again the Hotel Oranje). The red and white horizontal stripes remained flying as an improvised Indonesian flag.<sup>25</sup>

Everywhere there was fierce resistance by the youth against the landing of the British and the NICA soldiers. The British occupied several buildings and maintained a headquarters in the centre of Surabaya. Bloody hand-to-hand combat occurred on every street corner. The battle in Surabaya was so savage that Sukarno – upon urgent request of the British – had to come to Surabaya to calm the young Indonesian warriors and implement a Cease Fire agreement.<sup>26</sup> It was a very risky job for Sukarno to face the British and he travelled throughout Surabaya in a jeep to meet irregular people's troops. He could be arrested by the British or killed by any of the irregular troops due to the very different attitudes of the new Indonesian government and the militant youth in an atmosphere of violence and uncertainty. Many of the youth considered him a collaborator who had betrayed his people and his country. Sukarno did not care about these possible risks and accusations but hoped that the Cease Fire would be able to stop the bloodshed and persuade the British to recognise the Republic.

Following the death in action of British general Malaby on 10 November 1945 fighting in Surabaya resumed. Chinese youth who had been trained in the *Keibotai* set up a Chinese Defence Troop called the 'Blue Cross' organisation. They helped their

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<sup>25</sup> Benedict Anderson, , *Java in a Time of Revolution, Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972, 126.

<sup>26</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As Told to Cindy Adams*, 228, 229.

Indonesian brothers in the heavy fighting and assisted them in keeping law and order in the Chinese districts.<sup>27</sup>

While the British and Dutch forces occupied the northern part of the city of Bandung, a heavy flood occurred in the southern part of the city at midnight on November 25, 1945 because the floodgate of Cikapundung River had been smashed open.<sup>28</sup> It was never revealed who was responsible. Since the British and the Dutch had demanded to occupy the whole city of Bandung, a vast area of southern Bandung was set on fire by the TKR and the people's troops. The purpose of the scorched earth policy by the Republic was to prevent the British and the Dutch from making use of the people, the buildings and the properties.<sup>29</sup> Thousands of people fled Bandung to seek refuge in the regions of Garut, Sumedang and Tasikmalaya.

Heavy fighting also occurred in Semarang, Salatiga, Unggaran and Magelang between the Republic and the Allied forces. Major General Sudirman of the People's Security Army, TKR, succeeded in driving the British from Magelang on 21 November 1945. When the British were in full retreat to Ambarawa and Banyubiru, the TKR, assisted by the people's forces, pursued them and forced them to leave the mountainous regions of central Java for Semarang on 5 December 1945.<sup>30</sup> This was the area where the British had defeated the Dutch in 1811, so the British officers, who knew their history, realised that the Republic was a more serious opponent than the Dutch colonial forces of the previous century.

There was fighting as well in Medan, Padang, Bukittinggi, Palembang, East Kalimantan (East Borneo) and Sulawesi (Celebes). Forty thousand people in South

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<sup>27</sup> Bob Hering (ed.), *Siau Giok Tjhan remembers: A Peranakan Chinese and the quest for Indonesian Nationhood*, Townsville: James Cook University of North Queensland, 1982, 54.

<sup>28</sup> Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, 88.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-91.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 84-85.

Celebes were savagely slaughtered by KNIL soldiers (the Royal East Indies Army) of the 7 December division – headed by Captain Raymond Westerling – in December 1946.<sup>31</sup> However the fighting outside Java never matched the ferocity of that in Surabaya.

Meanwhile, Sutan Sjahrir had distanced himself from the Republic's program because he thought that Sukarno had collaborated with the Japanese and betrayed Indonesia. However, while was making a trip through Java, he became convinced that nationalism had really been strong among the people since the 1930s. He wrote:

The effect of the proclamation [of independence] was tremendous. It was as though our people had been electrified. A majority of the Indonesian civil servants, administrators, police and the military organisations immediately declared their support of the Republic. National strength and unity reached greater height than anything we had known before.<sup>32</sup>

He was sure that the tie between Sukarno and his people was still strong. Therefore, when he returned to Jakarta, he joined a Working Committee, which was newly formed within the KNIP in mid-October 1945. The KNIP (*Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat*), the Central Indonesian National Committee, was a provisional parliament consisting of 135 members who had been chosen by Sukarno and Hatta to represent the chief ethnic, religious, social and economic groups in Indonesia.

Sukarno was probably persuaded by Hatta and Sjahrir to implement the programme of the PPPKI (Association of Political Organisations of the Indonesian People) in which the idea of an all-Indonesian united front was developed. Hatta and Sjahrir actually saw the danger for democracy in the presidential government of the Republic with the PNI as a single political party. A.G. Pringgodigdo wrote as follows:

The people's demand for democracy was not to be fettered, and so on 7 October 1945, a petition was signed by fifty members of the KNIP, urging the

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>32</sup> S. Sjahrir, *Out of Exile*, New York: John Day, 1949, 259.

President to use his special powers to set up the People's Congress (Madjelis Permusjawaratan Rakjat) without delay. It suggested that until the People's Congress had been established, the members of KNIP be designated as members of the Congress.<sup>33</sup>

Since the KNIP became the provisional People's Congress the ministers were to be appointed by and be held responsible to the KNIP. The presidential cabinet then became a parliamentary cabinet led by a prime minister who was responsible to the KNIP. After Sutan Sjahrir had been elected chairman of the Working Committee on 20 October 1945, Sukarno was deprived of power. A.G. Pringgodigdo quoted 'Decree X', which implemented the change, as follows:

... the KNIP is to receive legislative power until the formation of the People's Congress and of the Parliament, and to participate in establishing the broad outlines of policy. It is further decreed that because of the critical circumstances, the day-to-day work of the Central Committee be performed by a Working Committee, which is to be elected from the KNIP and is to be responsible to it.<sup>34</sup>

On the question of the composition of the cabinet – even though he favoured a single party presidential cabinet composed of PNI members – Sukarno reluctantly gave in to Hatta and Sjahrir. He hoped that Sjahrir would be able to confer with the Allies about the status of the Republic. He needed Sjahrir for the negotiation at the time since the Allies – especially the Dutch – always accused Sukarno of being a Japanese collaborator. Sukarno thus revealed in this case the desire to avoid bloodshed amongst his people by indicating support for democracy in the hope of gaining recognition for his cause from the United States and the world.

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<sup>33</sup> A.G. Pringgodigdo, *Perubahan kabinet presidensiil menjadi kabinet parlementer*, Jogjakarta: Yayasan, 1955, 24ff; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 326.

<sup>34</sup> A.G. Pringgodigdo, *The 'Maklumat X', with annotation*, 27; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 326.

## 8. Peace Negotiations with the Dutch

The British and Americans had no intention of either of deposing Sukarno as President of the Republic or smashing the Republic. But they did want an orderly transfer of power from the Netherlands to the republic which would protect their considerable economic and strategic interests in Indonesia. The British in particular, with a big stake in southeast Asia, wanted and needed a friendly Indonesia. Similarly Indonesia, with British possessions in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo on one side, and Australia, then closely linked with Britain in foreign policy, on the other, also preferred good relations with the British. Britain was willing to fight (using Indian troops) to ensure a legal and orderly transfer of power, and also to restore its prestige and authority in southeast Asia, but privately acknowledged the justice of the Indonesian cause. The British also understood where the trends of history were going from their experience in India, and accepted the reality that the era of colonialism was ending. Therefore, they sought to persuade Sukarno and Lieutenant Governor General van Mook (who had returned to Batavia from Australia) to negotiate, but the Dutch always refused to do so. Sukarno first met General Sir Philip Christison on 25 October 1945 and accepted Christison's suggestion to meet the Dutch at a round table conference.<sup>35</sup>

When Sjahrir became Prime Minister for the second time on 14 November 1945 he obtained full authority from the KNIP to implement the Republic's policy. Since he also was Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sjahrir was authorised to negotiate with the Dutch about the status of the Republic. Less strident than Sukarno and inclined to compromise, Sjahrir was personally well disposed towards the Allies, had been consistently anti-Japanese during the War, and had a Dutch wife (even if the

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<sup>35</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka*, 54.

colonial authorities had kept them apart for years). For the Allies, he was a reassuring figure, the kind of man with whom they could do business. The first conference between the Indonesian and Dutch representatives under the auspices of the Allies took place at the headquarters of the British army, No. 1 Imam Bonjol Street, Jakarta on 17 November 1945. The representative of the Allied Forces was Lieutenant General Christison, the representative of the Republic was Sutan Sjahrir while the Dutch were represented by van Mook. Despite the high level of the representatives, no resolution was reached due to Dutch intransigence.<sup>36</sup>

The Indonesians and the Dutch had another conference on 10 February 1946 with a British mediator Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, who was later replaced by Lord Killearn.<sup>37</sup> At this conference van Mook indicated that the policy of his government had not budged since the offer made in a speech by Queen Wilhelmina delivered on 7 December 1942 in a spirit of defiance during the darkest days of war.

1. Indonesia is to become a commonwealth state in the form of a federation with self-government in the union of the Dutch kingdom.
2. The internal affairs are to be run by Indonesia while the foreign affairs are to be implemented by the Dutch government.
3. A provincial government is to be set up for 10 years before a commonwealth is founded.<sup>38</sup>

In response to the Dutch political statement the Republican government presented its political proposal as follows:

1. The Republic of Indonesia must be recognised as a full sovereign state over the former territories of the Netherlands Indies.
2. The Indonesian-Dutch Federation is to be created at a specific time while foreign affairs and defence are to be transferred to a federal body consisting of Indonesians and Dutch.
3. The Dutch army is to be withdrawn immediately from Indonesia and replaced by the army of the Republic of Indonesia if necessary.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 64, 65.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 82, 83.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 82 (Author's translation).

4. During the negotiation all military actions must be stopped and the Republic will look after the repatriation of Dutch prisoners and other internees.<sup>39</sup>

The highly divergent stands of both sides were discussed several times by Sjahrir and van Mook in Jakarta. When they did not reach an agreement the negotiations were continued in the Netherlands at Hooze Veluwe where a Republican delegation discussed the issue with the Netherlands government in April 1946.<sup>40</sup> When they still failed to come to an agreement, they resumed the negotiation in Linggajati, a mountainous place near Cirebon, on November 10, 1946 under the auspices of Lord Killearn. On 15 November 1946 an agreement was initialled by both sides which was officially signed by both governments in Jakarta at Gambir Palace (Merdeka Palace) on 25 March 1947.<sup>41</sup> The Linggajati agreement comprised 17 articles. The principal provisions were:

1. Dutch recognition of our authority in the islands of Java, Madura, and Sumatra, which was based largely on the fact that our armies were already well entrenched there.
2. Cooperation between our governments in establishing one democratic federal state to be called the United States of Indonesia and that this USI would consist of three member states. The first member state was to be the Republic of Indonesia, embracing only the three islands of Java, Sumatra and Madura. The second member was to be the State of Borneo, the largest of all our islands, and the third, the Great Eastern State, was to embody what lies east of Java and east of Borneo and which is in reality all the rest of the former Netherlands East Indies territory.
3. The USI and the Kingdom of the Netherlands (inclusive of Curacao and Surinam, its Latin American possessions) cooperate toward forming an equal political partnership, the Netherlands-Indonesian Union, to be inaugurated by January 1, 1949. The agreement called for gradual evacuation of Dutch troops, which was a major victory for us, and it called for guaranteed protection of Holland's economic interests, which was a major victory for her. The

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 83 (Author's translation).

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Vol.2, 132.

bone in the Republic's throat was that the over-all head of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union would be Queen Juliana.<sup>42</sup>

The Republic and the Dutch both made every effort to take great advantage of the Linggajati Agreement. The Dutch were trying to occupy the remote territories of West Tanggerang in the residency of Banten where the Chinese communities were making their living as peasants and fishermen, especially in Mauk and Balaraja. Shortly after the Linggajati conference, thousands of innocent Chinese were attacked by militant natives who stole their property, burnt their houses and threatened them with death. The Chinese fled the remote places to seek refuge in Jakarta. We do not know which side had provoked these attacks on the Chinese communities. The Republic accused the Dutch of having provoked the violence in order to send troops to occupy the territories.<sup>43</sup> The Dutch blamed the Republic for its failure to provide safety and order to the population of its territories. Since the Republic did not have enough well-trained professional forces, the Republican government was not able to dominate uncoordinated troops which had been aroused to implement racial, economic and religious provocations.<sup>44</sup>

Tan Malaka and his followers distrusted Sjahrir in the negotiations with van Mook especially since the KNIP discussions had revealed the sort of concessions Sjahrir was preparing to make to the Dutch.<sup>45</sup> Tan Malaka demanded complete independence and *de jure* authority over the former Netherlands Indies territory. The Republican government was aware of the danger of the opposition and arrested all the key PP (Union of Resistance) leaders following Tan Malaka, Sukarni, Chaerul Saleh

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<sup>42</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As Told to Cindy Adams*, 238. Vide Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, 221-225 for the complete Linggajati Agreement.

<sup>43</sup> Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Vol. 2, 183.

<sup>44</sup> Cornelis Van Dijk, *Darul Islam, Sebuah Pemberontakan*, Jakarta: Grafiti Pers, 1983, 66.

<sup>45</sup> Anthony Reid, *The Indonesian National Revolution 1945-1950* Melbourne: Longman Australia Pty.Ltd., 1974, 92.

and Abikusono.<sup>46</sup> On June 27, 1946 Hatta announced for the first time that the Republic had only been able to achieve *de facto* recognition of Java and Sumatra as Republican territory. When Sjahrir, Dr. Soedarsono and others were travelling on the evening of Hatta's speech, Major A.K.Yusuf, authorised by Major General Soedarsono and Sutanto in Solo, arrested them in Surakarta. They were released upon Sukarno's urgent message by radio on 30 June 1946.<sup>47</sup>

Sukarno himself did not agree with the Linggajati Agreement. He had expected that the Republic would obtain the former Netherlands East Indies territory. Furthermore Sukarno did not favour Queen Juliana as head of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union because this would not recognise full Indonesian sovereignty. Although the Linggajati Agreement was far from being the best solution, Sukarno realised that it was the only one Sjahrir could achieve at that time in the negotiations with the Dutch. He knew that the Indonesian delegation was also unhappy with their achievement.<sup>48</sup> To prevent unnecessary bloodshed in the war with the Dutch and to encourage negotiation, Sukarno reluctantly accepted the Linggajati Agreement.

At Hatta and Sjahrir's request, Sukarno issued a decree to increase the membership of the KNIP from 200 to 514 on 29 December 1946. Sjahrir expected that this decree would guarantee the ratification of the Linggajati Agreement. Professor Kahn claims that Sukarno himself had proposed the new members of the KNIP,<sup>49</sup> whereas Professor Iwa Kusuma Sumantri claims that Sjahrir had selected them. He had especially nominated members from Sumatra, in particular from his home region.<sup>50</sup> Sukarno revealed:

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>48</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 238-239.

<sup>49</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2001. Vide: List of KNIP members; Columns *Old KNIP and Sukarno Proposal*.

<sup>50</sup> Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Vol.2, 130.

Linggajati was a shower of ice water on the fire of revolution. Sjahrir, then Prime Minister, was its architect, not I. He hated Japan maniacally and consequently was lenient in dealing with Holland. Holland-educated, he'd worked in a Dutch labor organization in his youth. Whereas I constantly attacked them, Sjahrir said constantly kind things regarding them. We disagreed as usual.<sup>51</sup>

According to Professor Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, Sjahrir also ordered the Police and the Military to arrest about 300 of his opponents to secure the ratification of Linggajati Agreement.<sup>52</sup> He also revealed that Sjahrir had frightened some KNIP members into believing that a battle would break out at the plenary session of the KNIP at Malang on 27 February 1947.<sup>53</sup> He asked the session to decide in favour of the government policy and expected that the KNIP would support him. While members were asking questions and criticising the policy of Sjahrir, Vice President Mohammad Hatta suddenly stated that if the Linggajati Agreement was not ratified; both he and Sukarno would resign immediately. The KNIP needed Sukarno and Hatta as leaders and the threat of resignation, the increase in the KNIP membership and the fears of a possible battle in KNIP served to pressure the KNIP into ratifying the Linggajati Agreement, which it eventually did.

The Dutch took advantage of the political discussions and divisions in the Republic by occupying Krian and Sidoarjo on 24 January 1947 and Mojokerto on 17 March 1947. On 27 May 1947 – two months after the signature of the Linggajati Agreement by both sides in Jakarta – the Dutch presented the Republic with some intolerable proposals:

1. to form a joint Provisional Government
2. to issue joint currency at the fixed rate of exchange with the foreign currency

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<sup>51</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 238.

<sup>52</sup> Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Vol.2, 142-146.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

3. to demand the immediate transmitting of rice from the Republican territories to the other Indonesian regions which were suffering from malnutrition
4. to organise necessary order and peace in the whole of Indonesia and Republican territories with Dutch support (joint gendarmerie); to organise joint control over imports and exports

The Republic rejected these proposals on 7 June 1947.<sup>54</sup> The Dutch were doing their utmost to push their plans for a federal state. They created a state of Negara Indonesia Timur (State of East Indonesia) at a conference in Denpasar, Bali, in December 1946. A separate state for West Kalimantan was also established under Sultan Abdul Hamid in May 1947.<sup>55</sup> When their four proposals had been refused and they saw no prospect for reaching an agreement with the Republic, the Dutch launched their first 'police action'. Troops swept out from Jakarta and Bandung to occupy West Java. From Surabaya they moved eastwards to occupy Madura and the prominent Eastern part of Java. Smaller troop movements secured the Semarang area. The important ports, plantations, oil and coal installations in Java and Sumatra were conquered with the purpose of securing export commodities and restoring the right to their pre-war properties.

The Republican forces retreated in confusion, destroying what they could. In some areas last-minute acts of revenge took place: many Chinese in West Java were arrested and imprisoned aristocrats in East Sumatra were murdered.<sup>56</sup> Twenty-six Indo-Europeans imprisoned in Kuningan were also mercilessly killed.<sup>57</sup> The whole Chinese community of Maja in the residency of Cirebon on the western slope of Mount Ciremai was murdered. In Cilimus – 21 kilometres from Cirebon on the Eastern slope of Mount Ciremai – 46 of the 150 Chinese seeking refuge from the native attack at the complex of buildings of their community head were killed while

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<sup>54</sup> Kusuma Sumantri, *Sejarah Revolusi Indonesia*, Vol.2, 134.

<sup>55</sup> M.C.Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1981, 212, 213.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> The author lived accidentally in the town of Kuningan at the time of revolution

their property was looted. Most of the victims were the author's friends, playmates and fellow countrymen who were born in Cilimus. Hundreds of Chinese in Jatitujuh, a place by the Cimanuk River about 40 kilometres from Cirebon, were also attacked and robbed. Ten of the author's close family were killed as well. The whole Chinese community in Bumiayu on the slope of Mount Slamet were also killed. The first Dutch 'police action', the retreat of the Republican forces, and the independent activities of various self-appointed nationalist militias had caused the killing of innocent Chinese and damaged their property.

Australia, Great Britain (then negotiating its way out of colonial rule in India rather than fighting to stay) and the USA opposed the first Dutch 'police action' because it increased violence and clearly was no solution.<sup>58</sup> They therefore began to press the Dutch to urgently implement a softer policy by entering negotiations with the Republic for a peace treaty. In the meantime the Republic sent Dr Osman to Canberra where he made a direct appeal to Australian Prime Minister Chifley for intervention.<sup>59</sup> Dr Soedarsono was sent to New Delhi to approach the man who was about to become Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, for support. The reality of an independent India about to take its place in world politics, following a voluntary British withdrawal, was in great contrast with the drastic situation in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Sjahrir, who resigned in June 1947, went to the USA to represent the Republic at the United Nations.<sup>60</sup> The Australian delegation to the Security Council drew attention to article 30 of the United Nations Charter relating to a breach of the peace. Sjahrir urged the Council to take immediate action to restore international peace and security. He proposed that arbitration should begin in accordance with

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<sup>58</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 213.

<sup>59</sup> I. Chaudry, *The Indonesian Struggle*, Lahore, Karachi, 1950, 160.

<sup>60</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 213.

article 17 (B) of the Linggajati Agreement.<sup>61</sup> The Australian appeal was supported by Pandit Nehru who reminded the United Nations of article 34 of the United Nations Charter with regards to a situation endangering the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>62</sup>

On August 1, 1947 the Council approved the Australian resolution with the American and Polish Amendments so that the Security Council called upon the parties to cease hostilities and settle their disputes by arbitration. Great Britain, France and Belgium abstained from voting.<sup>63</sup> A United Nations Good Offices Committee, with Australian and Belgian representatives, was set up in October 1947 to assist Dutch-Republican negotiations for a new ceasefire. The USA offered the services of its naval transport SS *Renville* which anchored off Tanjong Priok, the port of Batavia. On 8 December 1947 the negotiations began on board the ship and on 19 January 1948 the two delegations signed a truce agreement called the Renville Agreement.<sup>64</sup> They also accepted 12 principles, which formed the basis for future political negotiations under the supervision of the Committee of Good Offices.

The Renville Agreement showed the deterioration of the Republic's position because it had to recognise the *de jure* authority of the Netherlands over the whole of Indonesia. The Republic's international friends sympathised whilst the Soviet bloc denounced the Renville Agreement as 'the most shameful document ever produced by a United Nations Body'.<sup>65</sup> There was nothing that Sukarno and his government could do. He hoped that a genuine cease-fire would result from the agreement. Sukarno realised that agreements between political parties in the Republic were disintegrating which made him worried about a possible uprising. The communists were moving

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<sup>61</sup> I. Chaudry, *The Indonesia Struggle*, 161-162.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>64</sup> J.D.Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 226.

<sup>65</sup> I. Chaudry, *The Indonesia Struggle*, 174.

towards open rebellion. He felt that the opposition of the PKI could damage the national united front against the Dutch.

There were several major reasons for the PKI's taking its own way to achieve independence. The first one was the failure of the Renville Agreement to meet the Republic's aim. This failure had disappointed most of the Republic's political parties. The second was the result of the changing policies of the International Communist Movement which allowed individual communist parties to devise their own tactics. The third reason was that the 'People's Democratic Front' (FDR) – an alliance comprising Sjarifuddin's Socialist Party, the Labour Party, Pesindo, the Indonesian Federation of Trade Unions (SOBSI) and the PKI – preferred to seek power by force if other means failed. The fourth reason was that there occurred a shift to a more radical leadership of Muso, Dr Suripno and Dr Amir Sjarifuddin.<sup>66</sup>

Muso had returned from exile incognito with Dr Suripno, a PKI member who had been representing the Republic in Eastern Europe.<sup>67</sup> In Surakarta there was resistance from the pro-PKI Fourth Division against the government plan for army rationalisation. Fighting broke out between the pro-PKI troops and the troops loyal to the Republic. In the morning of 19 September 1948 pro-PKI troops seized key points in the city of Madiun and called for revolt against the government. Muso and Amir Sjarifuddin hurried to Madiun where they faced a *fait accompli* and accepted the insurrection although they considered it premature.<sup>68</sup> Sukarno rallied support from the nation in a radio appeal:

The PKI under Muso's leadership is attempting to seize power in our country. Fellow countrymen, in the name of the struggle for Indonesian independence... I want to explain to you that you must make a choice: to follow Muso and his PKI who will destroy the idea of Indonesian independence or to follow Sukarno-Hatta who, with the help of God, will

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 192, 193.

<sup>67</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 229.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 230.

lead you along the road of independence for Indonesia and freedom from all oppression.<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile the Siliwangi Division under Colonel A.H. Nasution rushed to Madiun to suppress the uprising. It was not difficult for the Siliwangi Division to defeat the rebellion. Muso was killed in a minor engagement while other communist leaders including Dr. Amir Sjarifuddin - who had been a communist since 1935 - were captured. The revolt led to the temporary suspension of the PKI. Sukarno blamed the radical leadership and the deviation of Muso, Suripno, Amir Sjarifuddin and some other leaders from the party's proper course. He did not condemn the PKI as a whole but rather continued to regard the PKI as an authentic element in the Indonesian revolution. Due to American pressure the Dutch exercised surprising restraint and did not try to attack the Republic during the Madiun crisis. Since the Dutch were planning to crush the Republic it served the Republic with an ultimatum on 15 December 1948, which seemed designed to be rejected. When the Republic objected to accepting the Dutch crown during the interim period and refused to allow the Netherlands forces to maintain law and order in the Republic's territories, the Dutch launched a surprise attack on Yogyakarta on 19 December 1948. This opened the second wave of police action.<sup>70</sup>

When Sukarno heard the sound of the bombing of Yogyakarta airport that morning he hastily called a cabinet meeting and discussed whether he should go to the countryside and lead a guerrilla resistance against the Dutch attack or remain at his post and face capture by the Dutch. He later recalled his words as

Yes. Put up no fight on the streets of Jogja. We haven't a chance. But get your army outside the cities, General, and fight to the death. I order you to spread them through the villages. Infect the countryside with them. Put

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 230, 231.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 233.

them behind every bush. This is 100 percent total guerrilla warfare. Though we return to amputations without anaesthesia and sterilized banana leaves for bandages, let the world never say independence was awarded us out of a diplomat's briefcase. Let them know we bought it and paid dearly with our blood and sweat and determination.

And don't come out of the hills until your President orders you to. Remember, even if your leaders are taken, the next man, be he soldier or civilian, must take over. Let it be agreed Indonesia will NEVER NEVER EVER SURRENDER.<sup>71</sup>

That afternoon the Dutch force captured the President, Hatta, Hadji Agus Salim, Sjahrir and other members of the government.<sup>72</sup> On 30 December 1948 the prisoners were taken to Bangka where they were divided into two groups: Sukarno, Agus Salim and Sjahrir were detained in Prapat, a little place on Lake Toba, while Hatta and the others were kept in Bangka. Some months later the Prapat group was brought back to Bangka again. The Republic was not eliminated from the world scene at all because in Sumatra an alternative government of the Republic was proclaimed under the leadership of Sjafruddin Prawiranegara. The second round of Dutch action shocked the world and jolted the United Nations to take positive action against them.<sup>73</sup> The U.S.A. was persuaded to withhold their economic aid to the Netherlands until the Dutch were willing to enter into serious negotiations with the Republic.

## 9. The Transfer of Sovereignty to Indonesia

Meanwhile, the struggle between the Netherlands and the republic was settled by international intervention. On 24 December 1948 the United Nations Security Council, on the proposal of the USA, Syria and Colombia, called on the two parties to cease hostilities immediately, and on the Dutch to release President Sukarno and both sides to release other political prisoners all at once. It also instructed the Committee of

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<sup>71</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 253.

<sup>72</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 233.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

Good Offices to report urgently.<sup>74</sup> International pressure on the Dutch was intensifying. Pakistan, India, Burma and Ceylon imposed a ban on the Dutch airline KLM. Australian dockworkers boycotted Dutch ships and the countries of the Middle East, China and the Philippines strongly criticised the Dutch military actions.<sup>75</sup> Disappointed by the Security Council's deliberations and the ineffectiveness of its decisions, Indian Prime Minister Nehru summoned a conference of Asian countries in New Delhi where resolutions were passed on 23 January 1949 and forwarded to the Security Council. The resolution of the New Delhi conference recommended that:

Members of the Republican government and other leaders should be released and the residency of Jogjakarta be handed back immediately to the Republic to enable it to function freely; that an Interim Government, composed of the representatives of the Republic and of non-Republicans territories, commanding the confidence of the people of Indonesia be formed on 15 March 1949; that elections for the Constituent Assembly be completed by 1 October 1949, and power over the whole of Indonesia be completely transferred by 1 January 1950; that relationship with the Netherlands shall be settled by negotiations between the Governments of the United States of Indonesia and the Netherlands; that in the event of either party to the dispute not complying with the recommendations of the Security Council, the Council shall take effective action under the wide powers conferred upon it by the UN Charter to enforce its recommendations, and that all member states of the United Nations represented at this Conference pledge their full support to the Council in the application of any such measures.<sup>76</sup>

In response the Security Council passed another resolution on 28 January 1949 urging the Dutch to cease fire immediately and generally comply with the terms of the New Delhi resolution<sup>77</sup> The Dutch refused. However, when Dr Willem Drees (the Socialist leader and Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1948 to 1958) arrived quietly in Jakarta to assess the situation, he quickly realised how weak the Dutch position in Indonesia really was. Even the supposed allies of the Dutch, the federalists in the outer islands, offered only lukewarm support, opposed to the Dutch second

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<sup>74</sup> J.K. Ray, *Transfer of Power in Indonesia, 1942-1949*, Bombay: P.C. Manaktala and Sons, 1967, 159.

<sup>75</sup> I. Chaudry, *The Indonesian Struggle*, 205.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

police action, and refused to cooperate with the Dutch unless and until the Republic's authority was restored. Drees concluded that the Netherlands government, which had virtually no international support, and none from influential countries in the region like Britain, Australia, the USA and India, was obliged to recognise the Republican leaders' authority. The American delegate to the Security Council had warned the Netherlands on 12 January 1949 that 'any military success achieved by the Netherlands military action would not affect a solution of the Indonesia problem'.<sup>78</sup> When Drees returned to Holland he offered to comply conditionally with the Security Council's directives, within the framework of the Dutch plans for the foundation of a United States of Indonesia.<sup>79</sup>

Dr Mohammad Roem, the Republic's foreign minister, Dr Van Royen, a Dutch representative, and Mr Merle Cohran of the Committee of Good Offices came together on 14 April 1949 to find a solution to this difficult position.<sup>80</sup> At this conference Van Royen persisted with the argument that the Republic should stop its guerrilla warfare and participate in the Hague Conference to accept the formation of an Interim Government with the cooperation of the Indonesian federalists. Roem replied that the policy of the Republic could not be changed until its authority was restored and Sukarno and his colleagues were released.<sup>81</sup> In June 1949 both sides were ordered to cease-fire as a result of the agreement to revive negotiations and on 6 July 1949 Sukarno and his colleagues returned triumphantly to Yogyakarta by a plane belonging to the United Nations Commission for Indonesia.<sup>82</sup> The Sultan of Yogyakarta met Sukarno and other Republican leaders at the airport. To a special group of supporters, some of whom accompanied him and some of whom were

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>80</sup> Ray, *Transfer of Power in Indonesia 1942-1949*, 176.

<sup>81</sup> Chaudry, *The Indonesian Struggle*, 212.

<sup>82</sup> Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography*, 235.

waiting to welcome him in Yogyakarta, Sukarno handed the original proclamation flag, which was hoisted as a token of the existence of the Republic of Indonesia. He and Hatta were cheered by a crowd of people whose enthusiasm forced them back to the city in order to resume control of the government.

After the release of Sukarno and his colleagues, a conference was held in Yogyakarta and Jakarta about the institutions of the new state. It agreed that the Republican army (and not KNIL) would form the core of the military for a new Republic of the United States of Indonesia. The conference also agreed that Sukarno and Hatta would be the President and Vice-President respectively. The handing over of military authority from Dutch and irregular forces to regular Republican forces was not easy because in several turbulent areas such as South Celebes, East Sumatra, South Borneo and West Java, there was resistance from local irregular troops.<sup>83</sup>

Sukarno and his colleagues were suspicious of Dutch good faith in implementing a genuine ceasefire according to the Roem-van Royen agreement. However, the Republic sent its delegates to The Hague where on 23 August 1949 they met the Federal Consultative Assembly, representing the fifteen federal constituent states the Dutch had established, and the representatives of the Netherlands to bring the four-year struggle to an end. This Round Table Conference – held from August to November, 1949 – agreed to the complete and unconditional transfer of sovereignty to the Federation of Indonesia, which was to be set up on 27 December 1949. The conference also discussed a Netherlands-Indonesian Union and the outstanding debt of 4.3 billion guilders which was reluctantly accepted by the Republic, although it was later repudiated.<sup>84</sup> The question of West New Guinea was left unresolved and

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<sup>83</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 219, 220.

<sup>84</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 238.

remained as such until 1962, although the Round Table Conference agreed to determine the status of the territory through negotiation within one year.

On 27 December 1949 Queen Juliana signed the document transferring sovereignty from the former Netherlands East Indies to the new Republic of the United States of Indonesia in Amsterdam. On the same day, in Jakarta, people listened to the radio broadcast from Amsterdam and the speeches of Queen Juliana and the Vice-President Mohammad Hatta. The Dutch flag was lowered and in its place the Indonesian flag was raised. After this ceremony, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia was recognised as an independent and sovereign state.

The next day Sukarno returned triumphantly to Jakarta as President of the United States of Indonesia. The plane landed in Kemayoran Airport at 11.40pm. He received a rousing welcome from hundreds of thousands of people who crowded the streets. It must have been one of the most moving moments of Sukarno's life and his account is certainly moving:

...at 11:40, the presidential vanguard, the sole plane of the day – old Garuda Indonesian Airways, taxied into Kemayoran Airport in Jakarta. First off was the honour guard bearing the sacred Merah Putih [national flag], which Mutahar had preserved with its original needle holes. With beating heart I stepped out down into the sea of people.

We could not get through the crowds. Millions upon millions flooded the sidewalks, the roads. They were crying, cheering, screaming, 'Hidup Bung Karno... Long live Bung Karno... Hidup...Merdeka...'

Soldiers beat a path for me to the topmost step of the big white palace. There I raised both hands high. A stillness swept over the millions. There wasn't a sound. Except for the silent tears nothing moved.

'Alhamdullilah- thank God', I cried. 'We are free!'<sup>85</sup>

However conflict continued after the transfer which quickly led to the transformation of the United States of Indonesia into a unitary state of the Republic of

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<sup>85</sup> Sukarano, *An Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams*, 262-263; C.L.M. Penders, *The Life and Times of Sukarno*, London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1947, 134-135.

Indonesia. Although there was much pro-Republican sentiment in the federal states, strengthened by the release of some 12,000 Republican prisoners from Dutch jails, resistance to the Republic remained significant.

On 23 January 1950 the *Angkatan Perang Ratu Adil* (APRA, the Army of the Just King), consisting of about 800 troops, led by Captain Raymond Westerling and backed by Sultan Abdul Hamid II and some of the leaders of Pasundan state, captured key points in Bandung. The force comprised former KNIL soldiers, paratroopers who had deserted, former shock troops and ex-policemen. They were pressing the Federal government and the state of Pasundan to recognise and accept them as the military forces of the Pasundan state.<sup>86</sup> They threatened to attack the federal cabinet and kill several ministers. The Dutch High Commissioner and the commander of the Dutch garrison persuaded Westerling to withdraw his troops which then infiltrated Jakarta. But they were driven out and Westerling fled the country in disguise in February 1950. Sultan Abdul Hamid II of Pontianak and several Pasundan leaders were arrested while the states of West Kalimantan and Pasundan were dissolved and their authorities were taken over by the Federal government.

The federal states of East Sumatra and East Indonesia were against the unitarist movement, so the government sent in Republican troops to crush them. In April 1950 former KNIL soldiers, mostly Ambonese, and Republican units clashed in Makasar and a new East Indonesian cabinet was set up in May 1950 in order to dissolve the state into a unitary Indonesia. However, on 25 April 1950 Dr Soumokil, the former Minister of Justice in East Indonesia, proclaimed a Republic of South Maluku in Ambon. This new state was crushed by Republican forces after tough military operations from July to November 1950. Finally the constituent states

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<sup>86</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka 1950-1964*, 24.

including the states of East Sumatra and East Indonesia agreed to merge with the Republic, so that the United States of Indonesia became the unitary Republic of Indonesia on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the declaration of Independence, 17 August 1950, with a unitary but provisional constitution.<sup>87</sup> Sukarno's dream to create an independent and undivided nation of Indonesia had come true at last.

## **10. My Family in Troubled Times**

While the independence of my country was being fought for, like many I tried to live as normally as possible through a time of revolution, war and killings. My wedding ceremony was celebrated in the town of Kuningan on 10 March 1946. It took place at my house and the Chinese Public Hall. Early in the morning my family, best friends and neighbours came to help my parents prepare everything. Some people cooked meals, some baked cakes and others arranged bouquets, decorated the room and organised my departure to pick up the bride. At 10 o'clock in the morning a horse-drawn buggy was ready to take my two best men and me to the bride's house. The bride and her parents were standing at the front door. They received us by showering us in flowers and I took my bride by the hand. Afterwards we went into a big room specially decorated for the marriage formalities. The parents of the bride sat on beautifully decorated chairs and received a glass of arrack (rice wine) from us, the newly married couple, as a sign of honour. Subsequently my bride and I left the room and went to my house by a horse-drawn buggy accompanied by a lady who acted as a representative of the bride's parents.

We were greeted ceremonially by my parents and then led to an altar where we all knelt and prayed to God. Afterwards we served my parents and close family

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<sup>87</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 220- 221.

members a little glass of arrack and received a red envelope filled with money as a present. We were then seated on decorated chairs at a long table full of food and fruits while our guests sat around us. When everything was ready the banquet started. The wedding ceremony was simple. There was no music and no firework display. Neither motorcars nor church was available. The government forbade anything luxurious and encouraged the people to lead a simple life. All funds had to be dedicated to the independence of Indonesia. The wedding party finished at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. When the guests were leaving we were led to our own room where we could relax.

My wife and I stayed home for about a week. Afterwards we made a trip by a horse-drawn buggy to visit Elizabeth's parents and some close family members in Cilimus, Jalaksana, Kadugede, Ancaran and Lengkong. We received 1500 rupiah (as the guilder had been renamed in 1945) as a present, which we used as running capital for our small business. I made hair pomade with Vaseline and perfumed hair oil, which I sold in my little shop and in the market. My wife taught baking and decorating cakes to the girls of the Chinese community.

After the declaration of independence, Kuningan did not change much. Business was still dull and people were still shabbily dressed and the majority stayed at home. They had no jobs because there was no demand for peanuts and onions which were usually exported to Singapore. The connections by road and rail between Jakarta (Batavia) and Kuningan, Cirebon and Bandung were broken as a result of the fighting with the Dutch. People had no money to buy food and clothing. Young people were busy marching and training how to fight and drive away enemies.

My son Abrams Sun Hok Djien was born in Kuningan Friday 6 December 1946 at 6.15 in the afternoon. He was a healthy baby and grew up happily in the care

of his parents and grandparents. The boy was clever and active, and so much on the move that we needed my big brother, Khouw Djit Siang, to look after him.

I read news in the daily newspaper *Merdeka* that the Chinese in Mauk and Balaraja (two districts in the residency of Banten, West Java) were killed and plundered by native gangs of bandits. I was not sure if this incident was a trick of the Dutch to maintain control over the Banten area by accusing the Republic of not being powerful enough to govern Banten and take care of the Chinese community. The incident could have also been caused by anti-Chinese gangs who hated the Chinese because they dominated the country's economy. There were also native groups who aspired to create an Islamic country and wanted the non-Islamic people to leave Java.

I was of the opinion that living in a small place like Kuningan was not safe. Therefore we moved to Cirebon and lived in a pavilion in the family compound of Khoe Ceng Coan on Kebon Cai Street. I bought a little shop building in Pasar Balong Street for 10,000 rupiah and sold second-hand books, patent medicine, hair pomade, perfumed hair oil and sundries. My wife Elizabeth and my son Hok Djien stayed at home assisted by brother Khouw Djit Siang and a native girl. Our life in the city of Cirebon was smooth and safe. We were healthy and safe, we had enough food and I earned a good income. One day a Dutch aeroplane dropped pamphlets warning the people in the city not to be close to military objects because the Dutch were planning to bombard those objects and invade the city.

On 20 July 1947 a Dutch battle cruiser anchored in the Java Sea bombarded Cirebon with mortars. The attack lasted all day and night. At about 2 o'clock the next morning we heard sounds of shooting on the roads from Bandung and Jakarta. The shooting lasted for hours and was followed by roar of military vehicles. Apparently the Dutch came by motorcars from the west. By about 5 o'clock in the morning

everything was quiet. There was no more shooting and people went to bed since they were tired from staying awake all night. The Dutch had performed their first military operation in order to carry out the peace agreement of Linggajati.

At about 7 o'clock in the morning I saw Dutch soldiers and vehicles going around the city of Cirebon to establish security. The people of the city opened the doors of their houses and began to walk down the streets because they wanted to know the situation. Dutch soldiers had looted lots of things from empty houses and offices, which they then sold to people passing by or they traded them in for watches and valuable goods, especially gold jewellery.

That afternoon I heard that 46 Chinese in Cilimus, about 21 kilometres away, were killed by a gang of bandits who looted their possessions and burned their houses. A Dutch military driver told me that my uncle Gouw Tjiauw Seng and his family in Jatitujuh- 40 kilometres north-west of Cirebon - were murdered by a gang of bandits whilst his house was looted and set alight. I heard from my friend Jap Tiang Oen that all the Chinese in Maja, a village on the western slope of Mount Ciremai, were killed whilst their houses were burnt. He survived because he had gone to Kadipaten one day before the incident for medical treatment.

The Chinese community of the city of Cirebon was busy. They organised a committee to help refugees with shelter and food. They requested the Dutch authorities to help them to protect the Chinese communities living in remote places as Jalaksana, Kuningan, Kadugede, Cikijing, Talaga, Ciawigebang and Lurahgung. They were all in danger and could be attacked by gangs of bandits and anti-Chinese at any time. The Dutch authorities could not do much since they were preoccupied with their war on the republic and were under orders to send troops in the direction of

Yogayakarta. They could only help the Chinese Committee with four military trucks and some military officers carrying stenguns.

At the time I was a young man of 29 going with the Dutch military armed convoy as a volunteer. It was a dangerous journey for me to go with them to the remote places where we could be attacked by strong Indonesian guerrilla fighters. I loved my parents and family members so much that I forgot the danger of the expedition. We visited Cilimus where 46 Chinese had been killed. We saw houses that had been incinerated while corpses were sprawled on the ground scorched by fire. No Red Cross was available to bury them. My friend Lie Pian Hong was looking for his brother who had been killed in the back yard of a burnt building. He found his corpse lying on the ground near a small stream. He could not bury his brother's corpse since the expedition had to leave the building-plot immediately for security reasons.

The Chinese welcomed the returning Dutch and opened the doors of their shops and houses. They were asked by the Dutch authorities in Cirebon to organise the *Go An Tui* – the Chinese Security Organization – to protect the Chinese community and to help the police establish security in the city of Cirebon. Many young Chinese men became members of the *Go An Tui* and cooperated with the Dutch. I did not become a member because I intended to move to Jakarta to get a good job and continue my studies. At this time, I thought that the Dutch could stay in Indonesia for a long time and retain power in the archipelago because they were supported by the Allies.

We planned to save the Chinese community in Talaga, about 30 kilometres west of Kuningan, whose members were taking refuge in a Chinese temple. They were surrounded by hidden guerrilla fighters and gangs of bandits who could attack and plunder them any time. Our expedition stopped at the Dutch military headquarters

in Kuningan and our military commandant went inside to consult the local commanding officer for advice. His advice was not to continue the trip to Talaga but go back to Cirebon because the situation was dangerous on the road in Cipadung area, 15 kilometres south-west of Kuningan. The expedition to Talaga was cancelled.

The expedition consisted of five military trucks, five Chinese military drivers, ten members of the *Go An Tui* and was headed by two Dutch combat lieutenants with stenguns. With the permission of our military commandant, accompanied by two military officers with stenguns, I went to pick up my parents in Kuningan's Chinatown, my parents-in-law in Cijoho, and my uncle, Kwa Peng Ho in Kadugede. Chinese refugees appeared from hidden places and asked us to take them to Cirebon. When our trucks were full of refugees we left for Cirebon via Jalaksana and Cilimus. On arrival in the city of Cirebon we were emotionally welcomed by the Chinese community.

The next day our expedition went to Ciawigebang and Lurahgung, 30 kilometres east of Kuningan. Some Chinese houses in Ciawigebang had been burned and a Chinese shop owner, Tan Cin Kie, had been killed by a gang of bandits. Our expedition could not go as far as Lurahgung because the roads were blocked with tree trunks. Apparently the guerrilla fighters had blockaded the roads and were waiting for a good opportunity to attack their enemy. We went back to Cirebon and could not save refugees in such remote places as Lurahgung and Lebakwangi. I was looking for my brothers-in-law Tan Kiong Pek and Loa Wan Seng, but could not rescue them since we had to return to Cirebon. When I was back home I heard that Loa Wan Seng was killed by a gang of bandits while he was trying to rescue his foster father who was looking for his hidden treasure.

One day a Dutch friend of mine, Major Reverend Sibold van der Linde, now a chaplain with the Dutch colonial army, visited me and asked whether I could go with him to Bandung and Batavia (as he still called it). It was a good opportunity for me to see my relatives in Batavia and find a job. We went by a jeep and followed an armoured car to Bandung. The next morning we continued our journey by jeep again to Batavia. In the village of Cimacan our jeep skidded on the slippery road but all passengers were safe. I was a guest of my sister and brothers-in-law and spent two nights with them. Afterwards we went back home to Cirebon via Bogor, Puncak, Bandung and Sumedang.

Reverend Sibond van der Linde had been a protestant minister in Cirebon from 1930 to 1938. He was my catechism teacher when I was at the Dutch primary school. From 1939 to 1942 he was a minister in Jember, East Java, where I had visited him early in the Japanese occupation. He was interned by the Japanese from 1942 until 1946 until released by the Allies in Bandung. Afterwards he was appointed as a chaplain of the Dutch protestant churches in West Java in the KNIL (*Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Idisch Leger* Dutch colonial army) with the rank of major.

Soon after this trip, on Wednesday 3 December 1947 we welcomed the birth of our first daughter Liana Sun Hong Lie. The baby girl was healthy and clever. She entered the world at 1.30 in the morning and I had fetched the midwife at about 10 o'clock the evening before. Since the situation in Cirebon was dangerous I was accompanied by some *Go An Tui* soldiers with firearms. The midwife had to spend the night with us because curfew started at 11 o'clock in the evening and lasted till 6 o'clock in the morning. Everyone had to remain indoors until the next day. Hok Djien was very happy and proud of his sister Hong Lie. He played and ate with his sister

and was very protective of her. Nobody could touch her and he grasped his sister to keep her from harm or injury.

In January 1948 I started my studies by correspondence to be a teacher. The course was organised by the State Ministry of Education in Batavia where the final examination would be held. It was taught in Dutch, mostly by Dutch teachers. I was being prepared to teach in a Dutch-language education system which would very soon cease to exist. I worked very hard and finished my studies in two years. I went to stay in Batavia when I got a job at the *Nederlands Indische Handels Bank* with a salary of 350 guilders a month. (In Batavia, the money was still called guilders.) After one month I moved to the *Pusat Perkebunan Negara* (Head Office of Government Plantations) with a salary of 450 guilders a month with the right to an annual bonus. I worked from 7 o'clock in the morning until 1 o'clock in the afternoon and was able to study in the evening at the National University.

I had a good job at the Head Office of Government Plantations but I did not learn much business and commerce. My earlier desire to be a teacher had been replaced by a preference for business. I could see that the high status and salaries European teachers had enjoyed in colonial times could not continue as education became more widespread. Since I wanted to be a businessman I found the life of a civil servant dull and did not like it. My senior staff were Dutch and we used Dutch to communicate. Our head office only controlled plantations in the Dutch territory. The native employees were happy and welcomed the transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands to the Republic of the Federation of Indonesia at the end of 1949. The Chinese employees were neutral. The Dutch employees were getting ready to leave Indonesia. Their wives and children had already left Indonesia for Holland. The Eurasians were also trying to leave Indonesia, especially for Holland, Australia and

South Africa. After the transfer of power, my Dutch senior staff was replaced by new native staff members appointed by the Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Republic of Indonesia. The Dutch language was replaced by the Indonesian language in communication, correspondence and administration. Thus, I was fortunate enough in my brief career as a civil servant to work through a historic transition, as the Netherlands Indies came to an end.

## Chapter 4

### Turbulent National Politics and Personal Business during the Sukarno Era, 1950-1966

#### 1. The Era of Liberal Democracy

Since the KNIP had become the provisional People's Congress and Sjahrir had been elected chairman of the Working Committee on 20 October 1945, the Republic's cabinet ministers had been responsible to the provisional Congress which acted as Parliament. Once settled in authority after the formal transfer of power, the Republic introduced a policy of liberal democracy where the President became more or less a nominal head of state without real power except to appoint *formateurs*<sup>88</sup> to construct new cabinets and to receive credentials from foreign ambassadors. These tasks often involved complex negotiations. Liberal democracy lasted till 14 March 1957 when the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet resigned and Sukarno proclaimed martial law.<sup>89</sup>

Sukarno and Hatta continued in their positions as President and Vice-President until the Assembly could decide on a permanent Constitution. The liberal democracy system was inherited from the Dutch political system. However, in the Netherlands the queen was nominal head of state and, unlike Sukarno, she was neither charismatic nor ambitious. Sukarno did not like this system of government, especially since there were so many political parties severely competing to obtain power and authority, with the result that a cabinets often lasted only for a relatively short time. This made the government unstable and between 1950 and 1955 there were four cabinets in office. They were dominated by two large political parties, the Masyumi (Islam) and the PNI

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<sup>88</sup> This is a French term used in the French Third Republic (1871-1940), which entered Indonesian through Dutch. It refers to the politician appointed by the President to negotiate with the political parties to form a coalition government.

<sup>89</sup> Daniel S. Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966, 11-12.

(Nationalist), while other minor parties aligned themselves with one of the leading parties.

At this time Sukarno was trying to develop close relations with India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon with the intention of uniting developing Asian and African countries. The international situation was dominated by US-Soviet rivalry in the Cold War, and Sukarno saw himself as a leader of non-aligned former colonies who wished to avoid being drawn into this ideological conflict. To achieve this he organised an Asian-African conference in Bandung in April 1955 attended by representatives of 29 Asian-African countries. Among them were the People's Republic of China, India, North Vietnam and Egypt. For Sukarno the conference was a tremendously important occasion which gave him the opportunity to appear as the great unifier and leader of the third world.<sup>90</sup>

To integrate Chinese into the political life of the republic, the government founded a Consultative Council for Indonesian Citizenship (BAPERKI, *Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesiain* 1954. The council was dedicated on a formal level to the achievement of full civil and human rights for all Indonesia citizens and on an operational level to protecting the special interests of WNI (Warga Negara Indonesia) Chinese (Chinese who had chosen Indonesia citizenship). It was led by Siauw Giok Tjhan, the lawyer Oei Tjoe Tat, Go Gien Tjwan and some other prominent Indonesian Chinese figures who were in favour of choosing Indonesian citizenship. The council was initially a non-political body but during Sukarno's Guided Democracy it became an active supporter of Sukarno's policy. Later BAPERKI was banned by the Suharto government and its leaders were arrested.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 79-82; Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 262.

<sup>91</sup> Hering, *Siauw Giok Tjhan remembers*, 87 (notes).

After the first General Election on 29 September 1955, in which 39 million Indonesians took part, there were four leading political parties. They were the PNI (Nationalist), the Masyumi (Islam), the NU (Islam) and the PKI (Communist) parties, while other political parties gained far less votes.<sup>92</sup>

| Party      | Valid Votes | % Valid Votes | Parliamentary Seats | % Parliamentary Seats |
|------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| PNI        | 8,434,653   | 22.3          | 57                  | 22.2                  |
| MASYUMI    | 7,903,886   | 20.9          | 57                  | 22.2                  |
| NU         | 6,955,141   | 18.4          | 45                  | 17.5                  |
| PKI        | 6,176,914   | 16.4          | 39                  | 15.2                  |
| PSII       | 1,091,160   | 2.9           | 8                   | 3.1                   |
| PARKINDO   | 1,003,325   | 2.6           | 8                   | 3.1                   |
| P.KATHOLIK | 770,740     | 2.0           | 6                   | 2.3                   |
| PSI        | 753,191     | 2.0           | 5                   | 1.9                   |
| MURBA      | 199,588     | 0.5           | 2                   | 0.8                   |
| OTHERS     | 4,496,701   | 12.0          | 30                  | 11.7                  |
|            |             |               |                     |                       |
| TOTAL      | 37,785,299  | 100.0         | 257                 | 100.0 <sup>93</sup>   |

With the four main political parties leading in the general election, heightened competition to gain more power developed between the Islamic Nationalist parties (MASYUMI and NU) and the secular Nationalist parties (PNI and PKI). The national policy began to swing to the left and then to the right, depending on which political party was the core of the cabinet. The country could not develop itself and its people were still poor. Ministers paid more attention to the concerns of his party rather than to developing policies in the interests of his country for fear that he would lose support. For example a Minister of Economic Affairs could distribute an import loan from a foreign country to his party members so that they could import commodities for the Indonesia market. Indeed he was expected to do so, and many saw politics as a

<sup>92</sup> Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, Vol VI, Edisi ke-4, Jakarta, 1984, 222.

<sup>93</sup> Statistics from Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 238.

way of enriching themselves. The importers who obtained the import licenses were generally not skilled enough to do business and had no running capital at all since they set up their import business at the time their relations or connections promised them the import licenses from the foreign loan. They did not usually begin importing goods themselves but sold the licenses to Chinese importers.<sup>94</sup> Since the cabinet was making every effort to press for Indonesianisation of the economy through opportunities for indigenous businessmen, many new firms were bogus fronts of arrangements between government supporters and Chinese. This business practice was called an 'Ali-Baba' business in which an indigenous Indonesian ('Ali') was the front man for a Chinese ('Baba') entrepreneur. The 'Baba' could be a foreigner or a citizen. It did not make any difference.<sup>95</sup>

Only top figures in political parties, government officials and army officers of high ranking were prosperous, but the common people continued to suffer. Even once prosperous businessmen and civil servants were in a bad way. In 1950 the population was estimated at 77.2 million and in the 1961 census it was 97.02 million. Rice production was insufficient even though production in 1956 was 26 per cent higher than in 1950.<sup>96</sup> Java was the centre of political and business activities while the outer islands were generally deteriorating, as they did not obtain enough money, facilities and materials for the development of their territories. They considered Java to be a parasitical island, as it received the most foreign exchange earnings from the produce of the outer islands. This resentment was revealed by the growth of smuggling between Sumatra and Singapore and between Sulawesi (Celebes) and the Philippines.

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<sup>94</sup> The author was Manager of Import-Export Trading Companies at Jakarta between 1951 and 1955 and was familiar with this style of doing business.

<sup>95</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 235.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 225, 226.

The smuggling often happened under the sponsorship of regional military commanders.<sup>97</sup>

There existed antagonism between the Chinese, who had business skills and substantial commercial networks but no political support, and the largely native Indonesian bourgeoisie with less business skills, less commercial networks but political support. The Chinese had capital, skill and experience in business. They became successful and wealthy, particularly those who worked with the aid of government officials and high ranking army officers in getting import and export licenses as well as contracts to implement government projects. Since most Chinese had never been public officers nor soldiers and as they were a minority of the Indonesian population, they often became victims of the business antagonism. Many less-educated natives accepted the view that the Chinese were economic parasites and the cause of Indonesia's economic failure. Furthermore most of the Chinese were Buddhists, Confucians and middle class people who had co-operated with the Dutch colonial government. The native bourgeoisie and Islamic political movements vilified the Chinese as pork-eaters and infidels. The antagonism of native Indonesians against the Chinese was sometimes interpreted as an expression of resentment of the poor against the rich.<sup>98</sup>

An anti-Chinese movement was promoted by a native lawyer, a Mr Asaat, in 1956, calling on the government to discriminate in economic affairs against the Chinese (including those who were Indonesian citizens) in favour of indigenous Indonesians. This was directly opposed to the ideals of BAPERKI. Then in 1963 anti-Chinese violence erupted in many towns and cities of both West Java and Central Java. The violence was directed against property rather than people, involving the

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<sup>97</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 246.

<sup>98</sup> Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*, Oxford, London :Oxford University Press, 1963, 28.

destruction of cars, shops and houses by *becak* (tricycle) drivers, the urban unemployed and students.<sup>99</sup> I was Managing Director of the Serayu Transport and Forwarding Company at the time. Two days after the destruction in 1963, I made a journey to Semarang via Bogor, Bandung, Cirebon, Brebes, Tegal, Slawi, Purwokerto, Yogyakarta and Magelang. Many Chinese quarters in those towns and cities were damaged. The commodities of the shops had been robbed and the buildings burnt, but I did not hear of any casualties.

The army believed that it had played a very important role during the struggle against the Dutch colonial government. Its senior officers claimed to have the right to engage in politics especially in the situation where the political parties were competing and the cabinets often resigned. During the Wilopo cabinet (April 1952 until June 1953), when Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX was Minister of Defence, the cabinet planned reductions in the size of the bureaucracy and the military. There was also a demobilisation scheme to reduce the army from 200,000 to 100,000 troops. The regional army commanders were opposed to the demobilisation plan and blamed the political parties' role in the parliament. Sukarno himself was not in favour of the demobilisation plan, which would remove many of the revolutionary leaders with whom he sympathised, but he could do nothing since the parliament had the supreme power of the government.

Regional commanders attempted to resist the scheme. When it was demanded in Parliament that the central army leadership be dismissed, the central army group attempted a show of force. On 17 October 1952 they brought tanks and artillery as well as about 30,000 civilian demonstrators to the Presidential palace to demand that

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

Sukarno dissolve the Parliament.<sup>100</sup> The commanders who had created the show of force were inside the palace negotiating with Sukarno. Sukarno's account suggests that he talked them out of a coup attempt. He recalled that Colonel Abdul Haris Nasution, who was in charge of the show of force, pleaded their case:

This is not against you personally, Pak, but against the government system. You must abolish the Parliament immediately...

When there's trouble in the country, everybody looks to the army...  
It's the politicians who make the wars and the soldiers who do the dying.

It is only right we should have a say in what's happening.<sup>101</sup>

Sukarno was angry at the way that Nasution had acted. His account suggested that he bluffed:

You are right in what you want, but wrong in your method of bringing it about. Sukarno will never yield to pressure. Not for the whole Dutch army and not for one Indonesian battalion! ...

Say what you like to Bung Karno- YES. But threaten the Father of the Indonesian Republic- NO! NEVER!<sup>102</sup>

When Sukarno walked out quietly to face the mob, the crowd dispersed cheering 'Long live Bung Karno'. Sukarno's charisma, according to the President, destroyed the coup attempt.

In July 1950 Lieutenant-Colonel Kahar Muzakar joined some 20,000 troops who refused to be demobilised. In January 1952 Kahar Muzakkar and his troops formally joined Kartosuwiryo of the Darul Islam movement which was terrorising West Java at the time. Kartosuwiryo had been a rebel since the Moslem movement Masyumi had joined the Republic and rallied to the Linggajati Agreement and the Renville Agreement, Kartosuwiryo refused to move his troops to Central Java and

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<sup>100</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 233.

<sup>101</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 266-267.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

kept his Hizbu'llah and Sabili'llah military units operating in West Java, against both Dutch and republican forces.<sup>103</sup>

The militant Moslems of Aceh province, led by Daud Beureueh, Aceh's strongman and a bulwark of the Republic in the revolution, refused to accept Jakarta politics which they considered to be irreligious and incompetent. In May 1953 they were found to have been in contact with Kartosuwiryo of Darul Islam. They refused to accept the Pancasila government and rebelled openly against Jakarta with the support of many Acehnese civil servants and military men. Darul Islam, now encompassing the hinterlands of Aceh, West Java and South Sulawesi, became a great challenge to the government of the unitary Republic and the cabinet of Ali Sastroamidjojo. The uprising of Darul Islam in Aceh was suppressed by military action under Colonel Yasin who organised a Conference of Harmonious Acehnese People (*Musyawarah Kerukunan Rakyat Aceh*) in December 1962 to try to work out a solution.<sup>104</sup>

During the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, from March 1956 to March 1957, there were complaints from some regions in Sumatra and Celebes that they did not receive enough money from Jakarta for regional development. They did not trust the central government any more and were trying to forge their own way. Their activities were backed by some local army commanders who set up territorial councils named after mythically powerful animals. In West Sumatra the Banteng (wild ox) Council was founded in December 1956 by Lieutenant Colonel Achmad Husein, the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Commandant, illegally overthrowing the civilian Central Sumatra government under Governor Ruslan Muljohardjo. The rebels called themselves the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (*Pemerintah*

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<sup>103</sup> van Dijk, *Darul Islam, Sebuah Pemberontakan*, 72-76.

<sup>104</sup> Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, Vol VI, 270, 271.

*Revolusioner Republik Indonesia*, PRRI).<sup>105</sup> The revolutionaries seemed to have received arms from the Republic of China in Taiwan, which prompted the Indonesian government to close and seize many Nationalist China-oriented schools.<sup>106</sup>

At the same time the Gajah (elephant) Council was founded in Medan by Colonel Mahidin Simbolon, the Territorial Army Commander. In South Sumatra the Garuda (mythical bird) Council was founded led by Lieutenant Colonel Barlian, the Territorial Army Commander, and his assistant Major Nawawi; while in Manado (North Sulawesi) the Manguni (bird of wisdom) Council was founded by Lieutenant Colonel Ventje Sumual in February 1957. Two weeks later Ventje Sumual proclaimed the *Piagam Perjuangan Rakyat Semesta, Permesta* (The Charter of all People's Struggle) in Makasar.

The purpose of the uprisings was to obtain autonomy for the rebels' regional territories. Delegates consisting of Colonel Dahlan Djambek, A. Halim, Dahlan Ibrahim, Sidi Bakaruddin and Ali Lubis were sent to Jakarta to explain their plan to the Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo, Vice President Mohammad Hatta and President Sukarno. They failed to meet the President who was certainly against their plan since he had struggled for years to achieve the unitary Republic of Indonesia.<sup>107</sup>

Sukarno had come to believe that liberal democracy was neither suitable for the Indonesian people nor for Indonesian political parties. The cabinet and the government were not stable under liberal democracy. The common people remained poor, especially the people on the outer islands such as Sumatra, Borneo (Kalimantan), Celebes (Sulawesi) and other islands in the east. The Moslem Nationalist parties, the Masyumi and the NU, were competing too fiercely with the secular Nationalist parties, the PNI and the PKI. The military, which had rendered its country many services,

<sup>105</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 295.

<sup>106</sup> Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*, 26, 37, 86.

<sup>107</sup> Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, Vol VI, 272-276.

especially during the war of independence, was also looking for its comrades in arms. Therefore there were army officers who were supportive of the Masyumi and the NU, as well as those who were in sympathy with the PNI and the PKI.

The first cabinet after the general election of 29 September 1955 – the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet – was inaugurated on 24 March 1956. This cabinet had to implement the abrogation of the Round Table Conference Agreement, by attempting to establish Indonesian authority in West New Guinea, then still in Dutch hands, as well as implementing an independent and active foreign policy to achieve world peace based upon the resolution of the first Asian-African Bandung Conference.

During the liberal democracy of the years 1950-1957 the Indonesian nation, came close to falling apart. The unitary Republic was anything but united. The political parties had been destructive in their competition and the people of Sumatra and Sulawesi were asking for autonomy. The army was bloated and the officers were more interested in the future of their home regions and augmenting their personal fortunes than they were in their professional duties as soldiers. The state economy and revenue had been deteriorating, in particular after the Korean War boom ended, causing the price of natural rubber to drop by 71 per cent.<sup>108</sup> When Ali Sastroamidjojo resigned on 14 March 1957 and the political parties failed to negotiate a new coalition cabinet, Sukarno appointed himself *formateur* and formed an extra-parliamentary emergency business cabinet, called the Karya Cabinet (Working Cabinet), under the leadership of Ir Djuanda Kartawidjaja who was a non-party figure, formerly the Minister of Planning in the second Ali government.<sup>109</sup> Theoretically the Djuanda cabinet was responsible to the Parliament but practically Djuanda felt more

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<sup>108</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 230, 233.

<sup>109</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 288.

responsible to the President, as he had no parliamentary mandate. This arrangement indicated the introduction of Sukarno's Guided Democracy.

## 2. The Transition to Guided Democracy

Prior to the resignation of the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, Sukarno was already aware that the government was unstable because the political parties could not cooperate to unite the nation and preserve peace. Since the internal situation was deteriorating, Sukarno summoned a meeting of some 900 political and other leaders to the palace on 21 February 1957 and outlined his idea which was called 'the President's Concept'. The idea contained three broad outlines:

1. Liberal democracy is not applicable and proper to be used in Indonesia. Therefore it must be replaced by the Guided Democracy system.
2. To implement the Guided Democracy system it is necessary to form a cabinet based on the four main political parties, the PNY, the Masyumi, the NU and the PKI, supported by all parties as well as organisations.
3. To form a National Council of functional groups, the main duty of this council is to advise the cabinet with or without request.<sup>110</sup>

The Masyumi, the NU, the PSII, the Catholic party and the PRI refused 'the President's Concept' since they thought that the government system could only be changed by the Constituent Assembly. The political parties and the army in the outer islands also refused 'the President's Concept' because such a concept would weaken their position.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic, 17 August 1957 Sukarno made a speech in which he set out the ideology of guided democracy, which he named MANIPOL (*Manifesto Politik Republik Indonesia*, Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia). In his speech Sukarno called for a revival of the spirit of the Revolution, for social justice and for the 'retooling' of the institutions and organisations of the

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<sup>110</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 107-108.

nation in the name of ongoing revolution. The Supreme Advisory Council, in its session from 23 to 25 September 1959, proposed that Manipol be accepted as the Broad Outlines of State Objectives.<sup>111</sup> Although Manipol was a vague creed it was officially approved by the Presidential decree No.1 in 1960. It was legalised as well with the decision No.1/MPRS/1960 by the Provisional People's Consultative Council, founded in 1959. The MPRS (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara, Provisional People's Consultative Assembly, or parliament in emergency session) appointed Sukarno 'the Great Leader of Revolution' with the title of 'Mandataris MPRS' (Mandatory of MPRS).<sup>112</sup> After analysing Manipol in February 1960 the President told the youth congress in Bandung in February 1960 that Manipol consisted of five elements named USDEK, which was made up of the initials of *Undang-Undang Dasar 1945, Sosialisme Indonesia, Demokrasi Terpimpin, Ekonomi Terpimpin* and *Kepribadian Indonesia* (1945 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy and Indonesian Identity).

To preserve national unity and to be able to take essential measures in a state of emergency, Sukarno proclaimed a State of War and Siege in December 1957.<sup>113</sup> The Army's power was increasing because the civil administration was, as a result of marital law, subordinated to the Army's authority. Since Sukarno was President and Commander-in-Chief of the Military forces he held the real political authority under the State of War and Siege. He was able to post military Commanders everywhere in the country into positions of formidable authority and suppress the uprisings of the Darul Islam and the military commanders in the outer islands.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>114</sup> Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy*, 16.

Sukarno knew that Mohammad Hatta and the Masyumi were inclined to comply with the rebels' demands. Ignoring Masyumi's claims to form a new government and avoiding demands for a Hatta cabinet, Sukarno appointed PNY chairman Suwirjo as formateur on March 15, 1957 and instructed him to form a coalition cabinet. When Suwirjo failed Sukarno instructed him to try again on March 23, 1957,<sup>115</sup> aiming at a 'business cabinet', not dependent on political parties.

Ir. Djuanda Kartawidjaja's Karya Cabinet, inaugurated in April 1957, had to carry out the five following programmes:

1. to establish the National Council;
2. to normalise the situation of the Republic of Indonesia;
3. to continue with the abrogation of the KMB (Round Table Conference Agreement);
4. to strive for Irian Barat (West New Guinea);
5. to undertake rapid development.<sup>116</sup>

Masyumi and the Catholic Party had refused seats in the Karya Cabinet but Sukarno undercut their opposition by detaching individual members from them and rewarding them with office. Sukarno also tried to use his personal influence to persuade some other prominent political leaders to join the Karya Cabinet. The anti-communist parties were opposed to the Karya Cabinet because there were members in it who were either Communist or sympathetic to the PKI such as Hanafi who had informal connections with PKI leaders, Prijono, who had received a Stalin Peace Prize and was a member of the Murba party and Chaerul Saleh who was sympathetic with Murba's views.<sup>117</sup>

The opponents could do nothing because the second Ali Cabinet had already resigned, the situation was under the State of War and Siege, the political parties had failed in founding a new cabinet and the supreme power was in the hands of the

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>116</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 110.

<sup>117</sup> Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy*, 22.

President who was also Commander-in-Chief of the military forces. Sukarno wanted the Leftists to share the cabinet since he was aware that the PKI was one of the four biggest political parties in the General Election of 1955. The Karya Cabinet established the National Council by emergency law in May 1957. It comprised forty-one 'functional group' representatives such as youth, peasants, workers, women, intellectuals, religions, regions, as well as various ex officio members.<sup>118</sup> Almost all political parties including the PKI were indirectly represented in this cabinet. The most important exceptions were the Masyumi and the Catholic Party. Sukarno himself was Chairman of the National Council but the Council's affairs were handled by Roeslan Abdulgani who was Vice-Chairman and the most important elaborator of the Guided Democracy ideology.<sup>119</sup>

The National Council was intended by Sukarno to take the place of Parliament gradually and to instruct the Karya Cabinet to operate on the basis of the President's concept. It had to be able to compete with Parliament until Sukarno could paralyse Parliament and eliminate the political parties. Founding the National Council was Sukarno's move to introduce Guided Democracy. He was aware that he needed power to carry out his own concept therefore he had asked various Chiefs-of-Staff of the military forces to join the National Council. Nasution, the Army Chief-of-Staff, Subijakto, the Navy Chief-of-Staff, Suryadarma, the Air Force Chief-of-Staff and Sukanto, the Police Chief-of-State were all members of the National Council.<sup>120</sup>

Sukarno and certain military forces needed each other. The President wanted the Army to suppress the uprisings and political rebels against him while the military forces needed the authority of Sukarno to protect them against political parties

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<sup>118</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 247.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy*, 26-27.

planning to reduce their numbers and upgrade the quality of the military forces. The PKI also needed the protection of Sukarno. Therefore they supported Sukarno's concept and policy. So there were groups around Sukarno supported by particular military forces as well as the PKI. There were also anti-Sukarno and anti-PKI groups supported by particular military forces and the rebel armies on the outer islands. These two hostile groups were competing to hold power and authority. There were of course neutral groups at the time who adopted a wait-and-see policy.

The core of the more serious conflict to come started with disagreements over the system of government which should be adopted and over the policy which the competing groups wished to implement. Some political parties wanted to continue the liberal democracy with a federal system whilst Sukarno preferred Guided Democracy with a unitary system. Sukarno's sympathy with Marxism had existed since his youth when he wrote on Nationalism, Islamism and Marxism in 'Suluh Indonesia Muda' in 1926:

The Budi Utomo Party, the 'late' National Indische Party which is still 'alive', the Partai Sarekat Islam, the Perserikatan Minahasa, the Partai Komunis Indonesia and many others... each of them respectively has the spirit of Nationalism, the spirit of Islamism or the spirit of Marxism. In a colonial political situation can these spirits work together and become one Great Spirit, the Spirit of Unity, the Spirit of Unity that will bear us to the Field of Glory?<sup>121</sup>

Therefore the idea to co-operate with the PKI was not a new one nor was it the result of his state visit to China, the Soviet Union and other Communist states from 28 August to 16 October 1956; rather it was the aftermath of his observation on the internal and international political situation.

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<sup>121</sup> Sukarno, 'Nationalism, Islamism and Marxism' (1962) reproduced in Sukarno, *Under the Banner of Revolution*, Vol I, Jakarta: K. Goenadi and H. Mualliff Nasution, 1966, 3.

Since almost all political parties disliked Communism, the PKI needed the protection of Sukarno. This party had won more than six million votes in the general election of 1955 and also made major gains in provincial councils in the latter half of 1957<sup>122</sup> and replaced the PNI in second place. Therefore it was very hard for Sukarno to refuse the PKI a role in government even if he had wanted to.

Under the Karya Cabinet and during the development of the National Council, Liberal Democracy was deteriorating. This trend was encouraged by the successful political activities of the PKI. Liberal Democracy received a mortal blow as well from the failure of the *Konstituante* (Constituent Assembly) in its attempt to draft a new constitution. Elected in 1955 and having been in session since November 1956, the Constituent Assembly had made little progress since the Masyumi and the NU wanted to emphasise the pervasiveness of Islam whilst the secular nationalist parties preferred to incorporate the Pancasila into the new Constitution. The Karya Cabinet and the Army proposed an idea of a full return to the 1945 Constitution. Since the Constituent Assembly rejected the appeal from the government for a return of the Constitution of 1945, the President dissolved it and reintroduced the Constitution of 1945 by decree on 5 July 1959. The President's action was supported by the Army's Chief-of-Staff, the Supreme Court and Parliament, who all declared their willingness to work with the President under the 1945 Constitution.<sup>123</sup> The Army made use of martial law to prepare for this and on 3 June 1959 it had forbidden all political parties from performing any political activities. This was endorsed with the Army's order No. PRT/PEPERPU/040/1959 which prohibited members of the Constituent Assembly from holding a meeting.<sup>124</sup> The army wished to have not only a stable government but

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<sup>122</sup> Oey Hong Lee, *Indonesian Government and Press during Guided Democracy*, Hull: Centre for South East Asian Studies, The University of Hull, 1971, 60-61.

<sup>123</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 148.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

also halt the onward march of the PKI. Having experienced the revolts of the PKI in 1926-1927 and 1948, the Army regarded the Indonesian Communist Party as dangerous, for the PKI had benefited from the Liberal Democracy system. In the State of War and Siege as well as with the reinstatement of the 1945 Constitution, the Army hoped to slow down the PKI or suppress its activities. The PKI was aware of the reactions of its political rivals and thought the best way forward for its party was to support the President's concept and to carry out Sukarno's instructions.

In May 1957 the President of the Soviet Union, Kliment Voroshilov, visited Indonesia and made a trip by road to Bogor, Cipanas and Bandung. Between Cipanas and Bandung, Voroshilov's party was intercepted by Darul Islam rebels of Kartosuwirdjo who were repulsed by the escorting military forces.<sup>125</sup> It was humiliating for Sukarno that his important guest should have been put in such danger. He sought solutions through conferences aiming to build consensus. In September 1957 a National Conference (*Musyawarah Nasional*) was held in Jakarta attended by Sukarno, Mohammad Hatta, and regional and national leaders to discuss problems affecting the government, regions, financial economy, military forces and political parties. Following the National Conference a National Development Conference (*Musyawarah Nasional Pembangunan*, MUNAP) was held in November to discuss and formulate the development process in accordance with the wishes of regional territories. It was attended by political representatives, regional and national leaders, military officers and commanders of all military territories except the rebellious Lieutenant Colonel Achmad Husein, the Commandant of the Military Territory of Central Sumatra.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 118.

The Indonesian government had not succeeded in getting West New Guinea back from the Dutch, although great efforts had been made by means of bilateral negotiations from 1950 to 1953 as well as through Asian-African and United Nations forums. It therefore put severe political and economic pressure on the Dutch by abrogated the Netherlands-Indonesian Union in 1954<sup>127</sup> and repudiating the Round Table debt agreement on 3 May 1956.<sup>128</sup> On 18 November 1957 a great national rally was held in Jakarta demanding the release of Irian Barat. This was followed by a total strike on 2 December 1957 by workers for Dutch companies. The Indonesian government forbade KLM aeroplanes from landing on or flying over Indonesian territories.<sup>129</sup> It also demanded the Dutch eliminate all Netherlands Consular activities in the whole of Indonesia starting from 5 December 1957. The Indonesian government also nationalised Dutch enterprises, banking and trading companies after many had been seized by workers.<sup>130</sup> I was in Jakarta at that time and some people refused to sell food to Dutch subjects.<sup>131</sup>

This struggle with the Netherlands occurred while Darul Islam made its most daring attack. Sukarno was almost assassinated by hand grenades thrown by rebels in the front yard of Cikini Primary School on 30 November 1957 as he was approaching the door of his limousine to leave for home. Forty-eight children were critically wounded, several were crippled for life, but Sukarno was alive and unharmed. The Darul Islam assassins, Jusuf Ismail, Saadon bin Mohamad, Tasrif bin Husein and Moh. Tasin bin Abubakar were executed after trial in April 1958.<sup>132</sup> A little over two years later there was another attempt to kill Sukarno. This time, though, it was not a Muslim

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 114-117.

<sup>131</sup> The author was not sure whether it happened because of the instructions from the authorities or political parties, or whether people were afraid to sell foods to Dutch subjects.

<sup>132</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 119, 120.

extremist but a Christian military officer who made the attempt while Sukarno was sitting in a chair (not his usual one) at Merdeka Palace on 9 March 1960. Air Force Lieutenant Daniel Alexander Maukar strafed the chair where Sukarno would usually have been sitting.<sup>133</sup> Curiously, Maukar claimed his motive was to force President Sukarno to talk with Achmad Hussein's PRRI (*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia*, Republic of Indonesia' revolutionary government) in West Sumatra. This aim could hardly have been achieved if the assassination attempt had been successful. Maukar was sentenced to death by a military court in July 1960.

Meanwhile, the rebellion led by Achmad Hussein in Sumatra which had begun in 1956 continued to simmer. He met with fellow dissidents in Sungai Darch, West Sumatra, in January 1958 and on 10 February 1958 increased the temperature by sending an ultimatum to the government in Jakarta:

1. The Djuanda Cabinet must be dissolved within days by either returning its mandate to the President or the President himself must withdraw his mandate from the Cabinet.
2. The President must appoint Drs. Moh. Hatta and Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX to form a new Business Cabinet.
3. The President must return to his constitutional position as figurehead President.<sup>134</sup>

The Djuanda government in Jakarta responded by refusing the ultimatum and sacking Lieutenant Colonel Achmad Hussein, Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, Colonel Dachlan Djambek and Colonel Simbolon. The Regional Military Command of Central Sumatra was put directly under the Army Chief of Staff. It was at this point that Achmad Hussein actually founded the *Pemerintah Revolutioner Republik Indonesia*' (PRRI, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) on 15 February 1958, while two days later Lieutenant Colonel D.J. Somba proclaimed that the Permesta in Central and North Sulawesi had broken off relations with the Jakarta government and

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 163, 164.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 124, 125; Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 250, 251.

backed the PRRI. The Central government, supported by the National Council, readied its military forces to suppress the uprisings both in Sumatra and Sulawesi.

The military operations, led by Colonels Nasution and Yani, were over in two months and in May 1958 Hussein and his troops, including all PRRI dissidents, surrendered unconditionally.<sup>135</sup> Because of his success in crushing the uprising, A.H. Nasution, who was Army Chief of Staff at the time, was promoted to Lieutenant General. It was more difficult to crush Sjafruddin's Permesta in Sulawesi because the geographical conditions were favourable for the rebels. Furthermore they were equipped with weapons supplied by foreign countries which the Sukarno government did not have. The rebels had B-26 bombers and Mustang fighters, and also had foreign pilots. One of the pilots was the American Allen Pope who was shot down on 18 May 1958. He was sentenced to death by an Air Force Court but was pardoned by President Sukarno.<sup>136</sup> It was not until February 1961 that Permesta groups in North Celebes began to surrender to the central military forces. Sjafruddin ordered his forces to surrender and from June to October 1961 most rebel leaders were deported to Jakarta.

A further consequence of the PRRI rebellion was the banning of political parties. Nasution suddenly banned Masyumi and PSI under martial law in September 1958 – when Sukarno was abroad – but the official dissolution of the parties was carried out by the President himself on August 17, 1960<sup>137</sup> based upon presidential decree No.201/1960. The parties were accused of being involved in the PRRI rebellion.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 270, 271.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>138</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 166, 167.

The Darul Islam rebels in Aceh also laid down their arms whilst Kahar Muzakar and his rebelling troops remained in the hills of South Sulawesi where he was killed by government military forces in February 1965. Some 100,000 PRRI rebels surrendered but most of their leaders were not sentenced or punished severely, despite Sukarno's insistence upon harsh treatment of them. Many army leaders in Jakarta were sympathetic towards those individuals who had joined the PRRI. When another assassination on Sukarno was attempted in South Celebes in January 1962, the President insisted that the enemies be punished. Sjafruddin, Natsir, Simbolon, Burhanuddin and many other leaders of Masyumi and PSI were imprisoned. Sjahrir was also arrested, and then deported very much in the way the Dutch had deported trouble-makers they did not wish to imprison in the late colonial period. He died in 1965 after going to Switzerland for medical treatment.

In 1961 Sukarno launched a new attack against Darul Islam in West Java to arrest Kartosuwirdjo who was wounded in April 1962. Kartosuwirdjo was captured in June 1962 and was tried both for rebellion and for an assassination attempt on Sukarno. He was executed in September 1962 which shattered his followers' faith in his invincibility. Sukarno had succeeded in eliminating his tough old enemies among Darul Islam, Masyumi and PSI leaders. The security of the countryside of West Java was restored for the first time since the Revolution.

Meanwhile, foreign policy initiatives affirmed Sukarno's nationalist approach. On 20 January 1958, a Peace Agreement between Indonesia and Japan was signed in Jakarta formally to end the state of war between the Netherlands East Indies and Japan. It was a strange agreement, as the Netherlands had signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan in 1951, but Indonesia had not. In the agreement it was

confirmed that war reparations of \$US223,080,000 would be paid by Japan to Indonesia over a period of 12 years in the form of commodities and services.<sup>139</sup>

Sukarno invited several prominent political figures of the Third World, as it was beginning to be known, both to thank them for support for Indonesia's independent active foreign policy and to increase solidarity with non-aligned countries. India's first President, Rajendra Prasad, was the first such figure to visit in early December 1958. A few weeks later Yugoslavia's President, Josip Broz Tito, came as a guest of Indonesia.<sup>140</sup> Then in February 1959 two Indochinese leaders came on separate visits, first Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Prime Minister of Cambodia (Kampuchea) and then, just three days later, the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh.

Sukarno was astute enough to realise that he also needed good relations with the two Western countries in Indonesia's region, even though they were very much allies of Britain and the United States, so he welcomed the New Zealand Prime Minister, Walter Nash, in November 1959, and the Prime Minister of Australia, Robert Gordon Menzies, the following month.<sup>141</sup> Australia had participated in the establishment of the US-dominated South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in Manila in 1954, which Indonesia had opposed. In addition Australia shared Britain's commitment to the defence of Malaya, which Sukarno considered neo-colonialist. Despite their differences, and the fact that later Australian and Indonesian troops would actually fire on each other during Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia, Menzies and Sukarno ensured there was never a total rupture in relations.

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<sup>139</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 123.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 134, 135. He had organised the National Liberation Front of Partisans during World War II to fight the invading German forces. Tito led Yugoslavia in its break with the Soviet bloc in 1948 and became President in 1953.

<sup>141</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1950-1964*, 136, 137.

### **3. Sukarno's Guided Democracy**

After the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the restoration of the Old Constitution of 1945 by the President's decree of 5 July 1959, Sukarno's Guided Democracy was formally and quite easily implemented, especially since Sukarno was head of the National Council and intended to paralyse Parliament. The Army, under the leadership of Nasution, was trying to get rid of its rival political parties especially during Sukarno's world tour from April 23 to June 29, 1959. Nasution also implemented policies which he thought would be advantageous for the Army and his position. Therefore he decreed in May 1959, with effect from January 1, 1960, that aliens were not permitted to live and stay in distinct regional areas and would be banned from rural trade. There were not many Arab and Indian traders in Indonesia, especially in the rural areas. All the Dutch had already left. Therefore Nasution's decree was purposely issued to expel the Chinese from rural areas.

The purpose of his decree was to let the natives manage the rural trade without Chinese competition, to embarrass the PKI, to hurt the Chinese community and weaken Sukarno's friendship with China. Nasution's decree to get rid of the Chinese in rural areas was not only a painful stab in Sukarno's back but damaged Indonesia's economic situation as well. Indonesia still needed the Chinese traders who had trade relations with distributors, importers and exporters in big cities. Indonesia's import and export trade had been damaged by the war and the rupture in economic relations with the Netherlands. It needed to be developed, and it required qualified and experienced people. About 11,900 Chinese were repatriated to China. Both foreign Chinese and Indonesian-born Chinese were considered the same by the Chinese government and neither group needed a passport from the Chinese embassy to go to China. The Indonesian government did not want the repatriated Chinese to return to

Indonesia even if they were born in Indonesia and were Indonesian citizens. They had to sign a statement which promised that they would not return to Indonesia; otherwise they would not be given an exit permit to leave Indonesia for China.

The Chinese government reacted strongly against Jakarta whilst the PKI and Sukarno attempted to defend the Chinese and prevent the Army from taking more severe measures. The exodus of the Chinese from rural areas and the country not only caused serious economic distress to Indonesia but a new surge of inflation as well. Sukarno was aware of the policy that General Nasution and the military were making to bring down his supremacy and to knock out the PKI. He was worried that relations with China could be threatened. Therefore Sukarno sent Subandrio to Peking where, on behalf of the Indonesian government, he apologised to China and promised to improve the relations and the situation of the Chinese community. After Subandrio's visit to China the repatriation of the Chinese slowed down, the Chinese ships stopped arriving in Indonesia and in the end the repatriation came to an end without any comment or decree. Sukarno was trying to eliminate Nasution from the Army by replacing him. He persuaded him to join the working cabinet as Minister of Defence and Security as well as Armed Forces Chief of Staff.

On 10 July 1959 Sukarno formed a new working (*kerja*) cabinet with himself as Prime Minister and the familiar figure of Ir. Djuanda Kartawidjaja as First Minister. Nasution's power and authority weakened after he became Minister and Armed Forces Chief of Staff. These two functions of Nasution had more to do with his general political role than with specific military matters. Neither the Minister nor the Chief of the Armed Forces had the authority of command to control the soldiers. This was the role of Army Chief of Staff. Nasution's policy had to be discussed in the

Cabinet and approved by the government where Sukarno was Prime Minister. Nasution had to bow to Sukarno and was not able to carry out his own policy.

Sukarno knew that the PKI was the best organised Asian communist party outside China and with its 2.5 million members<sup>142</sup> at the time it could be the pillar of the NASAKOM<sup>143</sup> Cabinet in implementing his Guided Democracy. NASAKOM was an abbreviation of *Nasionalisme, Agama dan Komunisme*, Nationalism, Religion and Communism. It was a political concept of Sukarno to give the communists the chance to join his working cabinet in implementing his Guided Democracy. Basic to Guided Democracy were the traditional Indonesian procedures of deliberation and consensus and its provision for consultation and debate.<sup>144</sup> Its important new deliberative bodies under the 1945 constitution were the Supreme Advisory Council (*Dewan Pertimbangan Agung*) and the People's Deliberative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*) around which were grouped a National Planning Council, the National Front, the Body to Develop the Potential of the Functional Groups and a number of others without any apparent policy directions.<sup>145</sup>

Sukarno also produced general slogans such as *Ampera* (the Message of People's suffering), *Berdikari* (standing on our own feet), *Tavip* (the year of living dangerously), NEFOS (New Emerging Forces), OLDEFOS (Old Established Forces) and NASAKOM which were vague ideas intended to illustrate general policy directions rather than providing a coherent plan of action. They were intended to push the Indonesian people to revolt against liberal democracy and to support his Guided Democracy. Sukarno knew that slogans were more useful than a coherent policy to mobilise popular power and participation based on his charisma and a widespread

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<sup>142</sup> J.D. Legge, *Indonesia*. Third Edition. Sydney: Prentice-Hall, 1980, 158.

<sup>143</sup> Union of Nationalism, Religion and Communism.

<sup>144</sup> Legge, *Indonesia*, 157

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

belief he could lead and guide his people to a life of happiness and prosperity. Sukarno did not want to wait any longer to implement his Guided Democracy since he believed that the life of man is short and his people had suffered for too long. Sukarno was aware that most Indonesians, especially the people of Java, believed the prophecy of King Joyoboyo that the Indonesian people would be saved by a *Ratu Adil* (a Just King) from suffering and imperialism.<sup>146</sup>

Guided Democracy provided Sukarno with the power and authority of an absolutely powerful king with a weak parliament, since most of its members had been appointed by him. Sukarno himself was the only 'Guide' controlling the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches of the government. He could grant amnesty to anyone and sack any government official and military officer by accusing them of opposing his Guided Democracy. It was not a government from the people, by the people and for the people, because most of the power and authority was in Sukarno's hands, even though there were political parties sharing his government. Sukarno realised this and was aware of what he was doing. His bitter experience during liberal democracy had forced him to create a new system of government which would be suitable for the largely uneducated and illiterate people of Indonesia. In a liberal democracy, the common people of Indonesia had become 'dairy cows' and victims of their politically clever fellow nationals. In a liberal democracy there was still exploitation of man by man (*l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme*). Therefore he always said that the revolution was not yet finished, by which he meant that he had not yet succeeded in crushing imperialism entirely in his homeland. Sukarno seemed to believe that capitalism and *l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme* could be totally eliminated from world society. He did not realise that they still existed even in Soviet

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<sup>146</sup> H.J. De Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesie*, N.V. 'sGravenhage: Uitgeverij W. van Hoeve, 1949, 53.

Russia and China where state capitalism implemented by prominent communist party leaders continued to exploit the working classes and common people. His government looked like a democratic administration but we must not forget that the appointed ministers were no longer in their positions as members of various political parties. As ministers they were more expected to obey Sukarno rather than comply with the party policy. Therefore it was easy for Sukarno to be granted the titles of '*Pemimpin Besar Revolusi*' (Great Leader of Revolution) and '*Presiden Seumur Hidup*' (Lifetime President) by the Provisional People's Deliberative Council.<sup>147</sup>

On 18 February 1960 Sukarno formed a new cabinet, called Kerja Cabinet II, which held office for a little over two years.<sup>148</sup> This cabinet did not differ very much from the Kerja Cabinet I. The government had trouble with the Parliament which had refused the government's budget. Although the Parliament had agreed to follow the 1945 Constitution, it knew that it had been established by a general election and its members were representatives of political parties. The Parliament felt responsible to the people and the parties. Since no consensus eventuated on the government's budget for 1961 Sukarno dissolved the Parliament by Presidential Decree.<sup>149</sup>

He promptly appointed a so-called Cooperative Parliament (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Royong*) which was to sit until new elections were held on the basis of a new electoral law. Sukarno himself appointed 130 party representatives (the principal parties being PNI: 44, NU: 36, and PKI: 30). The remaining 153 members were functional group representatives, with 15 seats going to the Army, seven each to the navy and the Air Force, five to the Police and the rest to workers,

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<sup>147</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949*, 233.

<sup>148</sup> Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VI. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Jakarta:PN Balai Pustaka, 1984, 659.

<sup>149</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 313.

peasants, Islamic authorities, youth, women and the intelligentsia.<sup>150</sup> Sukarno formed the Cooperative Parliament not on the basis of political parties but on the basis of the interest of many people, including the people of Irian Barat. They were all selected, appointed and could be dismissed by the President.<sup>151</sup>

To intensify its claim on Irian Barat, Indonesia broke off its diplomatic relations with the Netherlands on the occasion of the 15<sup>th</sup> celebration of Indonesian independence on 17 August 1960. The Netherlands sent a fleet to New Guinea to strength its defences. Sukarno realised that Irian Barat could not be obtained by peaceful agreement but only by force. He sent his best troops to occupy Irian Barat<sup>152</sup> and requested the Soviet Union to supply weapons. On December 19, 1961 Sukarno gave his command, known as the 'Three People's Command' (*Trikora*), to release Irian Barat from the Netherlands.

Heavy fighting occurred in the Aru Sea between the Indonesian and Dutch navies on 12 January 1962. The Indonesian fleet consisted of three motor torpedo boats, *RI Macan Tutul*, *RI Harimau* and *RI Macan Kumbang*, whilst the Dutch navy consisted of bigger warships, among them the *Karel Doorman*, *Piet Hein*, *Gronigen* and *Korteman*. The Indonesian commodore, captain and all the crew of the *Macan Tutul* were killed during their efforts to protect the two other torpedo boats escaping heavy attack by the Dutch.<sup>153</sup>

On land, the Indonesian forces did better. Since the Indonesian Army had conquered Teminabuan in Irian Barat, and the United States of America had persuaded the Dutch to make peace with Indonesia, a peace settlement was signed in New York on 15 August 1962. Authority on Irian Barat would be transferred to

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 313, 314.

<sup>151</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949*. 165.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 168, 206-208.

Indonesia by the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) before 1 May 1962.<sup>154</sup> On 30 September 1960 Sukarno delivered a speech before the General Assembly of the United Nations entitled 'To Build the Word Anew' where he explained the Pancasila, the liberation of Irian Barat, the problem of colonialism, ways to improve the United Nations and how to ease tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Provisional People's Deliberative Assembly (MPRS) recognised this speech as part of the Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia.<sup>155</sup>

The Supreme Advisory council (*Dewan Pertimbangan Agung*, DPA), consisting of forty-three members, was also established by Presidential Decree. Sukarno was its chairman and Ruslan Abdulgani its vice-chairman whilst the remainder were political, regional and functional group representatives.<sup>156</sup> The Kerja Cabinet III was formed on 6 March 1962 and was terminated on 13 November 1962 after Ir. Djuanda had died. A new Kerja Cabinet IV lasted until August 1964. The ministers were appointed and dismissed by the President in accordance with the Constitution of 1945. Sukarno was trying to find the right men in his efforts to implement his Guided Democracy as effectively as possible. The distinctive feature of the Kerja Cabinet III was that the heads of the legislative and judicial institutions were given executive positions in the government. According to the 1945 Constitution the legislative and judicial institutions were not allowed to take part in executive affairs but Sukarno guided the government as he thought best. His Guided Democracy was to overrule the law if necessary.

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<sup>154</sup> Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VI, 334, 335

<sup>155</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949*, 173.

<sup>156</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 313.

When, by August 1964, the Kerja Cabinet IV had failed to provide successful government leadership, Sukarno formed another cabinet called the Dwikora Cabinet which lasted until 20 February 1966. By September 1965 this Dwikora Cabinet had become bloated and consisted of 99 ministers.<sup>157</sup> The two last Dwikora Cabinets under Guided Democracy were the Perfected Dwikora Cabinet, which lasted for three weeks in February and March 1966, and the Re-perfected Dwikora Cabinet from March until July 1966. As the names and cabinet size show, the politics of Guided Democracy were verging on the absurd. The last two Dwikora Cabinets in effect had no power whatever, however ‘perfect’ they may have been.

The Dwikora Cabinet experienced great difficulties in 1965. Indonesia had failed to prevent the Federation of Malaysia from becoming a member of the Security Council. In response Sukarno told a rally on 7 January 1965 that Indonesia had to quit the United Nations.<sup>158</sup> The Dwikora also faced the deteriorating health situation of Sukarno who was under the treatment of Chinese and Indonesian medical specialists.<sup>159</sup> But it would be the *coup d’etat* allegedly attempted by the PKI on 30 September 1965 which would bring the era of Guided Democracy to an end, even though, ironically, Sukarno’s successor would practice a kind of guided democracy of his own.

#### 4. Guided Economy

Linked to Guided Democracy was the notion of a Guided Economy. Sukarno’s idea was to save the common people from greedy domestic and foreign capitalists. Therefore he preferred to have the economy managed by the state. Although private

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>158</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949*, 19.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 35-36.

domestic capital still had room in Guided Economy it had to submit itself to the state economic policy. This was not that different from social democratic ideas in many countries at that time, especially as applied in former Asian colonies like India, Burma and Ceylon. The justification of this policy could be found in the 1945 Constitution. Article 33 was its legal basis:

- (1) The economy shall be organised as a common endeavour based upon the principle of the family system.
- (2) Branches of production which are important for the State and which affect the life of most people shall be controlled by the State.
- (3) Land and water and the natural riches contained therein shall be controlled by the State and shall be made use of for the people.<sup>160</sup>

There was no clear and authoritative definition of the term Guided Economy. Sukarno was trying to create it when he was really occupied with political intrigues at home and foreign political adventures abroad. Sukarno was really not much interested in economics. He missed Ir. Djuanda Kartawidjaja very much. Djuanda was a technocrat and very intelligent and had been the leading philosopher and implementer of the Guided Economy. Sukarno himself seemed to not have a clear idea of Guided Economy. From his economic policy statements and programmes, Guided Economy can be summarised as a socialist economy in which state leadership should be provided in the form of central planning and control over distribution, credit and production.

To plan economic development Djuanda set up a National Planning Council, replaced in 1963 by the National Development Planning Board (*Bappenas*).<sup>161</sup> Sukarno was the head of *Bappenas*, which had to make both short and long-term economic development plans. The government issued a Presidential Decree No.

<sup>160</sup> Quoted in Donald E. Weatherbee, *Ideology in Indonesia: Sukarno's Indonesian Revolution*, New Haven: Yale University, 1966, 41.

<sup>161</sup> Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VI, 322.

2/1959 on 25 August 1959 to introduce drastic confiscatory reforms to the currency. The value of Rp 500 and Rp 1,000 paper money was respectively reduced to Rp 50 and Rp 100, while all bank deposits over Rp 25,000 were frozen at ten percent of their value.<sup>162</sup> Sukarno was unsuccessful with his monetary policy because the government was not able to restrain its spending, especially for Ganefo (Games of the New Emerging Forces) and Conefo (Conference of the New Emerging Forces). This was ridiculous economics and achieve little other than impoverish those with small savings.

To prevent *l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme* the government wanted foreign capital to be subordinated to national social and economic goals. The colonial import and export economy was to be replaced with a more self-sufficient and industrialised economy.<sup>163</sup> Sukarno founded state enterprises, which had to follow state capital planning, but in my experience this was a failure. For example, a big state department store 'Sarinah' was founded in Jakarta where many imported commodities were sold at very low prices. This department store deteriorated because its employees were permitted to buy cheap imported commodities from the store, which they sold on private markets. The idea of state capital policy came to nothing. The corrupt government officials became rich whilst the common people were still poor and did not benefit from the Guided Economy policy at all.

The Guided Economy policy seemed to be similar to the economic policy of Communist countries where private interests should surrender to state and public interests. In August 1960, the Eight Year Plan was introduced, designating two categories of economic activity. Category A projects were intended to promote the welfare of the people, such as education, public works, transport, health and

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<sup>162</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 329.

<sup>163</sup> Richard Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986, 71, 72.

production of basic necessities. Category B projects included oil, rubber and other export commodities which were intended to earn income to repay foreign loans and to provide capital for investment in Category A projects.<sup>164</sup>

The Guided Economy philosophy included the expropriation of foreign capital assets. In 1957 and 1958, Dutch trading and state enterprises had been expropriated together with Dutch shipping, banking and industrial enterprises. But Indonesia could not totally eliminate foreign capital. Much of the really important and profitable oil industry remained in foreign hands, while the more visible Dutch trading and infrastructure companies (which were not nearly as profitable) were confiscated. The government dismantled investments which were considered exploitive and replaced them with more benign forms of investment such as production sharing or government-to-government loans. Direct government-to-government loans became a big problem when export earnings began to decline. Sukarno's Guided Economy proved unable to establish a strong state economic structure, one that was able to absorb foreign capital selectively into a coherent programme of investment and production.<sup>165</sup>

Sukarno's Guided Economy intended to construct a national industrial economy around state-owned capital. There was still room for domestic private capital but it was subjected to a variety of political and economic controls by the state agencies so that state-owned capital was the core of Guided Economy. Federations and organisations of 'Homogenous Enterprises' were established to integrate private and nationalised companies. However, these became instruments through which officials, political functionaries and the military could make exactions from business in return for allocation of raw materials.

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<sup>164</sup> T.K. Tan (ed.), *Sukarno's Guided Indonesia*, Brisbane, Jacaranda, 1967, 35.

<sup>165</sup> Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, 79, 80.

When I was Managing Director of the Prem Bottling Company in Jakarta between 1958 and 1961, I had to deal with government officials who had the authority to allocate cane-sugar and approve the retail prices of bottled lemonade and our Dubble Cola drinks. I often received demands for some hundreds of bottles of drink for free, sometimes including the bottles themselves (the price of empty bottles was higher than the price of the drink itself, since we had to import them). The federations and organisations of 'Homogenous Enterprises', in particular the Federation of Soft Drink Factories, were infiltrated by prominent political party members. There were newcomers in soft drink production who did not have enough capital, equipment or skills but who were trying to obtain cane-sugar allocations and attempting to influence the Federation with their ideas which often deviated from Guided Economy. Their main intention, in fact, was to maximise their profits with as little effort or investment as possible, using government licences as their tool.

The government established the National Council of Businessmen (BAMUNAS) and appointed R.M. Notohamiprodjo, a former Minister of Trade, as Chairman. The BAMUNAS was intended to be the official channel of communication between business and the state. It was also intended to be a state agency through which government policies on private business could be implemented.<sup>166</sup> The BAMUNAS was not successful since its management was in the hands of incapable and inexperienced leaders who were sometimes not in favour of Guided Economy. The Chinese industrialists preferred to keep a low profile and avoid the regulations and political infighting which characterised the Guided Economy. This was because they preferred making money to playing politics.

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 81.

The Guided Economy failed to construct a national industrial economy because industries and business enterprises were suffering from economic dislocation, a collapse of infrastructure, inflation and a shortage of spare parts and other imports essential to production. Since prices of commodities were rocketing, domestic capitalists preferred to keep imported raw materials rather than use them in manufacturing. Small indigenous textile businesses did not have enough funds to purchase their quotas of raw cotton and bank credit was also hard to obtain. Consequently they borrowed money from middlemen who financed their purchase or quotas of raw material. For these reasons the small indigenous textile producers preferred to sell the raw materials rather than producing them into textiles.<sup>167</sup>

Two other reasons why Sukarno's Guided Economy failed was because the government did not obtain enough export income to pay for its import spending and because officials and officers were corrupt. Nevertheless, with the assistance of the licence system, a domestic bourgeoisie began to appear with the support of government officials and the military. The most prominent indigenous business groups during the Guided Economy period were Agoes Dasaad, Rahman Tamin, Panggabean, Markam, Hashim Ning and Pardede. Agoes Dasaad was the biggest and most significant group among the domestic indigenous bourgeoisie.<sup>168</sup> It owed its rise almost entirely to its political connections more than any entrepreneurial skill.

The failure of the state capital policy in Guided Economy also caused the emergence of a new element among the Chinese domestic bourgeoisie, which obtained government official and military patronage. After the *coup d'état* of 30 September 1965 both the indigenous capitalists and Indonesian Chinese capitalists provided the foundation for the economic policy of the New Order. When, under the

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 89.

New Order, international capital was invited to return to Indonesia, the enterprises which had developed under Sukarno's Guided Economy began to deteriorate and collapse.<sup>169</sup>

## 5. Foreign Policy

Sukarno paid too much attention to foreign affairs. There were good reasons for this which went beyond the ability of foreign relations to feed his ego. For him, the Indonesian Revolution was more than just a struggle for independence. It was also a Revolution which had to be advanced not only in Indonesia but in the rest of the world as well.<sup>170</sup> Sukarno had had bitter experiences of colonialism, imperialism and capitalism which convinced him that these were international phenomena which had to be fought internationally if success in the Revolution was to be attained within Indonesia.

One of the important objectives of the Revolution was to live in peace and friendship with the neighbouring countries and the world. Thus, foreign policy was an instrument of the Revolution which had Pancasila as its basis. It was independent and active and had strong principles. It was certainly not a neutral or pragmatic policy.<sup>171</sup> Thus, the return of West Irian from the Dutch was an important objective of the Revolution. The Revolution without having West Irian as Indonesian territory was not complete since West Irian had been colonised in the same way as the other islands of the Archipelago.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>170</sup> J.R. Angel, *The New Emerging Forces in Indonesian Foreign Policy*, Ph D Thesis, Australian National University, 1970. Volume II, 222.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 274.

As discussed above, Indonesia pushed this militarily and diplomatically, working closely with the USA and the UN. Ultimately, though, Indonesian political activities at home and abroad were crucial in securing West Irian. While participating in the negotiations, Indonesia intensified the fighting and kept up the threat of force by mobilising its people to conquer West Irian. Through the combined use of tough diplomacy and threats, Indonesia had succeeded in obtaining US diplomatic support, Russian arms and finally West Irian as its new territory.<sup>172</sup>

While the struggle for West Irian was a real objective of the Revolution, the confrontation with Malaysia was in contradiction with the idea of living in peace and friendship with its neighbouring countries and the rest of the world. Sukarno had to change the objectives of the Revolution to take into account the development of British proposal to create Malaysia as a threat. It also provided the justification for strengthening his armed forces. When he was fighting for independence he only had the idea of crushing capitalism, colonialism and imperialism. He did not consider any problems arising from his neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, until it emerged in 1963.

Sukarno came to believe that his opposition to the foundation of Malaysia was more important than living peacefully and in harmony with the neighbouring countries. He thought that the federation had become a base for British and American armed forces encircling Indonesia. He gave this an ideological paradigm by using his notion of Indonesia as a representative of New Emerging Forces (NEFO) in a hostile Old Established Forces (OLDEFO) environment.<sup>173</sup> Therefore Sukarno proclaimed confrontation with Malaysia.

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 498.

<sup>173</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 363. See below for a discussion of these terms.

Neighbouring countries to the north of Indonesia had reasons to fear possible conquest by Indonesia. As early as 1945, during the discussions preparing for Indonesian independence, Sukarno had aligned himself to Mohammad Yamin's vision of the ideal Indonesian territory:

The territorial issue was pressed most strongly by Mohammad Yamin who, in due course, was to become of the more flamboyant ideologues of Sukarno's Indonesia. Yamin, calling on ethnic, historical and geopolitical considerations, argued that the republic of Indonesia should go well beyond the boundaries of the Dutch colony of Netherlands India and should embrace the former British colonies and protectorates in Malaya and Borneo...

Sukarno aligned himself on this occasion firmly on Yamin's side. Indeed, he went further and confessed to his past dreams of a 'Pan-Indonesia' stretching as far as the Philippines, but he recognized that Philippines sovereignty would have to be respected...<sup>174</sup>

The campaign of confrontation with Malaysia seemed to serve Sukarno as an important focal point for Indonesian foreign policy. Apparently Sukarno was striving to become a great leader of the New Emerging Forces (NEFO) in accordance with his crusade to 'build the world anew'.<sup>175</sup> Confrontation with Malaysia also provided an excuse to reinforce the military forces and select officers who were in favour of Guided Democracy. Sukarno needed strong armed forces on his side to crush his enemies. He possibly had the idea to shift people's attention to the danger of the Malaysian federation rather than to the failure of his Guided Economy.

The campaign to mobilise Third World support was another dominant concern of Indonesian policy. When Sukarno needed more support for the West Irian struggle he began to be active in non-aligned and Afro-Asian affairs.<sup>176</sup> Afterwards Sukarno blended Indonesian nationalism, Afro-Asianism and some of the principles supported

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>175</sup> Angel, *The New Emerging Forces*. Volume II, 528.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 499.

by the non-aligned nations into the basic concept of the New Emerging Forces Ideology.<sup>177</sup>

Indonesian foreign policy became broader during the periods of 1959-1962 and 1962-1965, especially during the development of the axis with Peking. This axis with Peking was so strong that the indigenous riots against the Chinese in 1963 did not affect Jakarta-Peking relations.<sup>178</sup> This relationship became a strong alliance, which increased the frequency of high level visits between Indonesia and China. Indonesia supported the numerous attempts to seat Communist China in the United Nations. It also backed the Peking position on Taiwan and Vietnam while Chinese Communist leaders endorsed Jakarta's confrontation with Malaysia.<sup>179</sup>

The concept of the New Emerging Forces (NEFO), on which Sukarno claimed to base Indonesia's foreign policy, is vague. The NEFO countries look at the world from perspective of poorer, less economically developed and politically less powerful peoples. Hence NEFO countries aspire for a greater influence in world affairs and a greater share in the world's wealth.<sup>180</sup> In a speech in Belgrade, he identified the NEFO as:

...the community of people, who want to be free, who want to be independent, who want to be not exploited, who want to be not dominated by other peoples, who want to be of a new world...to have a new world of...prosperity, who want to be standing on own [sic] identity, who want to live up to the idea of ...THE FREEDOM TO BE FREE!<sup>181</sup>

The term Old Established Forces (OLDEFO) embraces the counterparts to NEFO. In the Belgrade speech Sukarno referred to the conflict between the new emerging forces for freedom and justice and the old established forces of domination.

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 500.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 561.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 562.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 638.

<sup>181</sup> 'Key-Note Address of H.E. Dr. Sukarno', given at the Preparatory Conference for the GANEFO, 27-29 April 1963. Quoted Ibid., 661.

The OLDEFO were seen to consist of the opposing forces, that is, 'the forces of capitalism, the forces of colonialism, the forces of imperialism, the forces of feudalism'.<sup>182</sup> Thus, for Sukarno the conflict of the NEFO and the OLDEFO was a conflict of ideologies rather than a conflict of national interests. Sukarno was not able to implement this idea completely because he was forced from office within a few years of its development. In any case, it was working out poorly for Indonesia during 1965 and was widely opposed by important power-brokers in Indonesia, especially in the military and bureaucracy, who considered that anti-Western posturing was destructive of Indonesia's development and interests.

## **6. The PKI, the Army, and the Fall of Sukarno**

Ultimately, Sukarno fell from power because he was unable to manage escalating tension between the Army (now more united after the suppression of the revolts in Sumatra and Sulawesi) and the PKI. This tension had started after the crushing of the communist uprising in 1948. Since then the Army and the right wing political parties tried to prevent the PKI from taking part in the government. But when the PKI, under the leadership of D.N. Aidit, succeeded in becoming a big and popular political party, Sukarno considered inviting the Communist party to join the NASAKOM policy. The PKI was working very hard to implement the NASAKOM cabinet. In June 1965 the National Front, which organised indoctrination courses, established NASAKOM special courses in several places attended by political parties, government officials, army officers, popular organisations and individuals as cadres of Sukarno's NASAKOM policy. The PKI was working very hard to implement the NASAKOM policy so that the members of the PKI could be accepted by the

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p.662

government and armed forces as legitimate members of the official political and administrative structure.<sup>183</sup>

The dissolution of parliament in 1960 gave Sukarno the opportunity to implement his NASAKOM policy. In August 1960 Sukarno appointed Aidit and Njoto to the executive of the National front and in September the President named Aidit as a member of the delegation who was to accompany him to the United Nations.<sup>184</sup> At the end of 1960 Sukarno began to examine the possibility of bringing the PKI into a NASAKOM cabinet in which nationalism, religion and communism would be represented.<sup>185</sup> The more privileges the PKI obtained from Sukarno, the greater the tension between the President and the Army. The Army leadership and Sukarno had their distinct areas of initiative within which each was relatively free from interference of the other. Nevertheless they did not have unlimited power within their own areas. Sometimes they had to be careful and compromise when it was necessary for them to do so. For Sukarno the mere existence of the PKI was an important element, in particular when he faced army pressure.<sup>186</sup>

In March 1962 Sukarno included Aidit and Lukman in the State Leadership Consultative Body which was similar in status to the Cabinet, but without executive responsibility. Sukarno was very careful in implementing his NASAKOM policy. He wanted to establish how far he could proceed with inviting the PKI into the Cabinet without provoking open opposition from the Army leadership. To be sure, Sukarno established a Supreme War Authority (*Penguasa Perang Tertinggi*, PEPERTI) in 1959 under the President and the Regional Military Commander, which was formally and directly responsible to the President. In 1962 a Supreme Command for the

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<sup>183</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka, 1945-1949.*, 32, 33.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 1950-1964, 173.

<sup>185</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 324.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

Liberation of West Irian (KOTI) was also headed by Sukarno. Therefore the position of General A.H. Nasution became weaker, especially after the abrogation of martial law in May 1963.<sup>187</sup>

Nasution was promoted to the position of Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces in July 1962 and was replaced by General Ahmad Yani as Army Chief of Staff. Nasution seemed reluctant to confront Sukarno and kept aloof from the President's efforts to bring the PKI into the cabinet. Thus Nasution's position became weaker until he had lost any power to resist.<sup>188</sup> It is not clear whether Nasution's submissiveness was owing to loyalty or to weakness. Presumably he was keeping a low profile and preparing for the opportunity if Sukarno failed with his policy and faced severe opposition.

On 14 January 1965 PKI leader D.N. Aidit told the press that he would suggest to the government that the workers and the peasants be armed. He also planned to ask the government to set up a 'fifth force' to assist the four existing armed forces. Aidit's concept to establish a 'fifth force' was opposed by the Army Chief of Staff General Ahmad Yani.<sup>189</sup> When the alliance between Indonesia and China became stronger due to the withdrawal of Indonesia from the United Nations, Zhou Enlai offered Soebandrio weapons to arm a people's militia. Knowing this, Aidit proposed the creation of this 'fifth force' of armed workers and peasants to the President. On 31 May 1965 Sukarno spoke of Zhou Enlai's offer to arm the people and asked the four armed forces to submit plans for doing so. General Yani and General Nasution saw the potential danger that the PKI would use this opportunity to revolt. Therefore they suggested to the President that it would be better to arm all the

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 325.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 326.

<sup>189</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka 1965-1973*, 20-22.

people rather than the workers and the peasants only. They also proposed that the 'fifth force' should be controlled by the Army.<sup>190</sup>

To achieve this, the Air Force, under the leadership of Omar Dhani, gave short training courses to civilians from PKI mass organisations at the Halim Perdanakusumah air force base near Jakarta on 5 July 1965. Over 2,000 civilians from PKI mass organisations attended the courses. Then Omar Dhani secretly travelled to China from 16 to 19 September on Sukarno's instructions to discuss the Chinese offer of small arms, without telling Nasution, who was Defence Minister, about the trip.<sup>191</sup> All this greatly alarmed the senior generals in the Army and on 27 September 1965 General Ahmad Yani, Army Chief of Staff, announced that the Army was against the foundation of a 'fifth force'.<sup>192</sup>

The Army was willing to tolerate the PKI's activities as long as it could be confident that Sukarno could keep them under control. However, from August 1964 there were rumours that Sukarno was seriously ill, and he was in fact suffering from progressive kidney failure. In the first week of August 1965 Sukarno suddenly vomited and collapsed as he was receiving a delegation. Although he soon recovered the news of his illness was spreading at home and abroad. Political leaders and army officers were concerned by the news of Sukarno's illness. They wondered about the future of their homeland if Sukarno died. The PKI was speculating what the Army would do if Sukarno passed away. Aidit hastened back home from China and decided to encourage a group of army officers who were preparing to act against the Army's top leadership.<sup>193</sup> Anti-PKI forces were also on the alert and wondering what the

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 267.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 268

Communists would be doing when Sukarno really came to the end of his life.<sup>194</sup> There were assumptions among the pro-PKI top leaders that the Army might attempt a *coup d'état* on Armed Forces Day, 5 October 1965 when several divisions of the armed forces would be coming to Jakarta for the celebrations.

An atmosphere of crisis was developing. On the evening of 30 September 1965 Sukarno was delivering a speech at a convention of the Association of Indonesian Technicians at the Senayan stadium. After speaking for an hour and ten minutes he felt ill and left the rostrum for about ten minutes. A medical team from Peking hurried to his side and after receiving medical treatment Sukarno returned to the rostrum and continued his speech.<sup>195</sup> When the meeting in the stadium ended Sukarno fetched his Japanese wife Dewi from the Hotel Indonesia and went with her to the villa in the suburb of Slipi at about midnight.

When Sukarno was delivering that speech in the Senayan stadium, conspirators were making everything ready to depose of the generals and capture vital installations. The military units apparently involved in the plot were the First Honorary Guard Battalion of the Cakrabirawa Palace Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Untung; the First Infantry Brigade, commanded by Colonel Latief; the 454<sup>th</sup> Paratroop Battalion of the Diponegoro Division; and the 530<sup>th</sup> Paratroop Battalion of the Brawijaya Division.<sup>196</sup> A Communist 'fifth force' of 2,000 men was added to assist with the mopping-up operation. In the early hours of 1 October 1965 these forces seized Jakarta's radio station, telephone exchange and other vital installations. They also took up positions in Merdeka Square, which was surrounded

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>195</sup> John Hughes, *The End of Sukarno*, Angus and Robertson Ltd., London, 1968, 52

<sup>196</sup> Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesia: The Gestapu Affair*, American-Asian Educational Exchange Inc., 1969, 22, 23

by the Presidential Palace, the Defence Ministry, KOSTRAD (Army Strategic Command) and other important buildings.<sup>197</sup>

A series of raids was carried out against the homes of General A.H. Nasution, Lieutenant General Ahmad Yani, Major General R. Soeprapto, Major General M.T. Harjono, Major General S. Parman, Brigadier General D.I. Pandjaitan and Brigadier General Soetojo Siswomihardjo. General Nasution escaped from the raids but lost his five-year old daughter, Irma, and his aide, Lieutenant Pierre Tendean, who was captured when the attackers mistook him for General Nasution. A policeman, Karel Satsuit Tubun, on guard at the house of Premier Johannes Leimena, was also shot dead when he walked down the street to find out what all the commotion was about.<sup>198</sup> Some other generals were shot immediately and others taken alive to Halim air base.

Sukarno was supposed to have been awakened at about six o'clock the next morning when he heard about the shooting at Nasution's house. He was leaving Slipi in the direction of Merdeka Palace when a colonel in charge of security at the palace radioed the presidential escort that the palace was surrounded by unknown troops. For security reasons the president's party swung back and sped to the home of another of Sukarno's wives, Haryati. From there Sukarno went to Halim air base, presumably for security reasons, where the presidential jet stood by.<sup>199</sup> He had not seen at all the kidnapped and murdered generals. After conferring with Air Force Chief Omar Dhani, Sukarno met General Supardjo who reported the bloody events of that night. Sukarno clapped Supardjo on the shoulder and ordered him to prevent further violence.

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>198</sup> John Hughes, *The end of Sukarno: a coup that misfired: a purge that ran wild*. London: Angus and Robertson, 1968, 30-42.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 53-54.

Nobody, apart from Omar Dhani, knew what the President told Supardjo.<sup>200</sup> Soon afterwards the President left Halim air base and went in the direction of Bogor, 60 km, south of Jakarta.

Meanwhile, General Suharto came home from the hospital where his son Tomy was being treated at 1.15am. He had heard the news about the shooting, kidnapping and killing of the generals by 5.30am.<sup>201</sup> He promptly went to Kostrad (*Komando Strategi Angkatan Darat*, Army Strategic Command) where he heard that Sukarno was not in Merdeka Palace but heading to Halim air base. He also heard the news on the radio that Lieutenant Colonel Untung was commander of what was beginning to be known as Gestapu (the September 30<sup>th</sup> Movement). Since Untung was close to the PKI, Suharto was convinced that the movement was a PKI uprising. He took command of the Kostrad and planned to suppress the uprising.<sup>202</sup>

Suharto was convinced that Halim was the headquarters of the rebel army and, after hearing that President Sukarno had left for Bogor, he instructed Colonel Sarwo Edhie to capture the RRI (Indonesian Broadcasting System) and the Central Telephone Office before 7.00pm, at which time Suharto planned to broadcast a message to the Indonesian people. Edhie captured the RRI and the Central Telephone Office in time for Suharto's speech to be broadcast throughout the country. He told the people that six Army generals had been killed and the RRI as well as the Central Telephone Office had also been captured by the insurrectionists in support of a *coup d'état* led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung. He also revealed that Sukarno was safe and that he – with the consent of the Navy, Air Force and Police Force – had taken over

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>201</sup> Donald W. Wilson, *The Long Journey from Turmoil to Self-sufficiency*, Jakarta: Yayasan Persada Nusantara, 1989, 60.

<sup>202</sup> G. Dwipayana and K.H. Ramadhan, *Suharto, Otobiografi*, Jakarta: P.T. Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada, 1989, 118- 120.

the command of the military forces to crush the rebels and restore law and order. Suharto urged the people to suppress the insurgents for the sake of the unity of Indonesia and Pancasila.<sup>203</sup> It was a masterful performance from Suharto, who, from being a relatively small player in the military hierarchy, suddenly appeared to have taken over the country

That same evening, Edhie attacked the rebel forces at Halim. Suharto went to the Palace at Bogor where he requested and obtained Sukarno's formal appointment for responsibility for peace and order. There was no longer any problem with the insurgents in Halim Air Base because most of the 454<sup>th</sup> Paratroop Battalion of Diponegoro and the 530<sup>th</sup> Paratroop Battalion of Brawijaya were already in favour of Suharto's policy and action. Lieutenant Colonel Untung had fled to Central Java; D.N. Aidit had flown to Yogyakarta, whilst Omar Dhani and his family were protected in the Bogor Palace.<sup>204</sup> On 4 October 1965 the corpses of the six murdered generals and Lieutenant Pierre Tendean were found and reburied the next day in Kalibata military cemetery with full ceremony.

Suharto next used students' demonstrations to strengthen his hand. He understood the importance of appearing to be more than just a military strongman. He wanted and needed to be popular. The students had plenty to be angry about, as the economy was in disastrous shape, and they readily accepted help in organising protests against Sukarno's government. The KAMI (Indonesian Students' Group), the KAPPI (Indonesian Senior High School Students' Action Group) and the KASI (Indonesian Graduates' Action Group) were mocking President Sukarno and

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<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 126-128.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 129-133.

demanded that the PKI be banned, the Dwikora Cabinet dissolved and the prices of commodities reduced.<sup>205</sup>

Nobody knows if the student groups emerged spontaneously because of the deteriorating economic and political situation, but it is probable that the military were behind their formation. Certainly the students were very close to the RPKAD (storm troops) at the time. The students made their move when the Dwikora Cabinet met at Merdeka Palace on 11 March 1966. They rode on army tanks and armoured vehicles and marched towards the Palace. It was not certain whether the Army and the students would attack the Merdeka Palace and arrest the pro-PKI Cabinet Ministers or just intimidate Sukarno and his Ministers so that they would bow to the claims of the President's opponents. Whatever the case, Sukarno was spooked. Accustomed to adoration from the crowds, now the people seemed to have turned against him. Evidently Sukarno left the Merdeka Palace in haste for Bogor, followed by Soebandrio and Chaerul Saleh, whilst Leimena stayed long enough to dismiss the Cabinet.<sup>206</sup> Sukarno's and his Cabinet's authority was collapsing.

Three of Suharto's fellow generals followed President Sukarno by car<sup>207</sup> to assure him that Suharto was able to overcome the current disorder (which Suharto had almost certainly engineered), as long as the President had confidence in the General. On hearing this, the President was upset since General Suharto had already been ordered by him to restore peace and order and therefore should have already put down the disorder and demonstrations.<sup>208</sup> After a long and strained discussion, Sukarno agreed to issue a letter ordering General Suharto to take all necessary steps to ensure that peace and order be guaranteed, including the stability of the government and the safety as well as the authority of President Sukarno.<sup>209</sup> This statement was called 'Supersemar' (*Surat Perintah 11 Maret*, the 11 March Order). It was not a document

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 169, 170

<sup>207</sup> Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 402.

<sup>208</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 31; Wilson, *The Long Journey*, 67.

<sup>209</sup> J.D.Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography*, 402

of transfer of authority but a written instruction of President Sukarno to General Suharto that the General had to restore peace and order.

The 'Supersemar' was later approved by the MPRS (the parliament or MPR in emergency session) in late June 1966.<sup>210</sup> Until then the 'Supersemar' was just Presidential order to General Suharto, not a transfer of authority of government, as Sukarno himself stressed in his speech to the MPRS in June 1966.<sup>211</sup> If this argument is reasonable then the ban of the PKI on 12 March 1966 and the arrest of 15 Cabinet Ministers some days later could be considered as actions exceeding the President's order to restore peace and order, unless General Suharto had obtained a particular mandate from the President to do so.<sup>212</sup> At any rate, Suharto had certainly exercised every bit of authority he could squeeze out of the 'Supersemar' quickly, effectively and ruthlessly.

Given the size of the upheaval, the rapid restoration of order, calm and peace proved impossible. The number of victims killed without trace was not small. Arnold C. Brackman in his book *Indonesia: The Gestapu Affair* stated:

...A wave of murders swept the Central Java strongpoint of the party. In the Klaten-Bojolali area, for example, upwards of 250 non-Communist political leaders, largely identified with the Nationalist Party and the Nadhatul Ulama were executed. About 15,000 persons fled the area.<sup>213</sup>

There are no precise figures for the numbers of persons who perished, nor are there ever likely to be. Thousands who 'disappeared' during the period, for example, returned unobtrusively to their villages in late 1967 and 1968. In Jakarta, the consensus is perhaps as many as 150,000 persons perished between November 1965 and March 1966. This means that about a thousand persons were executed daily in this period. In some areas, the army took part in the massacres; in other places they stood aside but encouraged the slayings...<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 176.

<sup>211</sup> Hughes, *The End of Sukarno*, 260.

<sup>212</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 172-173.

<sup>213</sup> Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesia: The Gestapu Affair*. New York: American-Asian Educational Exchange, 1969, 31

<sup>214</sup> Hughes, *The End of Sukarno*, 257

President Sukarno's was left virtually powerless once the 'Supersemar' was confirmed and the dissolution of the PKI was ratified by the MPRS in June 1966. At the same session Marxism, Leninism and Communism were banned in Indonesia, and the MPRS abrogated Sukarno's title of 'The Great Leader of the Revolution', whilst his title of 'President for life', which was not abrogated, would henceforth carry no power to issue presidential decrees. An equally insulting defeat for Sukarno was the MPRS election of General A.H. Nasution as its Chairman. Sukarno had refused to have Nasution in his last cabinet.<sup>215</sup> Afterwards the MPRS dissolved the absurdly named Re-perfected Dwikora Cabinet, still chaired by Sukarno, and asked General Suharto to form a new cabinet.<sup>216</sup>

Thus Sukarno could only look on as Suharto became Acting President in March 1967 and President a year later. Completely defeated, he was at first confined to his house 'Hing Puri Bima Sakti' at Batu Tulis in Bogor and then to his house 'Wisma Yaso' in Jalan Gatot Subroto, Jakarta, which is now the Satria Mandala Museum<sup>217</sup> All his wives had left him except Hartini who had stayed with him when he was in Bogor. Since he was cut off not only from power but from contacts with specialist medical staff as well, Sukarno looked old, was unable to walk without support and was uncertain in speech when he appeared at Sukmawati's wedding in February 1970.<sup>218</sup> Since Sukarno's health was deteriorating he was brought to RSPAD Gatot Subroto (Jakarta Military Hospital) a month before he passed away on Sunday 21 July 1970. Despite ending his days under house arrest, Sukarno was still acknowledged as the Independence Hero of Indonesia and so was given a state funeral

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<sup>215</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 176; Hughes, *The End of Sukarno*, 256.

<sup>216</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 186.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 245.

<sup>218</sup> Legge, *Sukarno*, 407.

ceremony and buried the next day next to his Balinese mother at Blitar, East Java. Suharto knew when to be gracious.

## **7. My Opinion of Sukarno**

Dr. Ir. Sukarno was one of the great political leaders of Indonesia who struggled for his people and country since his youth until the end of his life. He loved his people very much, fought for them through the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) and built the Association of Political Organizations of the Indonesian People (PPPKI) to unite political ideas and power. In doing so he not only prevented a split within his nation but also created a vast national power mobilised to obtain the independence of his people. He was accused of being a traitor to the Netherlands East Indies government and exiled until the arrival of the Japanese army on 10 January 1942. During the Japanese interregnum Sukarno used the Centre of People's Power (PUTERA) to forge political unity among his people rather than to support the Japanese in the Pacific war.

After the Japanese capitulation Sukarno did not want the Dutch to come back. Therefore he proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945 and fought against the restored Netherlands East Indies government until the Dutch recognised the sovereignty of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia on 27 December 1949.

Sukarno favoured a policy of uniting the main streams of national political ideas. He did not want to see his people suffering as a result of government instability arising from fighting and accusations between rival political parties. He wanted the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) to take part in the government rather than cutting it out from mainstream politics to oppose the government either legally or (worse)

illegally. Hence Sukarno formed a NASAKOM cabinet – a presidential cabinet – which represented the main political streams of the Indonesian revolution: nationalism, religion and communism.

Sukarno also wanted to unite all citizens of many ethnicities and identities, as well as people of foreign origin, in one great nation of Indonesia without discrimination on the basis of religion, colour or origin. He created a political doctrine, Pancasila, which became the five political principles of independent Indonesia in order to unite the people politically. Pancasila was all about identifying what united people rather than what made them different. His ideas were inclusive. He did not want his people to be colonised or dominated again. He appreciated and respected the diverse religions of his people (he had a Muslim father and a Hindu mother and his education was partly Christian) and wanted all religions to live peacefully, and coexist with nationalism and communism, the two other important philosophical and intellectual trends in the country. And, on this basis of inclusivity, he wanted Indonesia to be a prominent nation in global society.

Sukarno realised that Indonesia was caught between the Cold War rivalry of the two great powers, the USA and the Soviet Union. This great power rivalry endangered Indonesia and other developing countries from losing financial aid from the great powers or worse, be forced to become involved in the great power conflict. Sukarno wanted his country to be neutral to protect his people from these dangers. Therefore, through his Prime Minister, Ali Sastroamijoyo, Sukarno invited African and Asian leaders to an Afro-Asian conference which was held in Bandung in April 1955. He wanted to create a free and neutral zone among the Afro-Asian developing countries (now referred to as the Third World). He was not only thinking about the

safety and welfare of his own people but more widely about the safety and happiness of all Afro-Asian people as well.

Sukarno's enemies have accused him of being a communist. During Guided Democracy, he invited the Indonesian Communist Party leaders to join the NASAKOM cabinet but this was not because he was a communist himself.<sup>219</sup> He believed that a party that won six million votes in the 1955 general election could not simply be ignored or excluded from government. This was especially true since that party had a revolutionary ideology and powerful foreign friends. More seriously, he has been accused of being the brains behind the 1965 Gestapu affair.<sup>220</sup> After the coup, students intensified their anti-government demonstration in Jakarta, demanding that Sukarno be brought to trial for his alleged involvement in the coup.<sup>221</sup> This demand was never met and it has been suggested that Sukarno was not brought to trial because there was no proof of his involvement. The only action he did which suggested possible involvement was to go to Halim air base, but that was almost certainly for his protection. Furthermore, the risk of violence if the President was put on trial was too great. In any case, similar circumstantial evidence could be brought against Suharto. In all probability, both Sukarno and Suharto responded to the events of 30 September 1965 rather than orchestrated them, Suharto very much more effectively than Sukarno. On this issue there were two contending groups: one, the 'rational' group, who wanted to bring Sukarno to trial; the other, the 'irrational' military officers who did not wish Sukarno to be tried, because this would be unjust and improper for a leader of Sukarno's stature. Suharto was opposed to a trial and argued that if the claims of the

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<sup>219</sup> Sukarno, *An Autobiography, As told to Cindy Adams*, 294, 295; Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 186, 196

<sup>220</sup> The accusation was made in Soerojo Soegiarso, *Siapa Menabur Angin akan Menuai Badai*, Jakarta, 1988, 236-238.

<sup>221</sup> Dwipayana and Ramadhan, *Suharto*, 176.

irrational group were ignored they could rise in support of Sukarno and the Old Order, which could cause a civil war.<sup>222</sup>

When Suharto was Acting President he asked Sukarno to continue the Presidency provided that he agreed with the banning of the PKI and denounced the Gestapu. However, Sukarno was firm in his stand and refused Suharto's offer. Sukarno was sure of the NASAKOM concept and did not want to denounce the PKI since, in his report to the MPRS of 10 January 1967, he had already accused the Indonesian Communist Party of killing the generals and of attempting a coup.<sup>223</sup> He considered that quite enough criticism of the PKI. Sukarno preferred to be a common person under house arrest to staying on as a President who had to obey the Army.

In defeat, Sukarno behaved with dignity and sought to avoid bloodshed. In this he was certainly morally superior to Suharto, who tolerated and probably encouraged bloodshed on a large scale. Sukarno never attempted to wage civil war nor flee abroad to save himself. He showed courage and integrity in 1966 when political life was about as bad for him as it could possibly be. He had never been a communist nor had he attempted to make Indonesia a communist country. I worked in management roles in private business in Jakarta throughout the Sukarno era, and, while there was more political interference and regulation than in colonial times or than under Suharto, business could make and keep good profits. It was certainly nothing like a communist economic system.

Sukarno accepted the ban on the PKI as a practical reality, although he believed it was unwise and remained committed to NASAKOM. Sukarno deserved reward and respect from his people as he had sacrificed a great deal to free his nation from colonialism and imperialism until Indonesia became a free and independent

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 194-196.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 204, 186.

nation. Many times in his life he took difficult decisions which were not in his personal best interests. In his youth, he could have become a prosperous technocrat in the colonial administration, but he chose the much tougher path of national awakening. In his old age, he could have stayed on as figurehead President but preferred to keep his integrity.

## **8. My Life during the Sukarno Era**

I spent most of my life in the Sukarno era running businesses in Jakarta. In this way I came to learn a lot about how the economy operated in these turbulent times. About a year after the formal transfer of power from the Netherlands Indies to the Republic of Indonesia, I left the civil service and entered the private sector with a job as General Manager at the Java China Trading Company, Asemkade Street, Jakarta. That was in 1951. My salary was Rp. 1500 per month, more than enough to live on at the time. I had to work hard. I had to read and answer the letters or discuss them with the Director. I had to go to the Office of Economic Affairs to apply for an import license since the Java China Trading Company was the holding company of the Europa department stores in Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang and Surabaya. From late in the afternoon until 8.00 in the evening (and sometimes later) we came together to discuss any issues. I could not leave till about nine o'clock in the evening and got home about an hour later. The office and the shop were open on Saturday so Sunday was the only holiday of the week.

At that time, I was also studying Social Political Economics at the National University, Jakarta and was working for my Bachelor of Arts degree. I could not attend the evening lectures since I had to work till 9:00 p.m. This continued month after month, year after year until I could no longer continue my studies and had to

leave the University. I learnt a lot with the Java China Trading Company, especially about marketing with the Europa department stores. The stores traded on their 'Europeanness', which was as popular as ever with those Indonesians who could afford in. The Europa department stores did not just sell goods from Europe or which looked European, they sold a cultivated European lifestyle in a time of cultural confusion and violence. Signage in the stores remained in Dutch and French to emphasise its style. Our marketing strategy was to make the customers think they had entered a sophisticated corner of Europe when they entered our stores. I also learned how to do business in the increasingly regulated economy, which was very different from the 'open door' economic policy of pre-war years.

While I moved from the public to the private sector, my young family continued to grow. Our daughter Lucy Sun Hong Lioe was born on Saturday 18 February 1950 in the Loan Trivelli Maternity Clinic, at about 9.25 in the evening. The maternity clinic was not far from our house in Petojo Sabangan III/341, Batavia (as we still tended to call the city in private life). It was about 10 minutes on foot. The baby girl was healthy and clever. She was calm, honest and good to her brother Hok Djien and her sisters Hong Lie, Hong Bwee and Hong Kiem. Our daughter Winny Sun Hong Bwee was born on Thursday 10 May 1951 in the Maternity Clinic of Mrs Bethke, Sawo Street, Batavia, at about 12.50 in the morning. The baby girl was healthy and clever. She was active and could socialise with many people. She was artistic and caring towards her family.

While I enjoyed working with the Europa department stores, the hours were long and upmarket retailing was not the best industry in Jakarta in the early 1950s, as so many Dutch and Indo-European people were leaving. I therefore decided to move into the commodities business, which had always been the mainstay of Indonesia's

role in the international economy. In mid-January 1953 I started working with the Harapan Kita Trading Company as General Manager in charge of buying and selling coffee and rubber. I got a good salary and had a car and driver. Although it was a good job it had its pressures which made me nervous and frequently caused me headaches. Unfortunately, like many Chinese my boss and owner of the company loved gambling. He lost a lot of money through gambling and he had no money left to do business. In the end he could neither pay his rent nor buy any more coffee or rubber. It was a very hard time for me as a General Manager. Customers were constantly asking me for clarification since the owner of the company was absent. I had to leave the Harapan Kita Trading Company when he could not pay my salary.

While I was with Harapan Kita, my daughter Loeki Sun Hong Kim was born on 13 June 1953 at about 5 o'clock in the morning assisted by midwife Hadiah, in the maternity hospital on Pane Street, Cideng Barat, Jakarta. It was the end of Ramadan and people were very busy with the ceremonies of breaking their fast at Idul Fitri. The baby girl was healthy. There was plenty of food in the maternity hospital and people were praying and reading the Qur'an. I picked up my wife and my daughter Loeki by car, which I drove myself. My wife and baby daughter were welcomed at home by grandparents, brother Abrams, sisters and the neighbours. Aunty Swat, Aunty Nani and Aunty Erna were coming as well with presents for the mother and the baby. Loeki was a good loving girl who had a passion for music. She loved her brothers and sisters and was merciful as well.

My family had a difficult time when I had no job. I could not meet my financial obligations and had to sell my jewellery. However, I had learned a lot about the international commodities trade, so two months later I was appointed a broker in coffee and rubber. I had a good income, more than enough for my family, but this job

was also stressful and bothered me all the time. I had to pay attention to the market price of coffee and rubber from London and Singapore. When the price of coffee and rubber was up I had to ask my clients whether they would sell their stocks of coffee or rubber. If I missed the market news from London or Singapore my clients could suffer financial losses or lose the chance to make a profit. A broker had to be honest and trustworthy for his clients. Having a good reputation is very important for a commodities broker, because a broker got a one per cent fee from his clients for his services. If a broker lost his reputation no client would trust him to do the job. It was important to be astute and advise customers when to sell and when to hold on to their commodities. Communications were slow and difficult then, and keeping track of foreign markets in London and Singapore was hard work, relying on short-wave radio broadcasts, telegrams and newspapers.

My experience in commodities trading and knowledge of foreign trade helped me secure my next job and in June 1955 I worked as Import Manager of the Subur Trading Company in Jakarta. I had to visit factories and industries to collect orders and import chemicals or other commodities which were not available in Indonesia. Not every import trading company could import commodities since our government did not possess enough foreign exchange. The parliamentary political system was reflected in economic policy, and foreign exchange was allocated through political parties. Our trading company had a good relation with the political party which dominated the government Office of Economic Affairs. Therefore it was very easy to import commodities through the connections our trading company had. Today this would be considered corruption, but this was the normal way to do business.

Unfortunately for the Subur Trading Company, there was a reshuffle in the Indonesian Cabinet and the minister who was in favour of our trading company was

replaced by a minister from another political party. As a result, many of our import applications were rejected which made our business dull. Our trading company was liquidated and I had to find another job again. This might seem bizarre today and it was certainly poor economic management, but it was how the scarce resource of foreign exchange was distributed. It shows how deeply political so many aspects of life were in the Indonesia of the 1950s.

While I was working for the Subur Trading Company, my son Leo Sun Hok Liong was born on 22 August 1955, assisted by midwife Hadiah in the maternity hospital on Pane Street, Cideng Barat, Jakarta. He was healthy and we were well-off once again since everything was going well at that time for the Subur Trading Company. Leo was a clever and energetic boy. He was intelligent and optimistic as well. He cared very much for his parents and family.

After Subur was dissolved I sought and soon found another management position, this time in mass sales of a commodity which almost everyone could afford. I was appointed Sales Manager of the Prem Bottling Company, which had a factory on Garuda Street in Jakarta producing O-SO, Prem Club and Dubble Cola soft drinks. Dubble Cola was a good marketing name. It was English, so seemed sophisticated, and suggested double value, and also hinted at bubbles, which we knew how to supply. Prem was the biggest bottling company in Indonesia with about one hundred factory and office workers. I worked hard and developed a better system of marketing and our products were sold not only on Java but also in some cities in Sumatra as well. I divided the city of Jakarta into four regions for sales and deliveries purposes. I also instituted the practice of keeping one truck full of soft drinks as a reserve vehicle which could substitute for any stalled trucks on the road. In this way customers could be sure of receiving their supplies, even if a truck broke down, which in those days

they often did. We could sell 45,000 bottles of soft drink every day, while the capacity of our factory was inadequate to meet demand at only 35,000 bottles per day. The turnover of our Dubble Cola soft drink was 20,000 bottles per day, which almost matched the turnover of Coca Cola.

The local Coca Cola factory protested against our Dubble Cola factory for the use of the word 'Cola' which they claimed to be a trademark, even though in fact it is merely the name of the tree producing the extract used in the drink. Their legal case did not develop very successfully, but in any event I had had to leave the Prem Bottling Company before the legal case was resolved. My departure was the result of poor relations between the shareholders of the Prem Bottling Company, so I returned to running a small business with no responsibilities to anyone other than myself and my family. I became a dealer in 'All Clean' motorcar cleanser and made hair pomade myself. My turnover was satisfactory and clients came to me to buy the pomade. They were always asking me to produce more, and there seemed to be almost infinite demand for the product in Jakarta in those days. Practically every male used pomade. When we were very busy with our business, our son, Benjamin Sun Hok Tju, was born on 23 March 1958 at 1.30am, assisted by a mid-wife and an obstetrician Dr. Lie Hong Gie at Usada maternity hospital in Jakarta. The baby boy was healthy, honest and brave. Hok Tjoe had many friends and was loyal to his friends.

I was offered a job as a year twelve teacher of the Pa Hoa Senior High School in Indonesian language, Literature and History. The name of the school was later changed into Yayasan Pengajaran dan Pendidikan (JPP, Teaching and Educating Institution), since the Indonesian government banned all Chinese names in order to assimilate the ethnic Chinese. Later the school was handed over to Baperki (*Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia*) a political movement of the 1950s

and 1960s to integrate ethnic Chinese into Indonesian society.<sup>224</sup> In 1966 it was confiscated by the Indonesian government since Baperki was accused of being close to the PKI.

I left the J.P.P. school in 1958 before it was handed over to Baperki when I returned to the Prem Bottling Company after my appointment as its Managing Director. I had a good salary, a car and driver, and an annual bonus. The enterprise was in good shape and was making progress, but the shareholders continued to squabble with each other. It was hard to get granulated sugar as a basic commodity for soft drinks. We got some granulated sugar from the government but it was not sufficient for the production of our soft drinks. We had to buy extra granulated sugar from the black market which made the production cost of our products higher. We only had one bottling machine which had to work hard day after day. When the bottling machine broke down the production of our soft drinks had to stop, which caused a financial loss to our company. The obvious solution would have been to buy a new bottling machine from Europe or the United States, but it was almost impossible to import such machinery at the time. I tried to organise the permit, but we were not allowed to import a bottling machine because the government did not have enough foreign currency to pay. Tiring of the squabbling shareholders and inefficient machinery, I left the Prem Bottling Company in 1962 to organise the Serayu Transportation Company, where I would be the founder and holder of fifty percent of the shares in the company.

However, before I founded the Serayu Transportation Company our family was struck by disaster. My beloved father passed away in April 1962 at the age of seventy. I did not expect this to happen at this time. He had been sound and healthy

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and used to regularly deliver tobacco to his clients. I took him to the surgery of Professor Dr Oey Eng Tie, a specialist on internal medicine, but he did not recover from his illness. He was buried in the new Chinese Cemetery of Kali Tanjung, Cirebon.

Early in 1963, the Serayu Transportation Company began operations. I visited government offices in Jakarta, Bundung and Cirebon to obtain cargo for my company. I went to Semarang by way of Cirebon, Tegal, Slawi, Purwokerto, Wonosobo and Unggaran to see the Director of the state owned agricultural company Pertani.<sup>225</sup> At this time, because of the Guided Economy policy, only state enterprises had sufficient business to need the services of a company like Serayu. I obtained 1,500 tonnes of cargoes from Pertani of Semarang which had to be transported by trucks from Cilacap to Purbalingga, a regency capital 30 kilometres east of Purwokerto. The transport fee I negotiated was sixty million rupia. My companion in Cirebon was the person engaged who claimed to be able to finance the business. But he did not fulfil his promise, which caused financial trouble in transporting the Pertani cargo.

I was lucky enough to get a five million rupia cash advance from Pertani which I used to finance the transportation of their cargo. The job was finished in six weeks and the profit was four million rupia. From that time I had working capital to finance other transport projects. The Serayu Transportation Company ran smoothly and had jobs in West Java and Central Java until the end of the government of President Sukarno.

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<sup>225</sup> Perusahaan Pertanian Negara Indonesia.

## 9. My Life during the Government of President Suharto

The end of the Sukarno era also marked the end of the adventurous and entrepreneurial phase of my life. I was a successful businessman in the era of the Guided Economy, with all the political and economic challenges that period presented. I had enjoyed playing the business and politics game of those years. It was chaotic in some ways, but it was also exciting, and there was good business to be done. There were risks, especially when political power changes, but I know my family and I could always fall back on the insatiable demand of Indonesian men for hair pomade. Meanwhile, Serayu was doing well.

This was the situation as we lived through the political turmoil of late 1965 and early 1966. Fortunately, we were only spectators as General Suharto, who had escaped his would-be assassins to become head of the Army's strategic reserve and mobilise army forces to take counter-action against the 30 September coup, introduced his new political order. After Suharto was appointed President on 27 March 1968 he started implementing his new order with an emphasis on economic development. He installed his 'Developing' Cabinet on 19 June 1968 in the President's residence. Its priorities were totally different from those of Sukarno's cabinets. The emphasis was on economic growth and the suppression of communism. The official statement of its aims was as follows:

1. To stabilise the political and economic situations of Indonesia.
2. To organise and implement the Five Years Economic Development Plan.
3. To hold a general election at the latest on July 5, 1971.
4. To restore peace and order and to eliminate all communist elements and activists of the 30 September Communist Coup.
5. To upgrade government officials and dismiss them if they were involved in the 30 September Communist Coup.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka 1965-1973*, 178-180.

To encourage economic growth, a team of economists was formed to advise the government. It was dominated by American-educated, pro-Western thinkers, including a large proportion of Christians. They believed that an open economy would stimulate growth. This approach was as much against Suharto's natural instincts as it was different from the Guided Economy approach which had preceded it. However, Suharto's willingness to appoint such a team, and to listen to it, showed how astute he was.

Meanwhile, the escaped PKI leaders offered armed resistance to the Suharto Government around South Blitar in East Java. The Suharto government sent troops to the Blitar region under Colonel Witarmin in July 1968 to eradicate the Communist uprising. The Communists built defence territories with underground hiding places and established the People's Sudden Combat Course. The graduates of this school were spread through the country to incite the local people and organise armed uprisings against the Suharto Administration. However, Blitar was no soviet liberated zone of the kind the Chinese Communists had controlled in the 1930s and 1940s, and there was no Indonesian equivalent of Mao Zedong in Blitar. The Blitar Communist Uprising was suppressed in six weeks.<sup>227</sup> Once again there were terrible killings of communists and their supporters.

In this new political atmosphere there were equally dramatic changes in foreign policy, and on 1 October 1967, Indonesia announced its decision to freeze its diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China on the grounds that Communist China allegedly had intervened in Indonesian internal affairs by helping the Indonesian Communists to stage the 30 September 1965 *coup d'état*. Indonesia also accused Communist China of protecting Indonesian Communist figures and of

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 182-183.

helping them to organise a counter-attack. Cambodia would act on Indonesian interests in Communist China whilst Romania would be Communist China's representative in Indonesia.<sup>228</sup>

Suharto moved quickly to restore Indonesia's relations with its neighbours, especially Malaysia on which Sukarno had been waging a low-level war. The restoration of foreign relations with Malaysia took place when Foreign Ministers Adam Malik of Indonesia and Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia signed a treaty in Jakarta in August 1966.<sup>229</sup> Relations with Britain and the United States, which had been strained, quickly became friendlier, and four years later Britain pulled out of its base in Singapore, and thereby ceased to be an Asian power. Ironically this was a move the British could never have made while Indonesia maintained its hostility to Malaysia. The restoration of Indonesia's active membership of the United Nations happened a month after the treaty with Malaysia when on 28 September 1966 Indonesia took part in the General Assembly. Dr H. Ruslan Abdulgani, who had played an important role in Sukarno's cabinets under Guided Democracy, was later appointed Head of the Indonesian Permanent Representatives to the United Nations.<sup>230</sup>

A meeting of developed countries was held in Amsterdam on 23-24 February 1967. This meeting was called the Inter-Governmental Group for Indonesia (IGGI), which discussed financial aid to Indonesia and the rescheduling of Indonesian national debts.<sup>231</sup> This in effect marked the return to friendly relations with the Netherlands. Restoration of relations with Malaysia paved the way for both countries to be founding members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Bangkok on 8 August 1967, together with the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The five

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 156-157.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid, 111-112.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 140.

countries realised and expected that they would help each other to promote their cultural, social economic, political and peaceful interests. This was a huge turnaround from the period of confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia.<sup>232</sup>

These were followed by international visits which symbolised Indonesia's renewed friendship with Western countries. The first were of religious significance. The guardian of Mecca, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia visited in June 1970, followed by Pope Paul VII in December. The next symbolised that the tensions of colonialism were over: Queen Juliana stayed for two weeks in August and September 1971, receiving enthusiastic welcomes wherever she went. It was the first ever visit by a Dutch sovereign to the archipelago. In June 1972 William MacMahon, the Prime Minister of Australia, visited and his successor, Gough Whitlam, chose Indonesia his first prime ministerial foreign visit in February 1973, just two months after his election.

Less successful was the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka to Jakarta in January 1974. Violent riots broke out and the Senen shopping centre and the Astra building, owned by William Soerjadaja, a Chinese business associate of both Mrs Suharto and Ibnu Sutowo (personal and business cronies of the President), were burnt down. This was the first time since 1966 that riots had erupted on the streets of Jakarta, and the government was shaken.<sup>233</sup> Some riot figures were arrested and brought to court for trial.

Meanwhile, prosperity started to return, assisted by the development of off-shore oil wells from 1970s. However, it was not a prosperity in which I was able to share as much as I would have wished as head of the Serayu Transportation Company. The problem was that its political links were all with officials who had done well

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 148, 149.

<sup>233</sup> Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, 164-167.

under President Sukarno. Following the inauguration of Suharto's New Order, the company found it harder to get orders. The devaluation of the rupia did not help either. I decided to wind up the company as salaries in government employment improved. I found a position as a lecturer in English and Dutch at the National University. Moreover, more Indonesians started travelling and wanted private lessons in those two languages. I went back to private teaching, which became an excellent business on top of my university work. I preferred it to running a trucking company, and stayed in it until migrating to Australia in 1983. Such a move is something I could never have contemplated even fifteen years earlier, and it showed how much both Indonesia and Australia had changed in that time. Previously emigration from Indonesia to Australia would have been unthinkable, as it was impossible to export capital from Indonesia and Australia did not accept Asian migrants.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion: A Life under Three Flags**

Indonesia had suffered under colonial powers for about 350 years under the Dutch and the Japanese. It is now an independent country governed by the Indonesians themselves. I am not in favour of colonial sovereign power, especially not under Japanese Imperialism. The best administration for Indonesia is under the Republic with a unitarian system of government. Though the Dutch colonial power was disliked, it had done the Indonesians a good turn as well. The Dutch colonial government had two prominent officials who successfully implemented the education system of the Ethical Policy- Dr. Christian Snouck Hurgronje who was a Dutch scholar of Islam and J.H. Abendanon who was the first 'ethical' director of education. They had submitted proposals on education of the indigenous elite which were accepted by the government.

Afterwards Sukarno and Hatta appeared in public as heroes of the quest for Indonesian independence with western political know-how, which they had obtained from the Dutch education system. Many native young men had gone to Holland to study several kinds of knowledge and science. They came back to Indonesia, became prominent political leaders who opposed the Dutch colonial government policy and suggested to their people of the Dutch East Indies to struggle for independence.

During the Japanese occupation, the people of the Dutch East Indies suffered a lot as well. They had offered to the Japanese their properties and their lives, which the Japanese needed to win victory in the Great Asian War. Though the Japanese during the war were hard on the people of the Dutch East Indies, in some ways they had assisted their political development. The people of the Dutch East Indies learnt more about politics, especially about colonialism, imperialism and independence. They

were also trained in fighting, combat and warfare. Many native young men were trained to be PETA (*Pembela Tanah Air*), meaning Indonesian Auxiliary Troops, under the Japanese occupation. Many Indonesian military officers were trained by the Japanese when they were young.

I am in favour of the Republic of Indonesia with a unitarian system of government. Indonesia consists of many islands, many ethnic groups and many languages, which have to be united in one unitary state. Otherwise, Indonesia would be broken into small states which could compete with each other and at last attack each other as well.

I better not compare the Sukarno administration with the Suharto administration. Both administrations were good and successful in defending the independence and the unity of Indonesia. Both had their good points and their weak points. I would rather combine both administrations in one team which could have worked together and could have been useful to each other. I would rather say that the Sukarno administration was the founder of independence whilst the Suharto administration was the developer of independence. I realise that Indonesia is far from being prosperous. Indonesia has to work hard, be well-united and tolerant. Through happiness and sorrow Indonesia can be a prosperous and successful country.

I was happy-go-lucky when I was in Indonesia. I was more Dutch-educated rather than Chinese-educated. I spoke Dutch and English, was fluent in Indonesian and Sundanese, which made it easy for me to have intimate relationships with both foreigners and natives. I had good positions in business and good relations with both natives and Chinese ethnic scholars. I would suggest that the natives and the ethnic Chinese have to work together in society, economics and politics for the sake of all Indonesians. They all have to keep away from mutual suspicion and mutual jealousy.

Let the ethnic Chinese feel at home in Indonesia and forget their own country of origin. Let them feel more Indonesian than more Chinese. It is not necessary to force them by law and treatment but let the circumstances and political atmosphere persuade the ethnic Chinese to assimilate willingly with the natives. The ethnic Chinese are willing, potential and capable to be good partners in developing Indonesia.

## ABBREVIATIONS

|          |                                                                                                                          |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ASEAN    | Association of South-East Asian Nations                                                                                  |
| BAMUNAS  | Badan Musyawarah Nasional = National Council of Businessmen                                                              |
| BPI      | Central Committee of Intelligence                                                                                        |
| CSI      | Centraal Sarekat Islam = Sarekat Islam Central (Headquarters)                                                            |
| DPR      | Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat = Parliament                                                                                     |
| DPR (GR) | Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Royong = Mutual Cooperative Parliament                                                    |
| GANEFO   | Games of the New Emerging Forces                                                                                         |
| GESTAPU  | Gerakan September Tiga Puluh = September 30 <sup>th</sup> Movement = the 1965 attempt to seize control of the government |
| HIS      | Hollandsch-Indlandsche School = Dutch Native School                                                                      |
| ISDV     | Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereniging = Indies Social-Democratic Association                                         |
| KAMI     | Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia = Indonesian Students' Action Group                                                    |
| KAPPI    | Kesatuan Aksi Pemuda Pelajar Indonesia = Senior High School Students' Action Group                                       |
| KASI     | Kesatuan Aksi Sarjana Indonesia = Indonesian Students Graduates' Action Group                                            |
| KKO      | Korps Komando = Marine Corps                                                                                             |
| KLM      | Koninklijk Luchtvaart Maatschappij = Royal Dutch Airways                                                                 |
| KMB      | Konperensi Meja Bunder = Round Table Conference                                                                          |
| KNIL     | Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger = Dutch Colonial Army                                                              |
| KNIP     | Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat = The Central Indonesian                                                                 |

|          |                                                                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          | National Committee                                                                    |
| KOSTRAD  | Army Strategic Command                                                                |
| KOTI     | Supreme Command for the Liberation of West Irian                                      |
| MASYUMI  | Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia = A Modernist Islamic Party prior to 1960            |
| MIAI     | Majelis Islam Ala Indonesia = Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia                    |
| MPR      | Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat = People's Consultative Assembly                       |
| MPRS     | Provisional Peoples' Consultative Assembly                                            |
| MULO     | Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs = More Extended Lower Education                       |
| NASAKOM  | Nasionalisme, Agama, Komunisme = Nationalism, Religion, Communism                     |
| NEFO     | New Emerging Forces                                                                   |
| NU       | Nahdatul Ulama = Association of Muslim Scholars                                       |
| OLDEFO   | Old Established Forces                                                                |
| OSP      | Onafhankelijke Socialistische Partij = Independent Social Party                       |
| OSVIA    | Opleidingschool voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren = Training School for Native Officials     |
| PARTINDO | Partai Indonesia = The Indonesia Party                                                |
| EPERTI   | Penguasa Perang Tertinggi = Supreme War Authority                                     |
| PKI      | Partai Komunis Indonesia = Indonesian Communist Party                                 |
| PNI      | Partai Nasional Indonesia = Indonesian Nationalist Party                              |
| PNI Baru | Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia = Indonesian Nationalist Education Party                |
| PPKI     | Partai Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia = Committee to Prepare Indonesian Independence |
| PPPI     | Perhimpunan Pelajar-pelajar Indonesia = Indonesian                                    |

## Students' Organization

|            |                                                                                                                                          |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PPPKI      | Permufakatan Perhimpunan-perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia = Association of the Indonesian National Political Organizations       |
| PRRI       | Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia = The Republic of Indonesia's Revolutionary Government                                        |
| PSI        | Partai Sosialis Indonesia = Indonesian Socialist Party                                                                                   |
| PSII       | Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia = Indonesia Islamic Union Party                                                                           |
| PUTERA     | Pusat Tenaga Rakyat = The Centre of People's Power                                                                                       |
| PKAD       | Resimen Pasukan Komando Angkatan Darat = Storm Troops                                                                                    |
| RRI        | Radio Republic Indonesia = Indonesian Broadcasting System                                                                                |
| SDAP       | Sociaal Democratische Arbeids-partij = Social Democratic Workers' Party                                                                  |
| SI         | Sarekat Islam = Islamic League (Union)                                                                                                   |
| SOBSI      | Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia = Dentrall All-Indonesian Workers' Organization                                               |
| STOVIA     | School tot Opleiding voor Indische Artsen = The School for Training Native Doctors                                                       |
| SUPERSEMAR | Surat Perintah 11 Maret = 11 <sup>th</sup> March Order from Sukarno to Suharto; The President ordered Suharto to restore Peace and Order |
| UN         | United Nations                                                                                                                           |
| USDEK      | 1945 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy and Indonesian Identity                                        |
| OC         | Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie = United East India Company                                                                            |

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION ON A LIFE UNDER THREE FLAGS

Indonesia had suffered under colonial powers for about 350 years under the Dutch and the Japanese. It is now an independent country governed by the Indonesians themselves. I am not in favour of colonial sovereign power, especially not under Japanese Imperialism. The best administration for Indonesia is under the Republic with a unitarian system of government. Though the Dutch colonial power was disliked, it had done the Indonesians a good turn as well. The Dutch colonial government had two prominent officials who successfully implemented the education system of the Ethical Policy- Dr. Christian Snouck Hurgronje who was a Dutch scholar of Islam and J.H. Abendanon who was the first 'ethical' director of education. They had submitted proposals on education of the indigenous elite which were accepted by the government.

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