THE STAGES OF MILITARISM IN LATIN AMERICA

by

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In Latin America the term militarism has a very limited application. It refers only to a country's armed forces or a part of them taking action against a civilian-democratic regime. The intervention by the military against a dictatorship is not considered militarism in the Latin American context.

EVOLUTION OF MILITARISM 1810-1918

Militarism in Latin America today is in a stage of development which differentiates it from the types which persist in many areas of the contemporary world. It is not the nationalistic militarism of the Near East, with its demagogic will to transform; nor is it the improvised militarism of Southeast Asia, with its will to order. Latin American militarism has no program. It has not had a program in fifty years, with certain exceptions which will be pointed out. The militarist has no apparent objective apart from the immediate goal of power for power's sake; but, as often happens, he may be made the tool of certain social groups. In the nineteenth century militarism often had a positive function. At times it was an agent of transformation, often of a nationalistic character. As such, it served functions similar to those currently being performed by the military in certain of the newly created states of Southeast Asia and the Near East.

Thus Latin American militarism has arrived at the penultimate phase in its history. In its final stage it will disappear. That epoch may be near. Encouraged by the increased possibilities of legislative and diplomatic action and the growing concern of international organizations, powerful elements in Latin America have made the obliteration of militarism their major preoccupation. That the time is ripe for such a step is one of the conclusions of this paper.

In the United States, governments have almost always been civil governments; in Latin America they have often been military and as such anti-democratic. "What causes this difference?" asks Luis de Araquistain. And he answers: "The cause must be sought in the fact that the North American republic is essentially an inheritance of the English monarchy and the Central and South American republics are inheritances of the Spanish monarchy."[1] The English monarchy, he continues, was able to evolve

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[1]Luis Araquistain, "El militarismo y la libertad," Cuadernos, suppl. to no. 16. Paris, Jan.-Feb. 1956, pp. 6 ff.

from absolute government to parliamentary government because for three centuries the country had no standing armies save in time of large-scale wars. In the Spanish monarchy, on the other hand, kings historically relied upon the support of a permanent army in opposing the demands of the people.

Not until the Napoleonic wars, beginning in 1808, did a majority of the military factions in Spain assume a popular, liberal character. It was this liberal conviction that caused the army in 1820 to rise against the absolute monarchy of Fernando VII and force a return to the liberal constitution of 1812. However, soon thereafter the Spanish army began to lose its liberal character without discarding the "right" it had assumed after 1808 to intervene in politics. General Juan Prim who ruled Spain in 1868, was the last of the military liberals. After his time, the army was simply the tool of the landed aristocracy. Six decades after the murder of General Prim, which marked the end of effective liberal-military collaboration, Spanish republicans sought unsuccessfully to ally themselves again with the military in an effort to overthrow the monarchy. Since then, Spanish liberals have repeatedly indicated their willingness to work with the military should it turn against Dictator Franco.

As in Spain following the Napoleonic invasion of the Peninsula, so in Latin America during most of the militant phase of the independence movement, the military was liberal. It represented the most aware, cultivated, and cosmopolitan part of the population, educated in the tradition of the French encyclopedistes. When the liberals temporarily established themselves in power, the conservatives subverted and divided the armed forces. This development in effect meant a return to the old oligarchic and military systems of the mother country and a rejection of the popular-liberal system that had characterized Spain in the 1808-1820 period. As a consequence, the new states did not dissolve their armies after independence was won. Instead, the military liberators were revered as true fathers of the rising nations, and their successors considered themselves the natural and legitimate heirs of the liberators. Thus a military cast was formed.

Once called into the political life of the new republics, the militarists soon got out of hand. Before long there arose a group of popular military leaders called caudillos who claimed to represent the politically responsible elements in society. The latter comprised the numerically small and economically weak middle class and the large landowners who held the politically inarticulate mass of peasants and artisans in servitude but who themselves lacked ideological unity. Intervention from the barracks in the political life of the inchoate states became so varied and persistent and so distinctively Latin American that, according to Araquistain, new words (quartelazo, pronuncimiento, cuartelada) were coined to identify the specific types.

Under the caudillos, militarism was at one and the same time nationalistic and, ostensibly at least, democratic. Small scale international

wars were common as presidents in military uniforms sent armies against their neighbors either to resolve differences over boundary problems or simply to distract attention from unfavorable domestic developments. Although the militarists almost invariably came to power by force and ordinarily were authoritarian, they professed to exercise power in the name of liberty and democracy. They promised repeatedly that once order was established they would give way to democratic government. They created "democratic parties," and were at pains to legalize their regimes at the polls. But rarely did any of them surrender power voluntarily. Even when a caudillo had good intentions, the army upon which he depended, corrupted by power, seldom permitted him to step aside in favor of a civilian.

In the final analysis the caudillos generally ended up representing only themselves. It should be pointed out, however, that although the caudillos had the power of dictators, none had totalitarian tendencies (which would have been premature in that era); nor did they place limitations upon liberties other than in strictly political matters. Like the republicans of contemporary Spain and the Latin American liberals of yesteryear, the democrats of today, although disavowing militarism, must still depend on the help of the military in combatting the heirs of the caudillos.

To the extent that the militarists of the age of the caudillos were reformers they were strongly oriented toward politics, and were generally content to leave the social and economic structures unmodified. Many of them were particularly concerned to separate the church and the state, though. Their efforts here as elsewhere produced no lasting political stability. In fact, by attempting to arbitrate civilian political feuds, the army intensified instability. In Paraguay, an extreme example, there were twenty-two presidents in a thirty-one year period. Furthermore, when the army attempted to moderate a civilian crisis, it generally left behind a legacy of rivalry that added to the threat of instability for future civilian governments.

Between 1918 and 1955 the political role of the military was determined primarily by its responses to communism and fascism. Hardly had World War I terminated when the Russian Revolution, coupled with the prior example of the Mexican Revolution, called the attention of the middle class, including intellectuals and students and certain elements of organized labor, to the possibility of resolving its problems by revolutionary means. But each move in that direction, -- the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA), founded in 1924 by Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, was probably the group most actively committed to reform between wars -- was resisted by the oligarquias.[2] In each instance

[2]The English word "oligarchy" has an almost purely political connotation, while the Spanish word "oligarquia," as it is used in Latin America, is much more inclusive. It refers to the dominance of the economy, politics and cultural life by a minority composed of landowners.

the armies fought for the preservation of political order and the defense of the social status quo. Whenever a freely elected government attempted social reform or labor-leftist movements threatened to win political control, a coup was likely to occur. Thus in 1930 when the economic crisis threatened to unleash a sociopolitical upheaval in Argentina, General Jose F. Uriburu led a coup d'etat in behalf of the ultra-conservatives. In Peru, each time that APRA or its allies won elections or were on the point of winning them, as in 1931, 1933, and 1948, the army moved against the party.[3] Sometimes, it is true, the military promulgated legislation of a progressive type, as in Chile during the 1924-25 period, but rarely was such legislation put into effect.[4]

The rise of fascism in Europe and the upsurge of conservative military dictatorship after 1930 paved the way for a species of "praetorian demagogy," best represented by Juan Domingo Peron and his palace guard in Argentina. Militarists of this type made wide use of demagogic phraseology and facist propaganda techniques and organizational methods, and did not hesitate to engage in "political concubinage" with communists. This fascist-type militarist was not transformist after the fashion of the nineteenth century caudillo, nor was he conservative like the dictators of the first third of the twentieth century. Like those of the Nazis, his main objects were power and the advantages which power conferred. Though he showed an absolute indifference to ideas, he took considerable pains to attract the masses, whose ambitions he appealed to. He actually represented no specific social class but only the interests of the assorted groups which backed him.

Roumlo Betancourt, head of the Democratic Action Party of Venezuela, who was removed from power in 1948 by a military junta, wrote as follows: "Latin American politics has always been characterized by violence. The economic backwardness of the nations and the persistence of feudal systems of production as well as the heritage of Spain -- the principal European exponent of military insurrections -- have contributed to this phenomenon ..... What is happening now (in 1949) is much more dangerous for the present and future of the continent than what happened earlier .... We are now witnessing a series of barracks revolts very close in technique to the Nazi 'Putsch' of the pre-war period, with similar characteristics and procedures. They are organized by military groups of the extreme right without popular assistance and contrary to the democratic aspirations of the countries involved."[5] The type of militarism Betancourt

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[3] Victor Alba, Le mouvement ouvrier en Amerique Latine. Paris, Editions Ouvrieres, 1953, pp. 143 ff.

[4] Julio Cesar Jobet, Ensayo critico del desarrollo economico-social de Chile. Santiago, Ed. Universitaria, 1955. pp. 165, 175.

[5] Romulo Betancourt, Venezuela, politica y patroleo. Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1956, p. 468.

described was expansionist and aggressive. At time, as in Argentina under Peron, it was concerned with gaining popular support by means of what the dictator demagogically called "social justice" (justicialismo). At other times, as in Venezuela under Marcos Perez Jimenez the appeal was to "industrialization." In Cuba, under Fulgencio Batista, the appeal was to both "social justice" and "industrialization." General Manuel Odria first flattered the popular masses until he gained their support and then took revenge on previous democratic regimes.

The essence of this new type militarism was summed up by one of its chief supporters, the Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (GOU), a group of cells or lodges of Argentine military activists. A circular issued by the GOU in April 1943 reads as follows: "Civilians will never comprehend the grandeur of our ideal and for this reason it is necessary to eliminate them from the government and give them the only mission which fits them: labor and obedience."[6] The same circular referred to the army's mission "to make possible the indisputable guardianship" of Argentina over Latin America. "Government," according to Peron, who rose to leadership of the GOU before 1946, "is a battle, and battles, whether military or economic, are governed by the same principles.... We (the military) are better prepared than any other group to triumph in this struggle.... The others may have intelligence, but the fighting spirit, the will to conquer, is further developed in the soldier than in the members of any other profession."[7] Despite the chronic economic crisis in Argentina, Peron granted his officers higher wages than those paid equivalent rank in the United States and put a large sector of the national economy under the direction of the Ministry of Defense. This latter act placed military men in privileged posts and gave them unusual opportunities to engage in business transactions.

THE YOUNG TECHNOCRATIC ELEMENT

Since World War II there has emerged yet another type of militarism. It is represented by the young officers who are inclined towards a technological approach to thearea's problems. This new group has been superimposed on the types already identified. The gorilas of Argentina, educated during the Second World War when it was not longer possible to go to Germany and who therefore came under North American influence, and the penicilinos of Mexico are representative of the new element. They wish to disassociate the army from political dictatorship and to repossess the military profession. But thus far these technically minded young men have been no less politically inclined than were their nineteenth century counterparts who became the caudillos and demagogues of the post-Independence era,

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[6]German Arcienegas, Entre la libertad y el miedo. Mexico Ed. Cuadernos Americanos, 1952, pp. 59-60.

[7]Robert Alexander, The Peron Era, p. 117.

and like them are transformadores. Currently they actually control El Salvador, and in Argentina they influence decision making at the highest levels. They consider themselves the guardians of the anti-dictatorial movements by which they originally entered politics. Their technocratic mentality demands a planned economy and a more efficient political system: one which reduces the compromises, negotiations, and postponements, characteristics of democratic process.[8] Basically they would like to function like the efficient managers of the new industries that are being established in Latin America. Undoubtedly the thing most likely to incite them to intervene in politics and even to stage military coups would be the conviction that democratic regimes were inefficient in the economic sector.

This young military faction is passing through a crisis of conscience that is fundamentally not very different from that which is preoccupying the young French military group. It knows that the army to which it belongs is incapable of fulfilling its mission; it knows that because of the army's dictatorial past, the military is not well accepted. Yet at the same time it believes that acceptance can be gained by appropriate gestures and actions that will give meaning to its own existence. One manifestation of this type of concern among the young military men is their extra-military activity. In Mexico, for example, they are taking part in campaigns to eradicate disease. In Honduras and El Salvador they are collaborating in the planning and execution of public works. In Bolivia they have carried out significant tasks in connection with colonizations and public projects. This participation, still small and not yet widespread, in the national development is considered by many young military men as the proper road toward wiping out militarism and as the best means of giving the army a function and a social prestige that it now lacks.

These young men are obliged to work with senior officers who are of a completely different mentality, and of course they must operate with troops who do not in any sense share their aspirations. Under these circumstances it is too early to predict accurately the evolution of this new military group. It appears reasonable, however, to assume that the direction it eventually takes will depend upon three factors: (1) the consolidation of democracy and the establishment of economic stability in Latin America, which would remove the temptation to intervene in politics, since there would be nothing "to save;" (2) effective resistance to communist penetration of the army wherever there exists among the young military an admiration for communism and its apparent efficacy; (3) evolution of an international situation which could influence the military organization of the Latin American countries.

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[8]For this description of the young military man, with his technocratic outlook, there are scarcely any written sources. The author has based the description on his personal experience and on conversations with several members of the military factions from various countries.

THE THREE TYPES OF CONTEMPORARY MILITARY MEN

Today in Latin America there are three types of military men: "the barracks groups," "the school officers," and the group of young officers who may be called "laboratory men."

The barracks groups closely resemble those officers who entered the Wars of Independence as civilian politicians in uniform and came out with a distrust of civilismo and democratic politicians.[9] As senior officers their numbers are being diminished by death and retirement. The barracks groups, however, still constitute the main body of the officer corps in many of the Latin American countries. Not a few of them owe their positions to favoritism. Many of them were trained in Germany and Spain. Predominately bureaucratic in spirit, they were the principal military contingent supporting the conservative dictators of the first third of this century, though they came to the aid of dictators who emerged after 1930.

The "school officers" have been the principal military supporters of the demagogic distators. They came out of the military academies, in some cases to continue their training in Germany, Italy, and Spain. For the most part they comprise the middle age group of the officers corps. They are almost uniformly career men, depending upon their ability rather than connections to obtain promotions. In contrast with that of the barracks groups, their training has oriented them towards technology and less towards routine. Today they constitute a very important segment of Latin American armies. Although they are momentarily neutralized by the passivity of the barracks groups and by the dynamism of the laboratory men, they have not renounced military intervention.

The "laboratory men" have a number of characteristics that distinquish them from the barracks groups and the school officers. In general they are drawn from the youngest age group within the officer corps. They have been trained in military academies of Latin America and have done post-graduate work in the United States rather than in Germany, Italy, and Spain. Of the three groups, the laboratory men are the best trained in the technical sense and have the greatest intellectual curiosity. As a consequence they find themselves uncomfortable in the routine-bound army. At the moment this group serves to neutralize the military caprices of the barracks groups and the school officers.

There is a certain amount of overlapping among these three groups.[10] Some of the "barracks" men are associated with the young group; some of the young men are tied in with the "school group," and some of the latter incline

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[9] Ronald M. Schneider, Communism in Guatemala, 1944-1954. New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1959, p. 215.

[10] For a more detailed description of the psychology of these groups, see Victor Alba, "Armas, poder y libertad," (series of articles in Combate, San Jose, 1958-1959, nos. 1-6).

toward the "barracks groups." In no place are these groups formally organized, but they often form nuclei, more or less secret and conspiratorial. In general, it is the "laboratory group" that is gaining the most ground and attracting new adherents.

NATURE AND FUNCTION OF LATIN AMERICA'S ARMED FORCES

In 1956 the aggregate number of military personnel in Latin America was approximately half a million,[11] distributed among the various countries and services as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force
Argentina	107,000	21,500	19,000
Bolivia	15,000	none	2,000
Brazil	90,000	8,000	9,200
Columbia	10,000	1,500	200
Costa Rica	None	none	none
Cuba	19,000	2,000	2,400
Chile	20,500	8,000	13,000
Ecuador	?	?	3,100
El Salvador	6,000	400	500
Guatemala	21,000	none	400
Haiti	4,500	none	400
Honduras	2,500	none	1,200
Mexico	41,800	2,500	3,500
Nicaragua	10,000	none	1,300
Panama	none	none	none
Paraguay	5,800	400	none
Peru	10,000	2,500	5,000
Dominican Republic	3,500	3,000	2,000
Uruguay	3,000	1,450	2,000
Venezuela	10,000	2,240	5,000

Latin American troops are supplied mainly with foreign arms, although Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico have minor armament plants. Under the Mutual Security Program the United States granted nineteen Latin American countries arms worth $284,000,000 during the period from 1951 to 1957, or 1.5 percent of the total military aid extended by the United States to all other countries. In addition Latin American countries have purchased armaments and naval vessels equal to many times this amount from the United States and Western Europe.

To what end? The function of the army in modern society is to defend the national territory or the national interests when these find themselves

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[11] Raul Ampuero, Speech in the Chilean Senate, in Boletin del Secretariado Latinoamericano de la International Sociolista. Montevideo, June 1958.

threatened by violence. Inside the Western Hemisphere the Organization of American States (OAS) has repeatedly demonstrated its efficacy in retarding the use of armed force in conflicts between its members. As a result the function of the Latin American armies has become limited almost exclusively to joint defense of the hemisphere against aggression from other continents. Despite all this, very little has been done to improve the military's capabilities in this area, or even to qualify them to serve in the highly technical forces that may from time to time comprise international armies required for police actions.

The Inter-American Defense Board is ineffective. The bilateral Military Defense Assistance Pacts between the United States and twelve Latin American governments do not constitute, in reality, a means of coordinating the separate armies in a cohesive joint defense. "It has never been contended seriously by United States military spokesmen that the treaties have bolstered Latin American armies to the point that they could withstand successfully a Russian attack. They simply make military politics a more present danger," states a North American commentator.[12] Furthermore, among the Latin American armies themselves (or their governments) there exists no provision for collaboration in the event of an emergency. No plans have been worked out for the evacuation of the major cities of the continent and there has been no attempt to establish a network of radar stations to detect possible aggressors.

The primary causes of the ineffectiveness of the Latin American armies are: (1) the economic weakness of the Latin American countries, which does not allow them to provide their armies with an organization and an armament suited to the necessities of modern war.[13] (2) The lack

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[12]Philip B. Taylor, Jr., Hemispheric Security Reconsidered. New Orleans, Tulane University Press, 1957, p. 108. Communist propaganda which charges that the Military Defense Pacts have provided dictators with the arms to keep the people suppressed has won wide acceptance, to the serious detriment of the United States. See Robert Alexander, Communism in Latin America, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1957, Ch. VI, XVIII, and Victor Alba, Historia del comunismo en America Latina, Mexico, Ed. Occidentales, 1954, Ch. XXXIII-XXXV.

[13]In this regard ex-president of Colombia, Eduardo Santos, speaking at the celebration of the second centenary of the University of Colombia said: "Against whom are we Latin Americans arming ourselves? Why are our countries ruining themselves with costly armaments which they will never be able to use...? We have no reason for fighting one another; we have only reasons for drawing close to each other and living together fraternally.... And do we have, perhaps, a military role to play in the great international conflicts? Never. In this era of the atomic bomb with these new incredibly costly armaments, with technical systems backed by billions, why are our poor countries continuing to ruin themselves

of trained military men and the means to facilitate this training on a large enough scale. (3) The militarist tradition, which has turned armies into instruments of political maneuver and has encouraged military men (aside from the small groups of "laboratory" men) to believe that their proper role is one of politics and power.

Given this reduced capability and lack of a meaningful and legitimate function, many Latin American military men find themselves in a state of mind comparable to what Alfred de Vigny said of the Napoleonic army: "The army is a nation within a nation. It is ashamed of itself and it knows not what it does nor what it desires. It asks itself ceaselessly whether it is a slave or owner of the State and its body searches everywhere for its soul and does not find it."[14] Thus the problem of Latin American militarism exists upon the plane of conscience, as well as upon the political level. With the appearance of such hopes and fears within the armies themselves it appears that militarism in Latin America is entering its penultimate phase. Some comparisons between Latin America and those countries where the evolution of militarism is less advanced may be tentatively drawn. These comparisons may be summed up as follows: (1) Until a few years ago, militarism in other underdeveloped areas was conservative. Militarism in Latin America was also conservative during the same period, but only after having first passed through a transformist phase during the era of the caudillos. (2) Militarism in other areas is today an unstable mixture of demagogic tactics and the will to transform. In Latin America, these two characteristics generally manifest themselves separately. (3) Militarism in other underdeveloped areas is anti-imperialistic and anti-western. Except in Peron's case and then for only a few years, militarism in Latin America was never anti-imperialistic. (4) Militarism in some of the underdeveloped areas is of a unifying nationalist character, while that of Latin America can no longer be described by these terms. (5) Militarism in the underdeveloped countries seeks to modify the old order; in Latin America (except for Peron and others of his kind), its objectives are generally more of a police than a reformist nature. (6) In most other underdeveloped areas, particularly in the semi-feudal Arab countries, force and usurpation of power carry more prestige than they do in Latin America. In the latter area, a democratic tradition exists alongside the tradition of militarism.

There are also similarities, which may be generally summed up as follows: (1) The military men come primarily from the middle class, which, although weak numerically, constitutes the most active segment

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with armaments which at a time of international conflict would represent absolutely nothing? Then? We shall be creating armies which are insignificant in international affairs, but devastating to the internal economy of each country. Each country is being occupied by its own army. See German Arcienegas, "La America Latina entrè la libertad y el miedo," Cuadernos, suppl. to no. 16. Paris, Jan.-Feb. 1956, p. 5.

[14]Cited in Victor Alba, "Armas, poder y libertad," Combate, no. 5, San Jose, Costa Rica, March-April 1959, p. 15.

of public opinion. (2) The armies do not discharge any legitimate military function such as national or regional defense. They do not have the training necessary for modern war, nor do they have adequate armaments. (3) The military men of other underdeveloped areas, particularly in the Near East, were considerably influenced in the past by fascist movements, and now, especially among the young men, by the communist movement and the methods espoused by the Soviet Union and China. The same influences, although to a lesser degree, exerted themselves on Latin American militarism.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF LATIN AMERICAN MILITARISM

As the foregoing analysis indicates, Latin American militarism has now arrived at a stage of development where, beyond combatting and denoucing it, one may look for a constructive solution to it. This change in attitude that we have noted among the anti-militarist groups is largely a result of the young military officers who want to keep the military from forcefully intervening in politics. Other reasons for the changing approach to the problems of militarism are: (1) The strengthening of democratic systems and the growing experience of individuals supporting democratic movements. (2) The drives towards industrialization and agrarian reform, both of which increase the demand for technical personnel. Accordingly, the young and best-prepared elements of the armies can increasingly expect to find economic activity that satisfies their aspirations. Also, industrialization and agrarian reforms are destroying the power of the oligarchies, and thus depriving militarism of one of its principal supports. (3) The tendency -- dormant for decades but now awakening -- to look for broad continental solutions to economic problems. The plans for the Bank for Inter-American Development, for regional common markets, and the modest unification achievements of Central America are examples of this tendency. (4) The development of the middle class as an increasingly important economic and social force and, above all, as the most active medium for the expression of public opinion. This is contributing to the modification of the mentality, the concepts, and the aspirations of the military faction, the majority of whose members have come from the middle class.[15]

Before these factors emerged, means for the solution or amelioration of the problem of militarism had already been proposed on different occasions. In 1936 the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace at Buenos Aires recommended arms limitation through bilateral or general agreements. In 1947 the Conference at Rio de Janeiro stated in Resolution XI that the Rio Treaty should not be interpreted "in the sense of justifying excessive armaments." In 1958 the government of Costa Rica

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[15] John J. Johnson, Political Change in Latin America: the Emergence of the Middle Sectors. Stanford, Calif. Stanford University Press, 1958, pp. 192-193.

presented to the OAS Council a program for arms limitation in Latin America. Since then, several countries (particularly Chile) have voiced support for such a program.[16]

The two most powerful and best-organized national revolutionary movements of Latin America have, in general, expressed similar points of view on the problem of militarism. In its most militant period, APRA, with its tendency toward continental methods, proposed highly concrete solutions: the creation of a unified military force with volunteers from all parts of Latin America to fight against the totalitarian powers; extension of obligatory military service (at that time wealthy young men were often exempt from recruitment), and utilization of the army to assist in incorporating the Indian into the national life and to colonize forest areas through the establishment of military colonies. At present, APRA is counting on the advances of technology in the military sector to determine the formation of a civilian outlook among the military men, "who now have no more than the name but who will become true technicians."[17] This is also the judgment of Romulo Betancourt, leader and theoretician of the Democratic Action Party of Venezuela. A short time before the fall of Perez Jimenez, Betancourt wrote: "The necessities of national development and the complex technology of modern arms have made it imperative that in some branches of the armed forces, especially in the navy and the air force, there be groups of officers with considerably higher cultural levels." He feels that these groups will respect "governments capable of directing and carrying out the national-democratic revolution."[18]

These are very moderate programs, anticipating neither the dissolution of the army nor total disarmament. At most they extend to part-time use of the army for duties of a civil nature (public works, education, colonization, etc.) as in Bolivia today.

It is possible that after decades of propaganda by the national

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[16]It should be pointed out that in all these diplomatic postures, as in the proposed solutions indicated below, it is assumed that the system of arbitration established in various treaties and applied by the OAS has been and will continue to be effective. See, in this regard, German Arcienegas, Entre la libertad y el miedo, Ch. XVII; and Antonio Gemoz Robledo, Idea y experiencia de America, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1958, Ch. VII-XI. On the Conference and Treaty of Rio, see the Pan-American Union, Informe sobre la Conferencia Interamericana para el mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad del continente, Washington, D.C., 1947.

[17]Interview with Victor Raul Haya de la Torre in Lima, April, 1958.

[18]Betancourt, Venezuela, politica y petroleo ...., pp. 770, 774. It should be pointed out that actually the air force and the navy were the armed forces most active in the struggle against Perez Jimenez in January, 1958.

revolutionary and socialist movements, it will be the young military men with their increasingly technological orientation who will search for and propose joint solutions, perhaps of continental scope, and who will impel Latin American political leaders and North American diplomacy to support these solutions and to put them into practice.

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN INDONESIA

by

Guy J. Pauker

INTRODUCTION

As Indonesia goes into its precarious second decade, initially at lesst as s "guided democracy," its future depends in large part on the role of the military and the relstionships of the officers' corps to the other elites and power groups in the country. The officers' corps, particularly of the Army and the Air Force, looms as one of the major sources of political power and administrative capacity in the country, along with the Communist Party snd with the radical nstionalists. In order to judge the probable behavior of the officers' corps, and its probably consequences for the political future of the country, it is necessary to examine its origins, its ideology, and its purposes. It is also necessary to trace the emerging pattern of civil-military relations, and to review the manner in which the officers' corps moved into national politics, crossing in 1955 the dividing line between resisting external interference in Army affairs and taking positive political action. Furthermore, it is necessary to examine the role of the Army in the restoration of the Constitution of 1945 and the consequent retrogression from a representative democracy based on a multi-party system to the rule of extra-parliamentary forces. It is here that militarism first appeared, and it is necessary to ask why, at this critical point, the army did not simply take over.

What sort of tentative balance sheet can one draw up concerning the present state of Indonesian politics? How deep do its instabilities run? What sort of a future can one predict for a society that has turned from representative to "guided" democracy, led by a father figure who is neither a political thinker nor an administrative architect but who maintains power by shrewd manipulation of divisions within and among groups? What will be the role of a military elite that is deeply divided and unsure of itself, but that includes a capable leader who may be following a sound, long-range strategy by which the Army can stabilize the country in the face of communist challenge?

ORIGINS OF THE OFFICER CORPS

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (Angkatan Perang or APRI) consist of an Army (Angkatan Darat or AD) of about 221,000 men, which has not been significantly expanded since the end of the struggle for independence in 1949, an Air Force (Angkatan Udara Republik Indonesia or AURI), of about 15,000 men, which is now about seven times stronger than ten years ago, a Navy (Angkatan Laut Republik Indonesia or ALRI),

of about 15,000 men, ten times larger than immediately after the achievement of sovereignty, and a State Police (Polisi Negara) of about 105,000 men, which includes highly effective, militarized, mobile brigade units. The three branches of the Armed Forces and the Police were created in the last months of 1945 and are, by and large, still officered by the first generation of professional soldiers. Unlike officers of the Army and the Air Force, those of the Navy and State Police have not played an important politicial role in the Republic.

In a country with a total population approaching 90 million, the less than 10,000 members of the officer corps of the Armed Forces and more especially the 6,000 odd Army officers -- their number is smaller than generally assumed -- form a very important segment of the country's elite and play a considerable role in the shaping of its destinies.

The officer corps of Indonesia comes from three different sources: a small number were educated by the Dutch before 1942, a larger number were drilled by the Japanese between 1943 and 1945, while a third group began their military careers during the struggle for independence between 1945 and 1949. After 1949 some officers received professional training from the Netherlands, but since the political break with the Dutch, more than 500 Army Officers have been sent to the United States, while smaller numbers of Air Force officers went to Great Britain and India and some Navy officers to various places in Western Europe. In the last two years scores of Air Force and Navy officers have been trained in Communist bloc or neutralist countries such as Czechloslovakia, Poland, and Egypt. Most officers of field rank have also been assigned, in recent years, on a rotating basis to the Staff and Command School in Bandung (SSKAD) for special courses.

Military training, in the colonial period, for services in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) began in 1830. The KNIL included at first 600 European and 37 Indonesian officers and 12,905 non-commissioned officers and soldiers. While throughout the nineteenth century the KNIL had almost constantly to wage "pacification" campaigns, in the twentieth century Indonesian armed resistance against Dutch rule gradually subsided, and the task of the KNIL as the ultimate guarantor of the colonial power's paramount authority became easier. By May 1940, when Hitler's armies occupied the Netherlands, the KNIL consisted of a professional corps of 1,345 officers and 37,583 troops. The personnel listed as European included, in addition to the Dutch, a large proportion of Eurasians as well as some mercenaries recruited from various parts of Germany. While a substantial number of soldiers came from the Christian parts of East Indonesia, especially the Minahassa (North Celebes) and Ambon, the number of Indonesian officers was very small and hardly any achieved field rank.

When the Dutch forces in the East Indies capitulated to the Japanese in March 1942, a few KNIL units stationed in the eastern parts of the archipelago escaped to Australia and were reorganized aa a KNIL battalion. It was this battalion that later took part in the recapture from the

Japanese of Tarakan in May 1945 and of Balikpapan in July 1945. Additional KNIL units were created as former KNIL members were liberated from Japanese camps after August 1945. These units played an important part, under Dutch command, in the two military actions against the Republic of Indonesia, which occurred from July 21 to August 4, 1947, and from December 18, 1948, to August 1, 1949. The KNIL was a force of 65,000 men when it was disbanded on July 26, 1950. Some troops were incorporated into the Royal Dutch Army and sent to Europe, others into the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia, while many were demobilized. It is reported that since February 1958 many of the latter have joined the Permesta forces in northern Celebes and are fighting as guerrillas in their home territory against the government in Djakarta.

Most of the members of the Indonesian officer corps whose careers started in the KNIL had been non-commissioned officers under the Dutch. Men like Lieutenant General A. H. Nasution or Major General T. B. Simatupang, who attended the Dutch Royal Military Academy in Bandung before 1942, are few in number and understandably achieved dominant positions. Those like the Air Force Chief of Staff, Marshall Suryadarma, or the Deputy Minister for Defense, Major General Hidajat, who attended the Royal Military Academy in Breda, the Netherlands, are even less numerous. The only former officer of field rank in the KNIL who joined the nationalist movement, Major Urip Sumohardjo, became the first Lieutenant General and Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Army. Before his death in 1948 he suffered much from the hostility of the Japanese-trained officers, who resented him because he had advanced so far in the KNIL.

Some of the Dutch-trained junior officers received additional training during the Japanese occupation of the East Indies, while others joined the anti-Japanese underground. For many more young Indonesians the years 1943-1945 marked the beginning of a military career.

A special Intelligence Branch of the General Staff of the Sixteenth Japanese Army, with headquarters in Java, known as the BEPPAN, set up an auxiliary corps -- the Barisan Pembela Tanah Air or Giyugun (Corps for the Defense of the Fatherland) -- toward the end of December 1943. The new formations commonly referred to as the PETA, consisted at first of 35 daidans which followed the organization of a Japanese battalion (daitai) but had only half the latter's number of men. A PETA battalion consisted of 522 officers and men. A few Japanese officers were attached to each battalion as instructors. In August 1944 twenty additional daidans were formed, and in November 1944 eleven more, bringing the total strength of the PETA to 66 battalions in Java. Three battalions had been formed in June 1944 in Bali. By August 1, 1945, there were 35,855 men in the PETA on Java and 1,626 in Bali.

In addition to the PETA battalions, the Japanese had recruited by August 1945 some 24,873 auxiliary soldiers in Java and 2,504 in Timor. Know as Hei-ho, these troops were armed with rifles and used for guar

duty under Japanese command.[1]

Following the imperial rescript of August 15, 1945, ordering the Japanese forces to cease all hostilities the PETA was disbanded on August 19, after a farewell address by General Nagano, Commander-in-Chief of the Sixteenth Japanese Army, who told them:

> It cannot be yet admitted that the Indonesians possess a real ability to fight against the powers of the world. Therefore enmity against foreigners shown openly by the Indonesians through armed organizations could not bring them happiness but rather cause calamities, especially as it is feared that atrocious (sic) atomic bombs might be used against them.

The events of the following years showed that the Indonesians were not afraid of atomic weapons. Whether this resulted from the intensity of their nationalist feelings or from their confidence in American good will, they certainly did not avoid clashes with the Allies.

The available data on the PETA make it possible to estimate that some 70 Indonesians may have been trained as battalion commanders (daidan-cho), some 200 as company commanders (chudan-cho), some 620 as platoon commanders (shodan-cho), and perhaps 2,000 as section commanders (bundan-cho). No Indonesians were trained for positions of field rank higher than major either by the Dutch or by the Japanese. This explains the opinion one can still hear among senior Indonesian officers that essentially they are all battalion commanders.

Numerous PETA officers later became important members of the Indonesian officer corps. These included former Army Chief of Staff Major General R. Bambang Sugene, now Indonesian Ambassador to Japan, Brigadier Generals Sudirman, Sarbini and Suharto, former territorial commanders in East Java and Central Java, who were Chudan-chos in 1945 and Brigadier General Achmad Jani, an important General Staff officer who was a shodan-cho. Few PETA battalion commanders (daidan-cho) became professional soldiers under the Republic since most of them were selected by the Japanese for political reasons from among older notables. The major exception was General Sudirman, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia from December 18, 1945, until his death on January 29, 1950, a former teacher whose military career started as a daidan-cho.

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[1]The figures given here are based on Japanese sources. Professor Kahin in his Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1952), p. 109, writes about the Peta that "at its peak strength in the middle of 1945 it numbered about 120,000 armed men." This figure is much too high, unless it includes the para-military formations mentioned below, in which case it is too low.

Some members of the Indonesian officer corps started their military career in para-military formations created by the Japanese, which became later the nuclei of irregular guerrilla units, the so-called lascars. They contributed much to the struggle for independence from 1945 to 1949 but were also a source of considerable political turbulence in the young republic. These formations received military drill, but were given only bamboo spears, not firearms. By the time of the first allied landings in Java tens of thousands of young men were prepared to rally to the defense of the Republic of Indonesia following the organizational pattern introduced by the Japanese. Lines of command had been established and a measure of group spirit prevailed. But the task of shaping these units into effective components of a defense force remained a formidable one, and the military value of these groups was dubious.

The most important lascar units included the Barisan Pelopor or Suishin-tai (Pioneer Corps) of about 80,000; the Barisan Berani Mati or Jibaku-tai (Death Defying Corps) of about 50,000; the Hizbullah or Kaikyo Seinen Teishin-tai (Islamic Youth Corps) of about 50,000; the Gaku-tai (Student Corps) of about 50,000.

During the nationalist struggle for independence a group of students who had undergone intensive anti-Western indoctrination from the Japanese formed the Tentara Peladjar (Student Army) of Central Java and the TRIP of East Java and fought bravely as the Seventeenth Brigade of the National Army. After 1950, some of them, having received additional military training, were admitted into the officer corps. Many others were given an opportunity, after demobilization, to continue their higher education in Indonesian universities or abroad.

The activist core of the Student Army has played an increasingly prominent political role since late 1956. The former leader of the Tentara Peladjar, Lt. Col. Achmadi, is an important figure in the present regime. He has been secretary general of the National Front for the liberation of West Irian (New Guinea) since November 1958; secretary of the committees on organization and programs of the new National Front being organized in 1960; and deputy minister for transmigration, cooperatives, and village community development in the presidential cabinet formed in July 1959.

The same Special Intelligence Branch of the General Staff of the Sixteenth Japanese Army (BEPPAN) that created the PETA initiated in October 1944 three training centers for Indonesian guerrilla leaders. These were known as Igo Kummu Tai. By the time of the Japanese surrender apparently a total of 150 Indonesian officers had been drilled in guerrilla tactics and returned to their homes to organize resistance movements. These officers became the hard core of the initial nationalist oppoaition to the return of the Allies to Java.

From the time of the British landings in September 1945 until the recognition of Indonesian sovereignty by the Netherlands in December 1949, Indonesian resistance was less spontaneous than either the Japanese or the

Indonesians cared to acknowledge. The Japanese, instructed by Lord Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command to maintain the status quo, asserted that all arms issued to Indonesians had been withdrawn. The Indonesians, of course, preferred not to acknowledge a Japanese contribution to their nationalist revolution -- and may indeed have resented intensely the heavy-handed Japanese occupation.

It is nevertheless certain that at least some Japanese services -- those of Admiral Mayeda -- helped the Indonesian nationalists to take over arms and that the training received in 1944 and 1945 shaped the character of the Indonesian resistance movement in the years to follow. The PETA officers who had known each other in Japanese training centers were able to regroup themselves after the battalions created by the Imperial Army had been disbanded. They formed the first military units of the Tentara Keamanan Rakjat (People's Security Army) organized by the government of the Republic of Indonesia on October 5, 1945.

Neither the Dutch nor the Japanese had been eager, for understandable reasons, to train Indonesians in the broader aspects of military science or in the use of heavy weapons. The PETA was armed only with rifles and pistols, some light machine guns, and a small number of trench mortars. When later they captured heavier Japanese material, they were incapable of integrating it either strategically or tactically into their operations. Most of the heavy material was eventually taken away by the British forces of the Southeast Asia Command.

Consequently, throughout the years of struggle against the Dutch and indeed until communist bloc military assistance permitted the expansion of AURI and ALRI, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia consisted, for practical purposes, of infantry units, used operationally in battalion strength.

GUERRILLAS, REBELS, AND VETERANS

Driven to recognize the authority of a central government, the most disciplined and rational elements among those eager to fight the Dutch in 1945-1946 became members of the regular armed forces. The more anarchically inclined elements accepted governmental control grudgingly and then only after considerable pressure had been brought to bear upon them. The Indonesian revolution had therefore a very different character from the kind of revolutionary war fought by the Chinese or Vietnamese Communists, whose guerrilla operations were carried out under the very strict discipline of a monolithic party.

In order to have an efficient Indonesian auxiliary army to support them in case of an Allied invasion, the Japanese had permitted the strengthening of national consciousness among the native troops. By the time of the proclamation of independence, on August 17, 1945, Indonesian soldiers were fanatically nationalist and ready to defend the newly-proclaimed Republic against the landing Allied forces. But intense as this nationalism was,

it lacked a rigorous ideology and was in no sense monolithic. Indeed the whole nationalist movement of Indonesia since its earliest inception after 1908 had never succeeded in creating a solid front.

As indicated above, the Japanese occupation had produced a number of militant groups with ideological differences and varying amounts of fire power at their disposal. When the Republican Government on November 3, 1945, invited the formation of political parties, the weight of these diverse groups was thrown into the balance as their leaders hastened to associate themselves with civilian political elementa. Most important among these groups were the Pesindo, (Indonesian Socialist Youth), the Hizbullah (Moslem Youth Group), the Barisan Banteng (Buffalo Legion), initially loyal to the Nationalist Party (PNI), and the Lascar Rakjat (People's Army) which leaned toward the extreme left. In January 1948, when Republican troops were ordered by the Hatta government to evacuate certain "pockets" in Java from which they waged guerrilla warfare against the Dutch, some 4,000 irregular troops, mostly from the Hizbullah and stationed in the mountains of West Java, refused to obey orders. They became the core of the Darul Islam movement, which held and is still holding the National Army at bay in parts of West Java, and expanded later into South Celebes and North Sumatra.

After May 1947 some lascar units were incorporated into the reorganized Tentara Nasional Indonesia or TNI (National Indonesian Army) and their officers given equivalent army ranks. Other lascar units were demobilized during the same period. Most of these units retained an esprit de corps which manifested itself after 1950 in the formation of some 200 veteran organizations, when the struggle for independence was over and all irregular groups were disbanded. The most important veteran's organizations were: PERBEPSI, close to the Indonesian Communist Party and claiming 300,000 members; Bekas Pedjuang Islam Persendjata, close to the Masjumi (Moslem) Party, also claiming 300,000 members; Ikatan Bekas Pedjuang, close to the Nahdatul Ulama Party, claiming 80,000 members; Corps Pedjuang Nasional Indonesia, close to the Nationalist Party (PNI), claiming 20,000; Bekas Tentara Peladjar, members of the former Students' Army, with 15,000 members. The total number of veterans has been estimated at between 500,000 and one million. The exact figure will be known only when the current official registration has been completed.

Most veterans were unprepared for civilian life. Yet they believed they were entitled to play a special role in the newly independent country. As this expectation was not fulfilled, nor appears to be in sight more than ten years after independence, the veterans have become increasingly a political problem.

The National Army took the initiative on January 2, 1957, to merge the various veterans organizations into a Veterans' Legion, with Colonel Rudi Pirngadie as chairman. On September 9, 1957, Parliament approved a Veterans Bill concerning registration, screening, and recognition of veterans. The implementation of this legislation (Law 57/1957) started late in 1958 and continues, under Deputy Minister for Veterans Affairs,

Brigadier General Sambas Atmadinata, the present chairman of the Veterans Legion.

The merger of veterans organizations into the Veterans Legion has not proceeded smoothly. In response to the recalcitrance of some of the groups, Lt. General A. H. Nasution, using his emergency powers under martial law, banned all veterans organizations except the Veterans Legion by a decree issued in November 1958.

A word of caution becomes necessary at this point. Most of the developments related above took place in Java. The course of events was significantly different elsewhere in the archipelago. Sumatra, which had little liaison with Java, was administered together with Malaya by the Seventh Imperial Japanese Army, with headquarters in Singapore. Auxiliary military organizations similar to the PETA were trained in Sumatra. From their ranks came such important officers as Colonel Barlian, former commander of South Sumatra, Colonel Sjamaun Gaharu, commander of Atjah, and Colonel Maludin Simbolon, former commander of North Sumatra and now one of the leaders of the counter-government proclaimed on February 15, 1958, in Padang. It can indeed be said that the Japanese military administration left Indonesia the heritage of two distinct armies, one based on Java, the other on Sumatra. They fought separate revolutions between 1945 and 1949 and never fully merged before they clashed openly in 1958. The civil war that has raged since then between the central government and the rebel group in Sumatra haa served to polarize still further the officers of the two armies.

In East Indonesia no PETA formations were trained, since the Celebes, Borneo, the Moluccas and the Lesser Sundas were administered by the Japanese Navy, from Headquarters in Macassar. North Celebes and Ambon, strongly Christian areas, had been traditionally recruiting grounds for the Dutch KNIL. Even after 1945, important segments of the population remained loyal to the Netherlands. This explains in part the fact that East Indonesia, unlike Java and Sumatra, is under-represented in the Indonesian officer corps although some former members of an East Indonesian guerrilla unit, the KRIS, have attained considerable standing. The KRIS was formed during the revolutionary struggle from some six thousand Christian refugees from the Celebes residing in Java. Several prominent officers of that group -- among them Colonel Ventje Sumual, former military commander of East Indonesia, who founded, in March 1957, the Permesta movement of the Celebes -- are now fighting together with the Sumatran rebels against Djakarta.

IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS

Thus the revolutionary years 1945-1949 left Indonesia with an officer corps of heterogeneous background -- men who had developed the independence of spirit that makes first-rate guerrilla fighters but who failed to acquire the ideological indoctrination needed to discipline and unify their actions. Their fanatical nationalism did not prepare

them for "revolutionary war" in Mao Tse-tung's sense, but for isolated, uncoordinated guerrilla operations.

Their struggle, however heroic, took place in an atmosphere of continuous political controversy. The military clashed repeatedly with the politicians over strategy. The politicians favored the use of diplomacy to bring the pressure of international public opinion to bear on the Dutch and thus achieve independence with a minimum of human and material sacrifices. The military insisted on an unrelenting armed struggle.

As late as August 1, 1949, General Sudirman threatened to resign his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in protest against the diplomatic negotiations with the Dutch, but finally decided that it was better "to accept the unwise policy of the government than to sacrifice the unity of the Armed Forces under my command." The bitterness of the statement speaks for itself.

Most members of the Indonesian officer corps, reacting to events as battalion commander, were unfamiliar with strategic thinking and the complex calculus it implies. They did not understand the constellation of international political forces on which the future of the Republic of Indonesia largely depended and insisted on keeping the tactical initiative against the Dutch.

Clearly, the Indonesian officer corps had not been instructed in Communist doctrines of "revolutionary war." Instead they relied on the Japanese doctrine of the "fighting spirit," which they called semangat. According to this notion, the warrior's elan was supposed to be more important than his technical training, the expectation being that its itensity would overcome all obstacles. The Japanese failed to produce politically sophisticated officers not only because of their understandable reluctance to train Indonesians in strategy, but also because they lacked it themselves. For these reasons they did not develop a political doctrine for the nationalist armies which emerged in Southeast Asia during the years 1942-1945 or an over-all plan for dealing with them. As for the members of the Indonesian officer corps, they may still be today -- to a greater extent than they realize -- the intellectual captives of the training they received from the Japanese.

Their preference for the "fighting spirit" may explain in part their revulsion against "scheming politicians," whom they always believed unwilling to sacrifice themselves for their country. This may also explain in part the lack of purposeful action by the officer corps today, although the proclamation of martial law on March 14, 1957, gave them a controlling influence over all aspects of Indonesian life.

Throughout its history, the Indonesian officer corps -- with some important exceptions -- seems to have had ideological affinities with the radical nationalist followers of the ex-Communist Tan Malaka. It was he who opposed any negotiations with the Netherlands, agitated for the total elimination of the economic and cultural influence of the Dutch, favored

an authoritarian regime based on a national front, advocated the elimination of political parties, and espoused a form of socialism, colored by intense nationalism. His followers, expressing their views through the Murba Party, considered the international agreements which led to Indonesia's sovereignty on December 27, 1949, as just another truce in the struggle against imperialism, a truce that they were willing to tolerate only because power relations made it too risky for them to take a more aggressive posture.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in December 1957, when the first "sputnik" altered the international power balance, these radical nationalists, together with the officer corps, seized the opportunity to take over the Dutch properties in Indonesia and to force the remaining Netherlanders out of the country, carrying on at last -- as they saw it -- the revolution interrupted in 1949.

THE PATTERN OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

In the last few years, especially since late 1958, military men have played an important politicial role in several new countries in Asia and Africa. In Indonesia, as elsewhere, military intervention in civilian affairs has been regarded as a more or less recent "erosion of democracy." As a matter of fact the military have been an important political factor throughout the whole fifteen-year period since Indonesia proclaimed its independence.

In the absence of both political and military traditions and experience, the National Army had an ill-defined place and purpose in the new state. Based at first on PETA units and youth organizations, "this loosely organized army was composed of highly autonomous and virtually independent constituent units having a territorial basis and subject to varying degrees of control by the Indonesian National Committees of their respective areas, which were charged with their maintenance and supply."[2]

Since they were formed neither by an old-established state, nor by a ruthless monolithic party, Indonesia's armed forces were never completely subjected to strong political or governmental control. And it was this lack of control that led to an unfortunate pattern of civil-military relations in which in the first year of the Republic, and frequently thereafter, factions in the army as well as irregular military organizations played an important role in politics. Not less frequently the politicians interfered in the internal affairs of the armed forces and tried to use them in their political game.

Had the officer corps been a well-organized force standing outside the political arena, it is conceivable that it might have intervened in

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[2]Kahin, G. McT., Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1952), p. 141.

public affairs, only at crucial moments, decisively and purposefully. But the very fact of its continuous involvement in the struggle for power combined with its heterogeneous military and ideological background has forced the officer corps to play a different and less commendable role. Being involved in, rather than detached from, current politics, the military acquired the habit of settling for small gains, individual rewards or, at best, tactical objectives. Thus they have failed until now to close ranks and use their collective strength to create a strong and efficient government. Under these circumstances, moral deterioration and material corruption have set in. Neither guided by strong principles of apolitical professionalism nor informed by political convictions, the Indonesian officer corps has not succeeded in assuming either the role of protector of a constitutional order or that of executor of a political program. Instead, it has drifted with the mainstream of the country's turbulent and erratic public life. This has been true throughout the history of the Republic.

In the first months of 1946, when Tan Malaka organized the Persatuan Perdjuangan, a movement against the government of Prime Minister Soetan Sjahrir, it not only incorporated major military organizations, but had, according to Professor Kahin, "the outspoken backing of General Sudirman." The movement called for the abolition of political parties and opposed diplomatic negotiations "as long as the enemy is still in our country." But while General Sudirman and other army leaders were tempted to overthrow or weaken the Sjahrir Cabinet, they were not interested in a cabinet dominated by Tan Malaka, whose ultimate objective was to take Sukarno's place. Tan Malaka, together with men who are today in Sukarno's cabinet, such as Mohammed Yamin and Chaerul Saleh, was arrested in March 1946 on order of the Sjahrir cabinet but was released the following June by troops of Major General Sudarsono's Third Division, who then kidnapped Prime Minister Sjahrir. General Sudirman, as Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces remained neutral. Meanwhile, Dr. Muwardi, the commander of the Barisan Banteng, one of the major irregular armed organizations supporting Tan Malaka, was arrested in May 1946 on Sjahrir's orders, but was released a few days later by General Sudirman, whose equivocal attitude during the first half of 1946 strengthened the opposition and weakened the government.

General Sudirman and other army leaders who originated the PETA not only clashed with the Prime Minister on the strategy of the national struggle but was apparently motivated by no altogether unjustified apprehensions that Sjahrir, who was openly hostile to Japanese-trained officers, planned to replace them. As protection against a possible coup by Tan Malaka and the Persatuan Perdjuangan movement, the Sjahrir government created in 1946 the Siliwangi Division and the Mobile Police Brigade. The officers in these organizations had been trained by the Dutch rather than by the Japanese. Over these units the cabinet did not give General Sudirman control.

The political tensions of the period led, in June 1946, to the proclamation of a state of siege in all of Java. On June 8, in an effort to co-ordinate the policies of the cabinet, of the army command, and of the irregular armed organizations, a National Defense Council was

established. In It General Sudirman continued to oppose Prime Minister Sjahrir. This state of affairs persisted until the kidnapping of Sjahrir in July 1946 and his rescue by Siliwangi troops from West Java and Pesindo (Socialist Youth) units from East Java, moving against rebellious Third Division and Barisan Banteng formations, made it clear that the Republic was heading toward civil war. Then President Sukarno was finally able to convince General Sudirman to come out against a Persatuan Perdjuangan coup d'etat. Tan Malaka and his most important followers were rearrested, and subsequently his direct influence on the army declined. As part of the bargain General Sudirman's own position was consolidated by a judicious distribution of the various politically antagonistic armed units throughout Republican-controlled Java. He remained a major political factor until his death in January 1950.

For two years after 1946, when the Army had been weakened by the intrigues of Tan Malaka, its politics were dominated by the activities of another politician of the extreme left, Amir Sjarifuddin. He was Minister of Defense in the Sjahrir cabinets, Prime Minister from July 1947 until January 1948 and ended up being executed by the army following the Communist Madiun rebellion of September 1948. Sjarifuddin was able to secure a substantial personal following within the officer corps. He also manipulated the politics of the irregular armed organizations which he controlled through a Fighting Bureau in the Ministry of Defense. After being replaced as Prime Minister by Dr. Mohammed Hatta, in January 1948, Sjarifuddin organized an opposition movement, the Front Demokrasi Rakjat (People's Democratic Front--or FDR), through which Moscow-oriented Communists tried to achieve their political objectives in the Republic. In July 1948, according to documents published by Professor Kahin,[3] Sjarifuddin estimated that the Front Demokrasi Rakjat controlled about thirty-five percent of the regular and irregular armed forces of the Republic, besides having influence over considerable percentages of certain other army units.

In the midst of growing political tensions, Dr. Hatta, soon after he assumed the function of prime minister, in February 1948, initiated a "rationalization program" for the armed forces, which was destined to become a major political issue for years to come. The program called for the demobilization of regular and irregular units so as to reduce the armed forces initially to 160,000 men and eventually to a well-trained, well-equipped, mobile, regular army of 57,000. These forces, operating at battalion strength, were to be prepared to carry out offensive guerrilla operations against the Dutch in case of renewed attack against the Republic. Colonel (later Lt. General) A. H. Nasution played an important role in developing the principles of reorganization, which were intended to ease the Republic's serious budgetary difficulties. They also drew a lesson from the events of July 1947 when relatively large but disorganized Republican forces were incapable of preventing the Dutch from achieving their major territorial objectives in only two weeks.

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[3] Op. cit., p. 270.

The Hatta government's program threatened to destroy the basis of Sjarifuddin's influence within the army and was therefore strongly opposed by the FDR, which was able to rally to its support certain officers and troops facing demobilization. Some units had to be disarmed by force. The Fourth (Senopati) Division, commanded by a Communist sympathizer, Lt. Col. Suadi, rebelled against the Republic and supported the proclamation of a Communist government in the city of Madiun in Central Java in September 1948. The rebellion resulted in several weeks of heavy fighting and was finally crushed by troops of the Siliwangi Division of West Java and the Sungkono Division of East Java, ordered into action by General Sudirman, who this time was on the side of the cabinet.

The rationalization program had not been completed when the Dutch forces again attacked the Republic on December 19, 1948. The accumulated experience and trials of the preceding three years were beginning to produce results. Although the leaders of the government, including President Sukarno and Prime Minister Hatta, were captured by the Dutch, the armed forces under the command of General Sudirman offered spirited and intense resistance until a cease-fire was agreed upon in August 1949. The fundamental estrangement between politicians and military came in this period, when negotiations between the Republic and the Netherlands, leading to the Roem-Van Royen agreement of May 7, 1949, stopped guerrilla warfare and brought independence under conditions which maintained for the following eight years the controlling economic position of Dutch capital and enterprise in Indonesia.

Professor Kahin, who was in Indonesia at the time, noted that the backing of Tan Malaka's nationslist Communist Partai Murba increased significantly as a result of the widespread dissatisfaction with the Roem-Van Royen Agreement, which was also strongly resented by the Republican troops, particularly those who had to evacuate their guerrilla strongholds.

THE OFFICER CORPS' MOVEMENT INTO POLITICS

To recapitulate, Indonesia's armed forces had fought intensely, under chaotic conditions, in the last ten weeks of 1945 against Japanese troops carrying out the orders of Lord Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command, and against newly landed British and Dutch troops. Isolated actions continued during 1946 and 1947, without central direction and often at cross-purposes with the diplomatic efforts of the government. Thier efforts against the first major Dutch attack, in July 1947, were largely unsuccessful, but from December 1948 until August 1949, they offered vigorous resistance to the second major Dutch military effort. These shared experiences and organizational efforts created an esprit de corps among Indonesian officers. This bond was further strengthened during 1950, when the Army played a major role in transforming the Federal Republic of Indonesia (consisting of the original Republic proclaimed on August 17, 1945, and fifteen federal states and autonomous areas created and supported by the Dutch) into the unitary Republic of Indonesia. The

unification of the country involved armed intervention in various parts of the archipelago, especially in the Celebes in April 1950, and heavy fighting in Amboina in late 1950.

The officer corps had therefore good reason to consider itself an important factor in the creation of the new state. The military felt strongly that they were not only executive agents but "shareholders" of the corporate body, the Republic of Indonesia. Developments between 1950 and 1952 only strengthened their already deeply ingrained lack of confidence in the ability of the politicians to "manage" the corporate body, the Indonesian state.

The conflict between the military and the politicians again came to a head in the famous affair of October 17, 1952, an event too complex to disentangle in a few paragraphs, especially as none of the protagonists are yet fully prepared to dispel the many smokescreens beclouding deeds and motivations. Briefly, the Chief of Staff of the Army, Colonel A. H. Nasution, and other key figures in the Army and the Ministry of Defense with identical or parallel interests, wanted to take advantage of the urgent need for budgetary retrenchments, unsolved since 1948, to pension off elements which did not meet the standards of a professional army -- as they conceived it. This would have affected many who had entered the Army directly from the guerrilla movement or who, for reasons of intellect and temperament, invoked the supremacy of the "fighting spirit" of the PETA over technical proficiency.

The opposition to the reduction in the Armed forces was supported by pressures from President Sukarno. It was able to have a motion adopted in Parliament which amounted to an expression of non-confidence in the leadership and organization of the Defense Ministry and Armed Forces, namely Sultan Hamengku Buwono, Mr. Ali Budiardjo, Major General T. B. Simatupang, and Colonel A. H. Nasution who supported the retrenchment program. The next morning, October 17, 1952, several thousand persons demonstrated in the streets of Djakarta, asking for the dissolution of Parliament. Swelling crowds assembled in front of the presidential palace, while several tanks and armored cars stood idle, their guns trained on the palace. President Sukarno soothed the crowd, promised elections as early as possible, but refused to dissolve Parliament "as this would mean to ask me to become a dictator." The crowds dispersed.

Having demonstrated his hold on the masses, President Sukarno was now in a strong position for receiving a delegation of senior Army officers, who attributed the country's political instability to the largely appointed, unrepresentative Provisional Parliament. Whether they asked the President to assume dictatorial powers in order to rid the country of politicians is still controversial. In any case, Sukarno refused to yield to any of their demands.

If one discounts President Sukarno's commitment to parliamentary democracy, a plausible assumption in the light of his earlier and later actions, one is led to the conclusion that he was trying to avoid becoming

the captive of a military junta, which would have been even more difficult than the party system. His image of himself, then as now, was probably that of the leader of a broad mass movement, responding directly to his oratorical appeal. Though working for the disruption of the party system, he was not prepared to let the military take over but rather to become, himself, the unchallenged national leader of Indonesia.

As to the officers, they failed to achieve their purpose not only because the President was able to intimidate them by his magnetic hold on the masses, but also -- perhaps primarily -- because of the lack of consensus and discipline among themselves. Not only was the officer corps divided among those who favored professionalism and those who believed in the "fighting spirit," but unity and purposefulness were lacking among the protagonists of professionalism. To illustrate, while Colonel Nasution, Chief of Staff of the Army, was being hostile to Parliament and inclining toward an authoritarian and militaristic outlook, Major General Simatupang, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, was arguing against a military dictatorship. Other officers close to these two leaders of the Army acted at cross-purposes during the October 17 affair, albeit in ways which, in their judgment would have furthered the interests of their groups as a whole.

If one keeps in mind the character of the Indonesian officers as independent battalion commanders, lacking the training and habit of acting in accordance with broad strategic plans worked out by a general staff, their guerrilla-type political activities become understandable. This basic assumption has to be kept in mind in explaining the political actions of various senior officers in the years after 1952, including the repeated rebellions dating from 1956 in Sumatra and the Celebes.

TOWARD CIVIL WAR

On December 5, 1952, Colonel Nasution was suspended as Chief of Staff of the Army, whereupon he proceeded to organize a political party, the IPKI. An officer representing an almost diametrically opposed view, Colonel Bambang Sugeng, a former PETA officer, became Chief of Staff of the Army. During the latter's tenure of office, an effort was made to re-establish the unity of the Army, divided since the October 17 affair. In February 1955, a meeting was held in Djogjakarta, to which 289 senior officers were invited. In a highly emotional atmosphere the officers visited the graves of General Sudirman and Lt. Gen. Urip, their leaders during the revolution. A statement read there proclaimed the following:

> We are not yet able to offer you incense in the form of a free, secure, prosperous and calm Indonesia. We are only able to offer you our promise that we shall follow the path of your souls' greatness, of your great sacrifice and that we will take care of the gift which is your legacy.

Obviously ashamed of their country's condition five years after

independence, the participants signed a solemn pledge to maintain unity and solidarity within the Army, this pledge which came to be known as the "Djogja Charter," expressed the officer corps' quest for unity, professionalism, and political non-interference in military affairs, especially with regard to senior appointmenta.

Four months after the meeting in Djogakarta another affair involving the Army rocked Indonesia. Realizing that he could not carry out the mandate of the officer corps, Major General Bambang Sugeng resigned as Chief of Staff on May 11, 1955. This became a test case for the willingness of the politicians to abstain henceforth from a personnel policy based on political considerations. The cabinet chose as successor a relatively junior and controversial officer, Colonel Bambang Utojo, who was unacceptable to the Army.

On June 27, 1955, when Bambang Utojo, promoted to Major General, was officially to be installed as the politicians' choice for the position of Chief of Staff, the Army boycotted the ceremony on orders from the Acting Chief of Staff, Colonel Z. Lubis. In a letter to the cabinet, Colonel Lubis refused to surrender authority to Major General Utojo and asserted that he was supported in this decision by all the territorial commanders. The latter, along with the territorial General Staff officers, then met in Djakarta and issued a statement on July 2, requesting that, in the interests of subordinating the Army to the Government, a clear dividing line should be drawn between political responsibility and technical responsibility, in making the appointments. The next day a meeting of the Indonesian Officers' Association (IPRI), of which Colonel Rudi Pirngadie was chairman, requested that Major General Utojo be removed and replaced by a Chief of Staff selected on the basis of seniority and ability, a request which if carried out, would make Colonels A. H. Nasution, M. Simbolon, Gatot Subroto and Z. Lubis the most eligible candidates.

In spite of the fact that the Minister of Defense, Iwa Kusumasumantri, the main culprit in playing politics with the Army, resigned, the cabinet of Dr. Ali Sastroamidjojo fell on July 24. President Sukarno, establishing a pattern of leaving the country at the height of a political crisis, went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, leaving the Vice President Hatta to handle the situation. On October 27, the new cabinet of B. Harahap, appointed Colonel A. H. Nasution Chief of Staff of the Army and promoted him to Major General.

The June 27, 1955, affair can be considered to be the dividing line between the period when the Army was mainly concerned with resisting political interference in its internal affairs and the period when it began to play an active role in politics. In the summer of 1955 an important group of senior Army officers decided that the parliamentary system was definitely not suitable for Indonesia and considered a coup d'etat. But in view of the fact that the first national elections had been scheduled for September 1955, they decided to wait and to re-examine the situation in the summer of 1956. Their guiding consideration in postponing the coup was the fear that they might stand accused of destroying the chances of constitutional democracy in Indonesia. Therefore, they

limited themselves to maneuvers leading to the downfall of the Ali cabinet. When the general condition of the country continued to deteriorate after the new Parliament started to function in 1956 and Dr. Ali had returned to power, this same group of officers made their move.

Colonel Z. Lubis, deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, and Colonel A. Kawilakang, territorial commander of West Java, initiated in the second half of 1956 a number of unsuccessful moves against the cabinet, which cast serious doubt on the capacity of these officers to plot successfully. Several senior officers were arrested. Then the plotter's efforts shifted to Sumatra and the Celebes, where between December 1956 and March 1957 they formed several Revolutionary Councils with the support of those local interests who were dissatisfied with the economic and administrative policies of the central government in Djakarta. The conflict reached a climax in February 1958, when the rebel officers, who had been joined by some of the most prominent members of the leading Moslem opposition party, the Masjumi, proclaimed a counter-government, the Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Rebpulic of Indonesia). Thus began the civil war that is still going on todsy in several parts of Sumatra and the Celebes.

The underlying reasons for the course of events in the last four years are not easy to ascertain. Colonels M. Simbolon, and Z. Lubis, who were on opposite side in the October affair of 1952 and who were rival candidates for the position of Chief of Staff in June 1955, are todsy fighting together in Sumatra. While both are Sumatran Bataks, Colonel Lubis is a Moslem as is Lt. Gen. Nasution, while Colonel Simbolon is a Christian. In the Celebes, Colonel A. Kawilarang, a strong supporter of the October affair, and Colonel J. Warouw, one if its most energetic opponents, are now comrades-in-arms in the struggle against Djakarta.

Leaving aside the ever present factor of personal ambitions, the most obvious explanation would be that all these senior officers, and their junior commanders in Sumatra and the Celebes, are now fighting for the "states' rights" of their respective provinces. According to the P.R.R.I., at the height of the civil war at least 30 rebel battalions were operating in guerrilla formations in Sumatra and 17 in the Celebes. The rebel officers were at last espousing a cause of wider popular appeal than the problem of relations of the Army with the Government: All these groups are united by a strong anti-communist and religious outlook, their common enmity to President Sukarno and probably to Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Nasution, and a desire to live in a decentralized, federal republic.

THE SEEDS OF MILITARISM

The senior officers who remained loyal to the government in Djakarta and the radical nationalist followers of Tan Malaka, who had been ignored

or even ostracized during the first decade of Indonesia's independent existence, have converged in giving political support to the cabinet formed by President Sukarno on July 9, 1959. Political developments in the Republic have run full circle, and power is now in the hands of the extra-parliamentary forces opposed to representative democracy based on a multi-party system.

On July 5, 1959, President Sukarno re-enacted by decree the Constitution of 1945, which provided for a presidential form of government. The decision to return to the 1945 Constitution had been announced by the Djuanda cabinet on February 20 1959. This decision was made following a two-day conference, held on February 11-12, at which the problem of political stability in Indonesia was discussed. It was attended by the senior officers of the General Staff and the territorial commanders of the Indonesian National Army. Between February and July the government struggled without success to obtain the support of the political parites represented in the Constituent Assembly elected in December 1955 for the acceptance of the 1945 Constitution. When these efforts failed, Lieutenant General A. H. Nasution, in his capacity as Central War Administrator under martial law, issued a decree banning political activities. His objective was to stabilize the situation until President Sukarno's return from a 67-day tour around the world on June 29. With celerity unusual for Indonesia a new cabinet was formed on July 9, and junior positions in the government were filled three days later. The Army received two of the nine positions in the inner cabinet and five of the twenty-five junior ministerial posts. An Indonesian Air Force officer was also included in the new cabinet, while the Chiefs of Staff of the Air Force and the Navy and the Chief of the State Police became ministers ex-officio. Thus members of the Armed Forces came to occupy one-quarter of all posts in the new Indonesian cabinet, a significant development in view of the fact that only two Army officers had been in the proceding cabinet, formed in April 1957 with Ing. Djuanda as Prime Minister. No representatives of the Army had been included in the preceding sixteen cabinets formed since 1945, and altogether only four or five persons with any military background had ever been cabinet members.

The most significant development following the shake-up was the appointment of Lieutenant General Nasution as Minister for Security and Defense, who, as a member of the inner cabinet, was to co-ordinate the Departments of Defense, Justice, Police, and Veterans Affairs while maintaining his position as Chief of Staff of the Army. For the first time, a military person and, even more important, an Army officer on active service became Minister of Defense.

The only other powerful group in the cabinet, balancing the military, were the radical nationalists associated in the first years of the Republic with Tan Malaka, who were members of the radical national Murba Party or at least temperamentally and ideologically close to that group. On March 5, 1960, President Sukarno dissolved the Parliament elected on September 29, 1955. On June 25, 1960, an appointed Parliament, including fifteen Army

officers and twenty Air Force, Navy and Police officers, was installed. The officer corps has now been incorporated into the new authoritarian system, described as "democracy with leadership" or "guided democracy." Its representatives have taken an oath of loyalty to a Parliament that was told by the President, when he installed it on June 25, 1960, that it should not make decisions by majority vote but refer to him issues on which unanimity could not be reached.

THE "MISSION" OF THE OFFICER CORPS

The questions, central to an understanding of Indonesian politics today are: Why did the officer corps not take over? Why do they seem to settle for short-run personal advantages in a country on the verge of collapse? What happened to the "mission" of the officer corps?

A prominent and knowledgeable senior officer, who acted for several years as the official spokesman of the Army, wrote in April 1960:

> Although the Army, with its strong leadership, organizational structure, and moral authority, has attained a considerable position, from which it has control over the mass movements in the social organization as well as over the administration of the country, yet, unlike Burma and Pakistan, where the Army took over power suddenly and assumed full control immediately, such a development will not occur in Indonesia.
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> The reasons for this conclusion are based on the following observations:
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> 1. The senior members of the officer corps of the Indonesian National Army, who were the product of the struggle for independence, have to consider themselves as a united group, during this period of transition, in order to save the country from further disintegration caused by internal political quarrels, which already several times have led to an armed clash. They must also consider themselves as a united group in order to save the country from being subservient to any kind of foreign power.
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> 2. Their primary consideration has been the thought that they do not wish to be accused by history of having destroyed the progress of democracy, or of having deprived the Indonesian nation of the opportunity to develop as a constitutional democracy, compatible with the politically advanced countries of the world.
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> 3. Taking into account the heterogeneous background of the senior army officers with their respective individual

political views, any potential military dictatorship will be doomed to failure by the internal controversy within the Army itself.

4. The position of President Sukarno in the constellation of Indonesian power is a safeguard against any Army dictatorship.[4]

The argument that the officer corps does not wish to be accused by history of having destroyed the progress of democracy was indeed voiced in the secret consultations held among the officers who discussed s possible coup before the 1955 elections. Now that the progress of democracy has been arrested by President Sukarno, such scruples seem less convincing, unless one assumes that the officer corps really confuses the new "guided democracy" with real democracy. But the explanation is too simple to be acceptable.

The argument concerning the dominant position of President Sukarno in the constellation of Indonesian power also needs fuller examination. President Sukarno is indeed an orator of magnetic power and a masterful political tactician. What is more, he is a man of great charm and vigor. He has history on his side as one of the early and vigorous exponents of the nationalist movement. Circumstances dating back at least to the beginning of the Japanese occupation in 1942 have made him the symbol of the Republic of Indonesia. But at the age of 59 he has not shown that he is either a major political thinker or an able administrator. He was neither the strategist of the revolution, nor the architect of a viable new state. His dominant position is to be explained largely by the weakness and confusion of the other political forces active on the Indonesian scene.

Basic cultural factors should also be taken into account. Some argue that Indonesian culture is trongly "shame-oriented." To feel malu (ashamed, bashful) is peculiarly meaningful and unpleasant to Indonesians. Repeatedly, in the short history of the Republic, prominent figures have been kidnapped by their opponents, not in order to be mistreated or eliminated, but to be shamed into doing what their opponents wanted. Others prefer to emphasize the fact that in a peasant society people are "conformity-oriented." They have a high affiliation-need, like to please each other, and do not like to hurt others' feelings.

Indonesian culture has also a strongly differential attitude toward the senior person in any hierarchy or social structure. Commanding officers, top bureaucrats, teachers, irrespective of age, are called bapak (father) by their subordinates or followers. Westernized Indonesians deplore this

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[4] Colonel Rudi Pirngadie, The Problem of the Government and The Army in Indonesia (Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, April, 1960), pp. 101-103.

attitude, which they call bapakism and regard it as a weakness of their society.

In the early phase of the struggle for independence and the egalitarian spirit which it generated, President Sukarno and other national leaders were called Bung (brother). As years went by, Sukarno shrewdly requested not to be called Bung Karno but Bapak Presiden. In recent years even this form of address came to be considered too familiar and it is now expected that he be referred to as His Noble Excellency the President and Supreme Commander.

It is conceivable that the attitude of the officer corps toward President Sukarno is the combined effect of malu and bapakism, the shame of turning against the father figure which is the symbol of the state. However tenuous, this explanation seems more meaningful in the Indonesian context than a devotion to constitutional principles which are, after all, the President's own formulations, not even legitimized by plebiscite. If President Sukarno is "a safeguard against any Army dictatorship," it is only because the Army is unwilling to challenge him.

If the reluctance of the military to assume full responsiblity cannot be explained by devotion to constitutionalism, neither can it be understood in terms of a solidarity of interests which would give the Army advantages under President Sukarno's regime that it could not otherwise enjoy. Indeed, it can be argued that President Sukarno forces the Army to accept a situation which is not completely to its liking. The radical nationalism group has become the Army's major rival within the cabinet in competing for control of the economic sector and shaping the cultural life of the country. Carefully balancing off one group against the other, President Sukarno sees to it that neither becomes dominant.

Even more disturbing to the Army is the fact that President Sukarno uses the Communist Party of Indonesia as a countervailing power. Though not in the cabinet, the Communists are handsomely represented on all other major governing bodies and are increasingly paired with the military in local government. Most senior Army officers are opposed to Communism, for ideological, religious, and nationalist reasons. Yet they tolerate the present position of the Communist Party apparently out of deference to President Sukarno's wishes.

This reduces Colonel Pirngadie's argument to his first and third observations. The essense of what he says is that the officer corps recognizes that it should act as a united group but that internal divisions make consensus impossible.

Important in any political system, consensus in a particularly compelling notion in Indonesian culture, which lacks the habit of decision-making by majority vote but relies on slow and subtle consultation (musjawarah) out of which is expected to emerge the sense of the meeting (mufakat). The Indonesian elites have hoped, even since independence that this method of decision-making originating, apparently, in the village communities of old, can be applied by the major instrumentalities

of the modern state, including the cabinet. The officer corps has tried repeatedly to achieve mufakat with no better luck than elsewhere in the Republic.

The most plausible explanation of why the Indonesian officer corps has not acted, until now, as a true reform movement is probably found in their lack of self-confidence, generated by internal divisions. Furthermore, to the extent to which they are still dominated by the belief that "fighting spirit" is more important than rational thinking, the Indonesian military may still think that the present radical nationalist regime is capable of solving Indonesia's problems.

A TENTATIVE BALANCE SHEET

Indonesia thus enters the second decade of its independent existence under conditions strikingly different from those prevailing in the first years of this new state. The recognition of sovereignty was granted by the Netherlands, on December 27, 1949, after four years of Dutch efforts to re-establish, directly or indirectly, colonial control. The years of revolutionary struggle have left a heritage of radical nationalism, have generated intense conflicts within Indonesian society and have created complex social groupings and alignments in the archipelago.

The trends evolving from the first years of the new state are still difficult to interpret. But they indicate already that developments in the early formative years of a new state do not necessarily shape the future in a predictable fashion. Half-way through its first decade of independent existence Indonesia seemed to be headed toward democracy. Political activities were unrestricted beyond the norms of more mature systems, so that even subversion and rebellion were tolerated. The press enjoyed a freedom which was used to the point of license. The individual felt that he lived in a free society. The rural masses experienced governments less inclined to interfere in their lives than any that had preceded them for generations. Low pressure characterized all aspects of public life in Indonesia, thus giving meaning to the slogan MERDEKA (Freedom) in the name of which the struggle for independence had been fought. Today the opposite situation prevails. Tensions are high and current trends point in the direction of militarist authoritarianism and possible radical totalitarianism.

In the current Indonesian situation the term "instability" denotes not a tendency toward superficial change among the political elite at the top of the social pyramid, but the profound convulsions of a society which has not yet found its identity and faces great difficulties in shaping its specific character. Political oscillations of increasing amplitude have led to the establishment of a personal dictatorship backed by the military. This coalition of forces may seem to bring to a temporary halt the motions of the body politic, but far from solving basic problems, it is likely to make the underlying pressures more explosive and the formulation of solutions of lasting value more difficult or even impossible.

In addition to setting the stage for national tragedy the military play an important role both as scenario-writers and as actors. Indeed, without their participation, developments would very probably have been substantially different, whether for the better, in the form of a healthier and more promising political system based on parties, or for the worse, as a communist take-over it is difficult to say. Instead of safeguarding and promoting a process of growth in the direction of a stable and prosperous society the military has become deeply involved in Indonesia's current misfortunes.

A few years ago some observers had high hopes concerning the wholesome role of the officer corps in a new and inexperienced political system such as Indonesia's. It was argued[5] that the officer corps of Indonesia, and of some other countries in Southeast Asia, were the product of an unusual process of natural selection and included some of the new countries' best human material, men with above-average qualities of leadership and patriotism as well as a commitment to moral values. In these respects they compared favorably in most cases with the politicians who had become the major beneficiaries of nationalist revolutions.

One was tempted to conclude that such men, acting as a group, having the advantages of organization, discipline and dedication were fit to give their country the guidance, direction, and inspiration necessary for constructive development, as well as to exercise the control necessary in an immature democratic society facing the danger of communist subversion.

Today such optimism seems less justified although it should not yet be discarded completely. While the role of the military in the public life of Indonesia has increased considerably since martial law was introduced on March 14, 1957, and shows signs of becoming dominant, it is open to doubt that the military are harbingers of progress. Portents of surprisingly rapid growth of militarism cannot be dismissed lightly. Yet the officers have not assumed full responsibility. As they displace the civilian political elite who became discredited during the first decade of Indonesia's independent existence, the military appear less and less different from the politicians whose positions they now occupy. In Indonesia, as elsewhere, plus ca change.... Is the Indonesian officer corps to be commended for not establishing a military dictatorship, for continuing to subordinate itself to the civilian authority of President Sukarno? Their leaders may tell themselves at present that, unlike their opposite numbers in some other countries, they have shown considerable restraint in not using the means of coercion at their disposal to destroy the democratic-republican regime of their country. But in reality this regime has already been destroyed by the events of the last few years. An elected parliament has been dismissed and replaced by an appointed body of men, the composition of which is determined at best by

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[5] Cf. my articles "The Role of Political Organizations in Indonesia," Far Eastern Survey, September 1958; and "Southeast Asia as a Problem Area in the Next Decade," World Politics, April 1959.

the power relations within a small clique. Martial law is used to control the public life of the country. Civil war has become endemic, albeit in the form of guerrilla and counter-guerrilla operations. In all this the officer corps plays a major role. But it does not use its capabilities for reform and progress. It accepts the role of partners or even instruments of a group of emotional, radical nationalists and shares in the benefits of power without serving, as far as can be seen, the interests of the people of Indonesia.

The rather disenchanted reflections of the preceding paragraphs need factual justification. This is easily available to observers of the Indonesian scene:

(1) Far from being united in carrying out the mission of protecting the integrity of the state for the creation of which they fought some fifteen years ago, and purposeful in guiding its future development, the officer corps of Indonesia, is deeply divided, within the branches of the armed forces as well as among them, by personal jealousies, conflicting outlooks, and special interests. Whether in the open conflict of civil war or in the intrigues and manipulations taking place within the military establishment controlled by Djakarta, much of the energy of the Indonesian officer corps is wasted in the pursuit of personal ambitions. The struggle among the officers inflicts untold damage on society as a whole.

(2) Instead of carrying out a control function in a yet unstable political system, providing the tutelage which is indispensable to a new country, the officer corps of Indonesia has become an instrument of repression at the disposal of President Sukarno. It is helping him maintain a controlling position based, not on legitimate authority, but on carefully nurtured and manipulated confusion and on the inherent weakness of a system incapable, so far, of producing meaningful and acceptable governmental alternatives.

(3) A self-denying group of young revolutionaries, modest and egalitarian in spirit, who took to arms and uniforms for the sake of a nationalist ideal, are now turning into middleaged militarists, enjoying the perquisites of office, symbols of status, and benefits of power. After years of restraint when promotions were slow but tolerated as necessary under the circumstances of a poor country, officers are now promoted rapidly and special benefits are more and more widely bestowed upon them -- and this in a country whose economic conditions are deteriorating with catastrophic rapidity.

(4) Men who fought well with a medley of arms of nondescript origin are now spending a very substantial proportion of national resources for the acquisition of modern arms, which may satisfy their vanity and possibly provide a better means for internal coercion but add little to the international security of their country. The argument of a persistent Dutch threat from Western New Guinea cannot be taken seriously. The Netherlands

are not going to try to reconquer the empire lost after World War II. Not in this day and age.

These developments suggest that the revolutionary officer corps of Indonesia is becoming a militarist elite. It controls the country or at least participates in its government, not to fulfill a mission, not to realize an ideal, but for selfish advantage as a pseudo-political party which gradually eliminates other political parties.

THE FUTURE

Developments in a militarist direction have been rapid, but it is premature to say that the trend is irreversible. Perhaps overnight the General Staff or some younger members of the officer corps of Indonesia will strike, sweep their house clean, and rededicate themselves to higher purposes. In the absence of reliable instruments for the assessment of human motivations, one has to rely on circumstantial evidence. It may turn out later that current developments are only the preparatory phase, however slow and confused, of a struggle with deeper meaning. But for the time being, an optimistic interpretation does not seem justified.

Much hinges on the intentions of Lieutenant General Nasution. His opponents are ready to argue that he is an ambitious and opportunistic officer who, having been outmaneuvered in October 1952 by President Sukarno, took advantage of favorable circumstances three years later to become again Chief of Staff of the Army, determined to keep this position and advance his career. If so, then he is only a professional soldier but a good one, as his strategy against the rebellion in Sumatra and the Celebes showed in the early months of 1958. He is willing to serve the Chief of State and his government faithfully and reap a professional soldier's normal rewards in terms of prestige, promotions, and power.

But it is also possible, following a different line of reasoning, to argue that Lieutenant General Nasution is pursuing a long-range political strategy of much broader scope. He spent the three years he was barred from active service in analyzing the problems of Indonesian society. He may have reached the conclusion that the political guerrilla tactics of the other senior officers with political interests and ambitions were wrong, that for a vast majority of the Indonesian nation President Sukarno is the living symbol of the Republic and any direct political attack on him is doomed to fail. Being seventeen years younger than Sukarno, Nasution may have decided to wait until succession to the presidency becomes possible in ways that would be accepted as legitimate by the Indonesian people.

Furthermore, Nasution may have reached the conclusion, shared by some of his colleagues, that the officer corps is not yet capable of governing Indonesia. A direct attempt to make the Army a tighter professional

organization failed in the early years of the Republic, leading to the October 17, 1952 affair. The following years showed that most commanders, having the mentality of independent, locally-rooted guerrilla leaders, were not amenable to the centralized direction of a General Staff and tended toward war-lordism. It would have been reasonable to conclude that such an army could not become the instrument of government of a poorly integrated archipelago.

Taking advantage of a variety of circumstances, Nasution -- if this attempt to read his mind has merit -- is now engaged in making the Indonesian Army into the organization which could eventually stabilize and develop the country. A pattern seems to emerge:

1. The proclamation of martial law on March 14, 1957 gave the officer corps vast responsibilities for civilian affairs.

2. The take-over of Dutch properties in December 1957, as well as control of the economic life of the country at large, gave the officer corps additional responsibilities and the opportunity to acquire managerial experience.

3. The formation of a National Front for the Liberation of West Irian in January 1958, with the Army Chief of Staff as general chairman and the territorial commanders as local chairmen, provided the officer corps with the task of organizing and directing a political mass-movement.

4. The military campaigns against the rebellion in Sumatra and the Celebes, since February 1958, strengthened the discipline of the Army, improved the training of officers and troops, and forced the government to make resources available for the increase and modernization of its equipment.

5. Numerous conferences of territorial commanders, held frequently in the last four years under Lieutenant General Nasution's leadership, create the habit of joint examination of military, political, economic and social problems and of policy-making by the senior officers.

6. Finally, the return to the Constitution of 1945, initiated by the Army, provided the institutional framework for a strong executive and eliminated the parliamentary system and the controlling influence of politicians, while coping with the danger of growing communist influence without a frontal attack on the PKI.

It can of course be argued that this interpretation of Lieutenant General Nasution's long-term plans is too neat, that the logic of the situation forced the Army to make one move at a time without long-term planning, in response to events over which the officer corps had no control. But if Nasution's failure on October 17, 1952, taught him the value of long-range strategic planning in politics, his time-table may be such as to make it difficult to see the total pattern.

The Army may well give itself several years for the completion of this operation. In April 1958 when most observers agreed that the Communist Party was likely to gain a major victory in the elections set for the following year, Brigadier General Djatikusumo told the press:

> The nation now needs a non-party government, backed by the Army, with elections suspended for six years.

Fifteen months later, such a government was formed, to be in office -- according to the Constitution of 1945 -- until 1964.

Supported by the officer corps during its first year, the government has been unable to solve any of the country's basic problems. Polarization of political forces is now increasing, with the Army as the rallying point of anti-communist elements, although the Communist Party of Indonesia continues to make advances, gaining more and more positions in the top echelons of central and local government. At the time of this writing, a sharp public exchange is taking place between the General Staff and the PKI. On July 8, 1960, the Politburo of the Indonesian Communist Party issued a statement reviewing the achievements of the Presidential cabinet after one year. Referring to the administration by Army officers of the enterprises taken over from the Dutch in December 1957, the Politburo said:

> The masses of the workers had hoped that the take-over would be used to serve the people and improve the workers' living conditions. These hopes were not realized at all. The fact was that these enterprises were placed under the control of certain groups whose attitude toward the workers was even worse than those of foreign bosses.
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> The influential elements of these groups formed among themselves a group of bourgeoisie which controlled and made use of the state apparatus to serve their economic interests; they also created among themselves bureaucratic capitalists who oppressed both the working class and the national bourgeoisie and proved themselves to be the medium which was creating conditions for the imperialists to continue their policy of exploitation and extortion.

In this statement the Communist Party of Indonesia is openly declaring the officer corps an "enemy of the people," to use Mao Tse-tung's terminology, an integral part of the "comprador" class opposed to the "national bourgeoisie." The reasons for this are clearly given in the same statement. Referring to the lack of success of the operations against the various rebel groups of the right and extreme right, the Politburo declared:

> The fundamental mistakes which brought about the stagnation of the security question were that officials responsible

> for security did not spend the greater part of their energy and thought on eliminating counter-revolutionary rebel cliques, but on preventing the development of revolutionary and democratic movements, especially on suppressing the progressive movements led by the Communist Party, and the struggle against the people and the Communist Party was, as usual, regarded as the fundamental one.

On July 18, 1960, Lieutenant General Nasution retorted, saying that "the Indonesian government's policies were supported by the majority of the people and were opposed by the minority including the rebels and the communist party." Significantly, the PKI was classed with the pro-Western rebel groups as exponents of a minority position. This not-too veiled threat was made explicit the following day when members of the Politburo were summoned before the military authorities of Djakarta to account for the statement of July 8 which, according to an Army spokesman, "had given rise to uneasiness and commotion in wide circles of society, which might lessen the government's authority."

Indonesia is in flux and no conclusion is possible today concerning the future political role of the military in that country. Before 1964, when the term of the present cabinet should normally expire, many of the comments made above may have been invalidated.

THE ARMY IN BURMESE POLITICS

by

Lucian W. Pye

The casual observer of the Burman scene must have been surprised on September 26, 1958, when it was announced that the army would assume civil powers and form a "caretaker government." Burma had appeared to be a country struggling heroically and with some success to realize the ideals of representative government. It is true that possibly no other government in history had had as many groups turn violently against it as had the Burmese government shortly after the country gained its independence. In 1958, however, after a decade of confronting all manner of insurrectionaries, the government seemed to be in a stronger position. There had been considerable discussion of socialist planning and it had been hoped that the country's economy might soon be restored to its prewar levels of per capita production.

In the spring of 1958 the split in the ruling party, the AFPFL,[1] revealed that all was not well behind the facade of progress and harmony. Various groups within the party had built up their relatively autonomous bases of power, and personal cliques had acquired personal followings based on patronage. Most important of all, the falling out among the top leaders of the party had serious national consequences. The split, which might have initiated a two-party or possibly even a multi-party system, divided every political group and threatened to split asunder every important institution in the land. Only the army remained united; and even it underwent tremendous internal strains, so that there was good reason to believe that had it not assumed a direct political role it too might have divided. The time was appropriate for the army to show its authority; and although there was little rejoicing over the prospect of military rule, no group, except the communist, was prepared to challenge the army's will.

The casual observer must have been equally surprised in April 1960 when the Burmese army honored its promise and, after permitting a fair election, restored authority to civilian politicians. Why had soldiers given up power when the nation appeared to be tolerably pleased with the manner in which they had been conducting the nation's business? Such a retreat from power and glory seems to conflict with sophisticated ideas about human nature and commonplace theories of politics. That the Burmese army did precisely what it had declared it intended to do has been one of the greatest surprises of contemporary Southeast Asian politics.

The Burmese Army had believed in 1958 that the country's problems

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[1] The initials originally stood for the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, but the words have long since lost their emotional significance while the initials have become increasingly emotion-laden.

could be readily solved if only the government displayed determination and a willingness to call for self-sacrifices. It saw the spirit and the ethos of the politicians as little more than uncontrolled cravings for corruption and compromise. As soldiers they believed all could be resolved through through the purifying influences of action and honor. Within six months the leading army officers were beginning to learn that government was an extremely complicated and intractable business. The solutions were not quite as easy as they had assumed. After a year in power army officers came to realize that they were beginning to compromise their original standards. They could see themselves losing the status of military men and taking on some of the aspects of the politicians, whom they had always held in contempt. Junior officers were now beginning to criticize senior officers for becoming "just like politicians." Before two years were out, the leaders of the Burmese military realized that if they continued to rule there was a real danger that the army itself would split -- just as the politicians had split in 1958 -- with the ironic result that the country might become united, but only in opposition to the army's rule. Hence the need to retreat from power while it was still possible to make something of its claims to integrity. Instead of having to admit failure, the military could lay claim to an ultimate success, for it would be the first army in the new countries to keep its promise of seeking only temporary authority. In so doing the army was also able to prove correct those who had steadfastly taken a most innocent and trusting view of its intentions, while shaming those who had ascribed to the army more cynical if not sinister motives.

The fact that Burma has run full cycle with military rule makes it a peculiarly interesting case study. Elsewhere in the developing areas the mood is still one of wondering and hoping about the possibilities of armies being the nation's salvation. In Burma it is possible to weigh more clearly the strengths and weaknesses, the advantages and disadvantages, of a system in which soldiers try to manage society. The Burmese experience suggests that armies in the developing countries can be torn by deep ambivalence: they can feel strong attractions toward power and toward the solving of problems and they can also have strong compulsions toward disengaging completely from society and seeking only the isolation and comforts of their professional world.

Above all else the Burmese case demonstrates that armies in transitional societies are not at all immune to the problems that plague politicians and administrators. The Burmese army officer proved to be no superman for he was no more able than the Burmese politician to rise above his cultural and historical heritage. Psychologically he was as disturbed about modernizing his country as was the Burmese politician. Once settled in the government office, the Burmese officer soon turned out to be very much like the civilian.

THE OFFICER CLASS AND THE CIVILIAN ELITES

When we look into the social and educational backgrounds of the Burmese army officers we find that, except for the fact that they have had a slightly more formal education, they are remarkably similar to the country's political leaders. Indeed, the majority of the twenty-three colonels who played key roles in administering the government were at one time either politicians or close associates of politicians. Most of these men were involved in the independence movement and were assigned in an almost random fashion to careers in the army once it became necessary after independence to staff all the institutions of government.

The social homogeneity of the military and political leadership of Burma can also be readily traces in the pattern of intermarriage among the families of the two groups. Of the five colonels in the innermost circle, one is married to the sister of one of the four top politicians, while the sister of another of the colonels is married to another of these politicians. One Colonel was a former cabinet member who, when he entered the army, had a series of remarkably rapid promotions.

The close association of the officer class with the politicians apparently made the officers feel that they were intimately acquainted with and fully knowledgeable about all aspects of Burmese politics. Indeed, in the light of the intensely personal nature of the inner workings of Burmese politics, it is quite likely that this was so. The extent to which these officers were aware of even the most subtle political developments may have heightened their alarm over events. Also, their acquaintaince with the political scene must have made it seem less inappropriate for them to intervene directly.

In spite of the similarity of their earlier backgrounds, army training and the responsibilities of command brought about many changes in the outlook of the army officers. A decade of frustrations and disappointments over national development had left the politicians confused and plagued with anxieties and self-doubts. In contract, during the same period the officer class became increasingly confident of its ability to command respect. Both groups consisted mainly of people who found decision and choice difficult, but for the army officers the range of alternatives was narrower. Their problems were more clearly structured, and thus they came to believe in their ability to demand decisive action by others.

The constant problem of insurrection forced the military to assume increased responsibilities, first for law and order, and then for numerous other aspects of government. Immediately after independence various groups took up arms in their opposition to the nationalist leadership of the AFPFL politicians. The heart of the insurrection was the revolt of the communists in 1948. Following the pattern of "armed struggle" which the communists throughout Southeast Asia adopted in that year, the Burmese party went into the jungle to organize guerrilla warfare. Their expectation was to follow the road to power which the Chinese Communists had

explored and developed. However, the communists were soon joined in their insurrections by other groups who sought to represent in particular the various minority peoples of Burma. The Karens by 1949-50 had mobilized about 10,000 men to oppose the government and seek a separate Karen state. The other important insurrections consisted of the Mons, the Arkanese, and the PVO's (Peoples' Volunteer Organization), remnants of the army initially raised to fight for Burmese independence. The spirit of insurrection and violence became in time so widespread throughout Burma that these larger rebel organizations were joined by countless bands of dacoits and bandits, most of whom followed the fashion of the day by proclaiming tha they represented some popular cause.

The insurrections forced the Burmese people to reconsider the role of the soldier in their society. Before World War II it was the Karens, Chins, and Kachins who were assumed to be the martial tribes in British Burma, the Burmese Buddhists being thought to have little talent for army life. After the Karens revolted, the Burmese army lost most of its leading officers, for at that time most of the officers and nearly half the mean were Karens. Those Karen officers who did not join the insurrection were relieved of their commands and retired. Thus the modern Burmese army was built up largely during the years after 1949-50. British forms still persist, but very few of the officers were trained in their military roles by the British.

During the civil war the army was forced to take over direct authority in many districts. In most of these districts there ensued a three-way struggle among the army command, the civil administration, and the local AFPFL leaders. Lines of authority were constantly being confused, and increasingly arbitrary acts were becoming commonplace and decisive. This development occurred in the context of an earlier decline in the standards of local administrations. Briefly, before the army entered the picture, the story was one of competition between the civil administrators and the district AFPFL leaders. In the prewar arrangement the key official in the district was the deputy commissioner, who had that unique combination of power and responsibility that is typical of administrators in British colonies and who usually had the title of District Officer. After independence the AFPFL became the key decision-making group in the country, which meant that at the district level the authority of the deputy commissioner was eclipsed. Local representatives of all the departments and ministries had to look increasingly to the AFPFL leaders for direction rather than to the deputy commissioners.

Army influence in the districts favored a reconsolidation of authority and a clearer relationship between authority and responsibility. The army preferred to deal with specific officials who had wide authority rather than party leaders of considerable power but undetermined responsibility. In short, the army favored a return to the prewar type of village headman and deputy commissioner and thus increasingly clashed with the AFPFL representatives in the districts. These party politicians often had considerable power and were not particularly responsible to direction even from the AFPFL leaders in Rangoon.

These developments had been taking place during the years preceding 1958. They suddenly became more significant after the AFPFL split in the spring of 1958. With the falling out of the top leaders the center of Burmese political activity shifted from Rangoon to the districts. Events could no longer be determined entirely by the interplay of personalities in Rangoon. Leaders had to look to the districts for support, particularly because of the expectations that there might be national elections. Local party leaders found themselves involved in intense power struggles as each faction of the divided AFPFL sought to gain or hold its support. As the local political leaders asserted their authority over the civil administrators in the districts and sought to exploit the machinery of government to win an election, they came more and more into conflict with army authority. Although this issue was never well articulated -- each group had its reasons for not publicizing it -- it did convince many army officers that the activities of the politicians were about to destroy the country. This conflict in the districts helps to explain the enthusiasm with which the army turned against the politicians in the fall of 1958.

The Burmese army had several advantages as it assumed an increasingly political role. A decade of difficulties with insurrectionaries had led to substantial military budgets. Compared with other organizations depending upon public funds, the army was by far the most favored group. As a consequence the army was able to modernize itself more rapidly and more completely than most institutions in the country. Also, the relatively generous way in which the army was treated reduced considerably its internal problem of allocating resources, and hence there was less internal tension within the army than in most public organizations in the country. In this connection it should be noted that the army officers as a group had a conspicuously higher standard of living than any other group that depended upon the public treasury. Army quarters provided them with better housing then was enjoyed by all other officials except cabinet ministers. In general they followed a way of living that made it clear to all that they were a special element within the ruling elite.

With the tension that followed the split in the AFPFL the army increasingly stood out as the only united group in the society. It also appeared to be the only organization capable of carrying on effective action. Under the circumstances of domestic tension, people began turning to the army for leadership. This attitude stemmed in part from the fact that in modern Burmese history men in uniform have tended to assume authority during times of crisis. The image of decisive and effective authority in uniform had also been implanted in the Burmese mind during the period of British rule.

Although on the surface the army appeared to be a relatively efficient organization, it should be noted that much of its drive for power came from a sense of frustration in realizing its own objectives. The fact remains that in spite of the resources assigned to it, the Burmese army did not succeed in stamping out the insurrectionaries. Indeed, as a military organization it did not have an impressive record. Among the army officers there was growing feeling that the failures of the army could be attributed

primarily to the politicians. When the army failed in its technical operations it tended to blame the civilian population for lack of aggressive leadership. Thus the frustrations and weaknesses of the Burmese army as a fighting force contributed to its readiness to assume a political role.

The level of technical competence within the Burmese army is most uneven. Some of the field troops are very poorly trained and poorly led, while the more specialized departments of the army have some of the best educated men in the entire country. Many of the skills commanded by the army are peculiarly relevant to civilian and particularly administrative activities. The army thus takes considerable pride in its ability to develop modern skills and believes that it is well fitted to manage all aspects of government. The very weakness of the army in military matters seems to have strengthened its confidence for coping with non-military problems.

The army's distrust of civilian leadership crystallized in the summer of 1958 when U Nu, in efforts to strengthen his government, indicated a willingness to deal with the communists and other insurrectionaries. Shock and consternation at the thought of treating with a decade-old foe were enough to unite the army behind the decision of its leaders to assume power.

The ease with which the Burmese Army was able to command a decisive political role stemmed in large part from the inability of the civilian groups to perform their functions effectively. The failings of the civilian leadership are far too numerous even to be listed here. They included the usual difficulties that have retarded development in most of the newly emergent states. In the case of Burma, most of these difficulties can be summarized as a failure to develop effective relationships between those in administrative roles and those performing political roles.

ADMINISTRATORS AND POLITICIANS

Indeed, most of the history of post-independence Burma can be related to a deep-seated hostility between those who are oriented to administrative roles and those who are committed to the politician's way of life. The tragedy of the country is that at no time have these two groups of leaders been able to work together. The struggle has been much to deep to be well articulated, and its emotional intensity has been heightened by the fact that it includes a dimension of class conflict.

The administrator and the politician came into being at different times and under quite different circumstances. Thus the differences between them are considerably greater than the customary ones.

The administrators were essentially a prewar product who became a power group because they were more Westernized than most people in their society. The administrator class, as we are thinking of it here, included not only civil servants and bureaucrats, but also those connected with the judiciary and the courts, those involved in the education and medical

services of government, and those who held positions in the railway administration. In short, they included all those who held offices that were dependent upon the government and the pattern of British rule.

An outsider is likely to conclude that relatively few Burmese held positions of influence under British rule. This view is traceable not only to the conspicuous power of the British official but also to the prevalence of Indians in the administration. Among the Burmese, however, there is a strong tendency to give considerable credit to the influence and importance of the Burmese official. In part, this may be a reflection of the perfectly natural practice of people to attach importance to themselves and to their ancestors. Most of the better educated Burmese of today remember when their fathers were held in high regard by all in the community, and they resent deeply the suggestion frequently made by Americans that the Burmese were of little importance in the prewar development of the country.

This feeling for the past importance of the administrative class is no doubt strongly supported by the fact that the group did have a distinctive way of life. Its members came from the better families; their sons received the best education; they had pride in their command of the English language; they were on personal terms with important officials; they had been posted to many districts; they could talk knowingly of leaves and pensions and of retirement. They lived in a world of widespread personal ties; wherever they traveled they found acquaintances and other people like themselves.

We cannot go into the complicated reactions of the members of the administrator class to British rule and the issue of independence except to note that, although they learned to appreciate much of British culture, they always thought of themselves as being complete and true Burmans. Independence to them meant that they would be moving up the administrative ladder and would have no superiors to dictate to them. Independence, however, did not come to Burma in the way the administrators expected. First, the administrator class was seriously disrupted by the war and Japanese occupation. Indeed, for them even more than for the British who could always go home, the war destroyed an old way of life that could never again be restored. Under conditions of stress the administrator class saw power move into the hands of the nationalist politicians. Apparently many of the administrators were deeply disturbed by the nationalist movement, for it made them wonder whether they might not have been traitors to their people. Had they possibly loved British culture too much, paid too great a respect to the ways of rational administration, been too ready to reject their own traditions? In a very real sense the members of this class were faced with a crisis of identity. Above all else they found that independence did not mean that they would become the ruling class; instead, the politicians became their superiors just as the British had been.

The politicians, in contrast, came generally from a lower economic

class, and usually with somewhat less education. Even when future politicians and administrators met at Rangoon University, the former tended to be activists while the latter were the more earnest students. The politicians, as they came to power, regarded the administrators as merely the agents of the British, people who would have to prove their loyalties to new masters. Above all, they tended to discount not only the administrators as a class but also the function of public administration itself.

During the first years of independence the administrator felt himself powerless and victimized. Many left government service, and those who remained sought to avoid risk and responsibility by narrowing the scope of their authority. This tendency to withdraw is typical of the Burmese when faced with a threatening situation. Instead of resorting to "empire building," Burmese administrators sought to limit their jurisdiction and find security in routine matters. The result, however, was not a reduction in the over-all size of the government, for new ministers, departments, and boards had to be created to handle new tasks.

The administrators' fear of the politicians gave way to resentment and then to contempt. Within the administrator class there was s strong feeling that the AFPFL politicians were bringing shame and disgrace to Burma. When the split in the AFPFL finally came there was considerable rejoicing among the administrators upon seeing the politicians in difficulty. Before this occurred, however, the politicians, while they still appeared to be in full command, felt some uneasiness toward the administrators. In spite of their assertions that the administrators had been the willing servants of the British, the politicians in most matters felt inferior to the administrators. The administrators understood much about government, about the law, about the nature of public policy; but under no conditions could the politicians admit to their ignorance. They had to act as though the technical skills of the administrators were of little significance.

The combination of insecurity and a need to dabble in the politics of charisma forced the politicians more and more into a position of irresponsibility toward even the most essential functioning of government. The stock response of the politicians to failure in public administration was to charge members of the civil service with corruption and evil intentions. As the attack on the administrators became more severe, and as more and more of them were arrested, they tended to show even less initiative and greater desire to minimize the scope of their individual responsibilities.

There are numerous dimensions to this struggle between the administrators and politicians, but all of them tended to emphasize the contradictions between the requirements of rational administration and the spirit of Burmese political maneuverings. As the structure of administration weakened and the bonds of the nationalist politicians dissolved, insecurity became more widespread and hostility and aggression more overt. The external restraints being removed, people began to feel that it was not only

possible but necessary to express themselves aggressively.

The failure of the politicians and administrators to coordinate their efforts tended to influence public attitudes and thus set the stage for a popular acceptance of drastic changes. It is extremely difficult to gauge public opinion in Burma because of the lack of autonomous interest groups capable of articulating the diverse interests of the entire community. For over a decade the AFPFL had claimed a monopoly on voicing the legitimate interests of the Burmese society. However, even before the split there was considerable popular dissatisfaction with the AFPFL politicians. Among the more politically conscious groups there was a growing feeling that Burma had not lived up to her expectations, and a sense of failure spread among the urban elements. Short-run disappointments reinforced more profound self-doubts and anxieties to produce even more hostility towards politicians as a class.

This hostility was fed by fear and distrust, evoked in turn by the arbitrary and ruthless acts of middle echelon political leaders. An atmosphere of fear was first created within the ranks of the administrators, particularly after U Nu established the Bureau of Special Investigation, which often followed the procedure of arresting people first and investigating later. Fear of the AFPFL spread beyond the ranks of administrators. The power of the party to control licenses and government employment affected the lives of large numbers of people, and when these powers were used arbitrarily it set in motion a chain reaction of fear and hostility. All these developments contributed to a feeling that there was widespread corruption within the ruling circles. U Nu himself, by constantly stressing the need to eliminate all forces of corruption, provided further ammunition for those who saw the AFPFL government as an essentially dishonorable enterprise.

But hostility toward the politicians did not develop into hostility toward democratic institutions as such. On the contrary, much of the criticism directed against the politician concerned his failure to adhere to democratic norms. Thus what appeared to the West as a possible failure of democratic institutions was not so interpreted by a politically sophisticated Burman. Instead the common reaction has been one of expressing animosity toward a leadership which is considered to have made the Burmese appear less capable of operating a democratic system than in fact they are.

The extent to which Burmese in all quarters have clung to the democratic ideal is to be seen in the extraordinary stress on legal form that has accompanied the advent of military rule. All elements in Burmese politics except the communists united in refusing to use the word coup d'etat, and the influence of the army was felt through legally constituted channels rather than through arbitrary actions.

THE FRUSTRATIONS OF MILITARY RULE

In the fall of 1958 the army moved with remarkable speed in assuming commanding positions within the government office to perform "supervisory" tasks. The army was also extremely active in mobilizing the citizens of Rangoon to form work brigades for cleaning up the city's streets. Officers, soldiers, and civilians worked together to perform what was supposedly the routine dut' s of the Department of Sanitation. The army also announched that prices were too high, that there were "economic insurgents" who must be fought with vigor and even force. Merchants suddenly learned that their stores were to be searched for any signs that they were "unpatriotic" and "hoarding" goods. The army itself became involved in retail activities by expanding its Defense Services Institute (the equivalent of a Port Exchange system) to cover the civilian population. The navy was ordered to transport fish to market with the hope of reducing prices. Needless to say, the total costs of government rose steadily, and, indeed, the army's complete lack of economic sophistication became a decisive factor in forcing it to get out of its policy-making role.

By the end of 1958 the over-all pattern of army actions became increasingly apparent. The extraordinary fact was that the Burmese army in seeking to realize its ideal of government was in essence seeking to force upon Burmese society once again the basic structure and pattern of prewar colonial Burmese government. Indeed, the ideals and the goals of the army seemed to be quite explicitly those of the old British Burma. In particular the emphasis was on re-establishing administrative rule and restraining all forms of popular, agitational politics. Law and order and efficient operation of government became the guiding principles. Administrative problems as they emerge were to be handled quickly and efficiently. The government was assumed to know what was the best interest of the country. The people had to be taught and trained.

The virtues of army government were essentially the same as those common to any colonial administration. There was a marked improvement in efficiency in public administration. Authority also became far more regulated and predictable, as there was a considerable reduction in the arbitrary use of political power. The focus of the government was on developing essentially non-political activities which could be seen as improving the economic lot of the population. Instead of encouraging people to become involved in political activities, the army sought to make people more aware of their particular economic and social roles in society and how they might improve themselves in their performance of these roles.

Although the Burmese press professed to welcome the introduction of the "caretaker" government of General Ne Win, a number of journalists were arrested and a diffuse sense of fear paralyzed the spirit of the freedom of the press. Other groups in the country also found special reasons for disliking army rule. Peasants who had been accustomed to receiving favors from politicians and to benefitting from casual administration of agricultural loans found the army rule "to hard." Student

groups, who under communist leadership had been wont to terrorize their professors and to avoid serious work, learned that the army was not amused by widespread violations of standard regulations. Indeed, at almost every level of society, army rule proved that the Burmese people were not prepared to make heavy demands upon themselves in order merely to improve their land and strengthen their country.

Fundamentally, the pattern of army rule in Burma contained within it the same seeds of instability that are inherent in any colonial administration. Unavoidably but persistently, the army stifled all forms of spontaneous political action and took upon itself the business of speaking for the more particular and the more conflicting interests of all elements within the society. Communication between the ruler and the ruled was no longer that of the political marketplace; it became dependent upon the informer and the agent. Above all else, army rule in Burma lacked any mechanism for handling conflicting interests within society. The means for adjusting and accommodating the demands of various interests was missing, for it was blandly assumed that the administrative programs of government were inevitably in the best interest of all.

Above all else, the army sought to undermine the position of the politician. The ties between local political leaders and the purse-strings of government were cut by direct army action. All channels of patronage were blocked. The army hoped that restoring the village headman to the position of authority he had held in the days of British rule would isolate the politician and cut him off from all close contacts with the rural masses. At the same time the army encouraged distinguished personages who did not command any form of political organization to return to more public roles. The army ideal appeared to be government by specialist. This was a view which fitted in with the essentially elitist and technocratic theories of the military profession.

After the army had been in authority for nearly a year there was considerable evidence that it was becoming increasingly disturbed by criticism and frustrated by the conflicting demands of government. People were still willing to praise it for the initial contribution it had made in restoring order and a sense of purpose to Burmese public life, but it was becoming clear that whatever popularity the army might have had was fast running out. All the dissatisfactions people felt about their lot were now directed toward the army, an unambiguous symbol of authority. Gradually the senior army officers saw the advantages of having some alternative targets for dissatisfactions, and, hence, the value of civilian leaders.

In thinking about possible civilian leadership the army indicated that it was not completely impartial: its distrust of U Nu was more long-lasting than its distrust of politicians in general. In addition, there was evidence, and much more popular speculation, that the army was in fact positively in favor of U Nu's opponents in the Stable AFPFL. However, if the army had any intention of supporting the Stable AFPFL, it soon

learned, once it had decided to permit elections, that it had lost full control of the situation and it would not guarantee a Stable AFPFL victory.

Two developments worked against the army and its friends in the Stable AFPFL. First, all the popular resentments against the demands and the restrictions of the army were aimed at their supposed civilian allies. People did not feel secure enough to criticize openly the army or its policies, but they could attack the civilians who claimed to favor all the army had been doing. Second, in weakening the power base of the civilian politicians in general, the army had damaged their supposed allies in the Stable AFPFL more than they had hurt U Nu's faction. This was because the Stable AFPFL depended upon the power or organization for its influences, while the Clean AFPFL had mainly the well-known personality of U Nu, the Prime Minister of the previous decade. By destroying the effectiveness of party organization, the army in effect left U Nu's charismatic personality to shine alone without any significant form of competition. In early 1960 U Nu's party won a decisive victory.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

The extraordinary experience the Burmese have passed through during the last few years has unfortunately not led to any clear-cut conclusions. Burmese politics is still permeated with a sense of uncertainty and incompleteness. Power has been restored to a civilian government, but there is no certainty as to what its future is to be. Above all, there is the realization that what the army did once it can do again.

Within the officer corps there has been some disagreement as to what should be the future of the army. It is possible to discern three vaguely formed schools of thought. First, there are those who wish to cling to power and who feel the army should conduct and could have conducted an even more forceful program. Most of the support for this essentially authoritarian school comes from junior officers who are critical of their superiors but who are not personally confronted with the dilemmas of policy-making. The second school is of the exact opposite opinion: the army should get out of all politics and maintain its purity as a professional military organization. The members of this school are as unsophisticated in their political philosophy as those of the first school.

The third school sees the army performing limited but still essential roles in the national development. Some of the senior officers, for example, maintain that there are still some forms of administrative activity for which the army is peculiarly well fitted and therefore that the army will have to participate in these activities. These officers also feel that the army should continue to screen much that goes on with government in order to prevent the emergence of "abuses" and "evil practices." Because they cannot wholly agree on the types of civilian activities for

which the army is best adapted, this third group cannot produce a unified program for army behavior.

The eighteen months of army rule brought out more clearly than ever the extent to which Burmese problems of national development stem from a failure of the administrator and the politician to realize an effective working relationship. The army was able to improve the standards of administration in some areas. It also reminded the people that the national interest called for minimum standards of public order. It could not, however, come to grips with the fundamental problem of how to bring together the functions of the popular politician and the public servant. Until this basic problem has been resolved and the Burmese politicians and administrators learn how to coordinate their roles, the country cannot know true progress or stability.

What the army has to do is to give the Burmese a second chance to go about the task of nation building. In a sense, the Burmese are now starting over again in their experiment with representative institutions. The army has possibly saved the country from serious disaster; it clearly has not been able to guarantee its future. In the last analysis, it rests with the Burmese people themselves and particularly with their political and administrative leaders to decide whether or not the country is to become an effective, modern state and society.