INTRODUCTION

Indonesian political history offers a wealth of material for the comparative study of political parties. Throughout the first two decades of Indonesia's existence as an independent republic, her political parties played important roles in the performance of several political functions. These parties varied greatly in ideology, organization, and the character of their leadership and following. The three distinct changes in political structure that Indonesia underwent during this period presented entirely different environments and adaptive possibilities to these parties.

In spite of all this, relatively little work has been done on Indonesian political parties.[1] Only the PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* - Indonesian Communist Party) has received a considerable amount of scholarly attention, partly because of the international implications of the PKI's development but also because of the fascination certain scholars have felt for its revolutionary potential. The kind of interest shown for the PKI has been sadly lacking for the other parties. Existing works on the Muslim parties are limited in scope and reveal little of the role these parties have played in the Indonesian political system.

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[1] The best sources of information on the role of Indonesian political parties during the period covered in this study are still the standard political histories. See Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972); George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952); Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962); Daniel Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1966); Herbert Feith, "The Dynamics of Guided Democracy," in Ruth T. McVey, ed., *Indonesia* (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1964).

R. William Liddle, *Ethnicity, Party and National Integration — An Indonesian Case Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970) deals with party politics in one regency in North Sumatra during the Guided Democracy period.

Short studies dealing specifically with the political parties are: Daniel Lev, "Political Parties in Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, VIII:1 (March 1967), pp. 52-67; Soedjatmoko, "The Role of Political Parties in Indonesia," in Philip Thayer, ed., *Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956).

The Indonesian Ministry of Information has published several books containing information on party constitutions and by-laws, short

Standard works on Indonesian political history deal extensively with the intricacies of inter-party competition in cabinet and parliamentary politics but they do not delve deeply into the internal workings of these parties or their relationships with their constituencies.

The paucity of scholarly attention devoted to party affairs may partly be the result of the decline of parliamentary institutions in Indonesia in the late 'fifties. After 1957, the parties' central role in determining the general directions of national policy was gradually taken over by President Sukarno and the army leadership. The attention of most observers of the Indonesian political scene naturally gravitated to these newly dominant political actors. Unfortunately, this shift in focus led to a static conception of Indonesia's political parties reflecting scholarly unconcern rather than Indonesian realities. A recent analysis of the national party system, for example, concluded that "... party organizations tended to atrophy quickly after the supreme effort of the 1955 elections," and that "... there has been no significant change in party structure and leadership not only since 1959, but ever since the early 'Fifties."[2] This conclusion seems to follow logically from the precipitous decline in the parties' fortunes after 1957, but, as I will try to show in this study, it is very far

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party histories, and government laws and decrees dealing with parties. See Kementerian Penerangan, *Kepartaian di Indonesia* (Tegal: De Boer, 1950); *Kepartaian di Indonesia* (Djakarta: Pertjetakan Negara, 1951); "Partai dan Parlemen" (Djakarta, 1953, mimeographed); *Kepartaian dan Parlementaria Indonesia* (Jogjakarta: no publisher listed, 1954); Departemen Penerangan, *Almanak Lembaga Lembaga Negara dan Kepartaian* (Djakarta; Pertjetakan Negara, 1961).

On the PKI in the post-independence period, see Donald Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia*, 1951-1963 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964); Rex Mortimer, "The Ideology of the Communist Party of Indonesia under Guided Democracy" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Monash University 1970); Arnold Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Praeger, 1963); Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1965); Ruth T. McVey, "Indonesian Communism and China," in Tang Tsou, ed., *China in Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 968).

On other political parties, see Deliar Noer, "Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia" (M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1960); Mochtar Naim, "The Nahdatul Ulama as a Political Party, 1952-1955: An Inquiry into the Origins of Its Electoral Success" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1960); Munawir Sjadzali, "Indonesia's Muslim Parties and Their Political Concepts" (M.A. thesis, Georgetown University, 1959); Robert J. Myers, "The Development of the Indonesian Socialist Party" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1959).

[2] Lev, "Political Parties," p. 63.

from correct in the case of the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Party, PNI).

The conception of Indonesia's political parties as static or "atrophied" organizations is unfortunate in that it has resulted in the failure of scholars to consider changes in the internal character of these parties as factors affecting broad patterns of political change. On the purely descriptive level, for example, it is clear that the decline of constitutional democracy in Indonesia in the mid-'fifties was brought about by the increasing weakness of the parliament and the cabinet. But in order to understand this process, one must first seek to explain what happened within the parties which were the main components of the system. Similarly, any serious study of the Guided Democracy period must take into account the role, not only of the PKI, but also of the other parties, in creating the conditions of intensified conflict and generalized tension which led to the calamitous events of late 1965 and early 1966.

Regime and Party Development

Before we can draw any firm conclusions about their role in modern Indonesian political history, we must first examine the political parties more closely. In doing this, we must identify and analyze those factors in the society, the political system, or the particular regime that influenced the character of these parties. We might ask, for example, how religio-cultural cleavages in Indonesian society affected differentiation between parties in terms of ideology, leadership recruitment and social support. We might also examine how system-wide patterns of political socialization, political recruitment, interest articulation and interest aggregation affected the parties as institutions performing these functions together with others.

In studying the PNI, however, I have focused my attention on those factors deriving directly from changes in the character of Indonesia's post-independence political regimes. This choice was determined partly by the need to limit the scope of the study. Secondly, the richness of available but previously unexamined documentary material recommended a historical approach. Lastly, tremendous changes in the character of the PNI that occurred at various points in its post-independence history demanded analytical focus on these changes.

This is not to say that I have chosen to disregard other factors affecting the PNI, nor that this is a purely historical analysis. Given the fast pace of change in the Indonesian political system, however, I thought it best to examine system-level influences on the PNI within their historical context rather than attempting to describe them only at one single point in time. Similarly, in my analysis of ethnic and religio-cultural influences on the PNI, I chose to see these factors not as "constants" but rather as "activated" by specific political arrangements and events.

Although a background chapter on the revolutionary period (1945-49) is provided, this study focuses on the PNI at the time of the parliamentary regime, from 1950-1957, and during the Guided Democracy period, from 1958 to 1965.[3] I have tried to provide as full a description as possible of the two regimes covered in this study. Analytically, however, I am primarily interested in those aspects of these two regimes that directly affected the development of the PNI and possibly that of other parties as well. This interest has guided my selection of particular institutions and events for discussion. The relative importance of these as against other institutions and events in determining the basic character of these two regimes has been weighed. In analyzing the parliamentary period, for example, I have chosen to focus my attention, not on formal institutions as such, but on the more elusive, yet perhaps more useful concept of the national elite.[4]

In this manner, the Indonesian parliament before the elections of 1955 can be seen, not primarily as a representative body — an institutional expression for interests "articulated and aggregated" by its component parties — but more simply as a temporary arena for intra-elite competition. Various arguments can be advanced to support this judgment. Most important is the fact that this was an appointed parliament: its membership at this time was essentially a collection of

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[3] Part of the reason why I chose to focus on the 1950 to 1965 period is the paucity of material on the PNI before 1950. The choice of 1965 as a cut-off date is perhaps arbitrary, but corresponds to the general view that an epoch of modern Indonesian history closed with the upheavals of that year.

[4] The use of "national elite" as an analytical category in studying Indonesian post-independence politics was suggested by Ruth T. McVey, "Nationalism, Islam, and Marxism: The Management of Ideological Conflict in Indonesia," introduction to Soekarno, *Nationalism, Islam and Marxism*, trans. by Karel Warouw and Peter Weldon (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1969).

capital city politicians and local notables with no clearly definable constituencies.[5] In the pre-election period, political parties should not then be seen as hierarchical entities with roots deep in Indonesian society, fiercely fighting each other on the basis of mutually exclusive ideological claims, but rather as factions within a definable national elite divided on the basis of more mundane differences in personal experience and outlook. As these groups competed with each other in parliament and in the various cabinets, they began to stake out individual areas of ideological or, more properly, cultural identification. And they ended by claiming constituencies on the basis of these ideological-cum-cultural differences.[6]

As long as there were no elections, party conflict couched in terms of these differences could be mediated through the mechanisms of elite solidarity. Thus, in spite of the instability of cabinet government in the period from 1945 to 1955, on the whole, this period was more stable than the latter half of the 'fifties. Party conflict in this earlier period was indeed continuous and bitter. But coalitions between competing parties were often achieved and defeat in parliament or cabinet politics was received with some degree of equanimity because it was expected that the losing party would have other chances in future political battles. The 1955 elections raised the stakes of party competition. Political battles now began to assume a life-or-death aspect. One consequence was the outbreak of regional rebellions in 1957 and 1958 which were as much the result of intra-elite competition for dominance at the center as they were of demands for regional autonomy. At the end of this period, two major segments of the political elite, the Masjumi (Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia — Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations) and the PSI (Partai Sosialis Indonesia — Indonesian Socialist Party) leadership, were eliminated from the political arena.

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[5] On the pre-election parliament, see Miriam S. Budiardjo, "Evolution toward Parliamentary Democracy in Indonesia: Parties and Parliament" (M.A. thesis Georgetown University, 1955); Miriam S. Budiardjo, "The Provisional Parliament of Indonesia," *Far Eastern Survey*, XXV:2 (February 1956), pp. 17-23.

[6] On religio-cultural communities and politics in Indonesia, see Robert Jay, *Religion and Politics in Rural Central Java* (New Haven: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies, 1964); G. W. Skinner, ed., *Local, Ethnic and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia* (New Haven: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies, 1959); Clifford Geertz, "Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example," *American Anthropologist*, LIX (February 1957), pp. 32-54.

What brought about this crucial change in Indonesia's political system? What was it that destroyed the tenuous but, for ten years, sufficiently effective bonds of elite solidarity? Part of the answer can be found in the accumulation of animosity built up in the years of intense party competition. No less crucial was the change in the mood of the country as growing frustration over economic difficulties began to replace the hopes of the revolution. Of more immediate importance for the political party system were the changes in the terms of party competition brought about by the elections.

Prior to the build-up of the election campaign in late 1953, cabinet and parliamentary decisions could be made through pragmatic accommodations of interest among a small group of people, differentiated by party affiliations, but linked to each other through membership in the relatively small capital-based national elite. The elections changed all this. In the process of trying to develop for electoral purposes bases of support outside of the elite — outside the capital, among the Indonesian masses — Indonesia's political parties introduced strong local forces of communal conflict into elite politics.

This development resulted from party efforts to develop support by taking advantage of primordial loyalties in Indonesia's religio-cultural communities. These efforts exacerbated conflicts among the various party-organized factions in the national elite. The leaders of the political parties now began to see themselves more as representatives of these communities than as members of an elite separate from the masses. These subtle changes in mood and outlook among the members of the national elite made the differences between them more rigid and less subject to compromise than they had ever been before. At the same time, new groups of local leaders, more dependent on provincial and communal sources of support than the national party leadership, began to make their influence felt within the parties.

The introduction of new groups of leaders into the now much enlarged political parties served not only to make cooperation between the parties much more difficult, but also worked to weaken individual parties themselves. As I will show in the body of this study, this was true of the PNI. Fragmentary evidence suggests that it was also true of the second largest party at that time, the Masjumi. Given the divided state of these two major parties, the party-dominated cabinets and parliament were necessarily weakened.

When the forces which had helped to emasculate these institutions evolved into various forms of dissidence in 1957, and into full-scale rebellion in 1958, cabinet and parliament proved wholly incapable of coping with the challenge.

In the broadest sense, the breakdown of the parliamentary regime was brought about by an integrative crisis — the failure of central institutions (cabinet, parliament, and parties) to control the localized social groups which had been provoked into political assertiveness by the elections. More specifically, it was brought about by what was in effect an abdication of power by the major parties. Into this vacuum stepped President Sukarno and the leadership of the Army, who gradually assumed the reins of power. Starting with the declaration of martial law in 1957, President Sukarno and the Army began a wholesale attack on the powers and prerogatives of the political parties. The parties lost first their formal control over the cabinet, then over the upper levels of the bureaucracy, and, lastly, their effective control over the legislative branch, once parliament was turned into an appointive body in 1960. Party activities were severely curtailed in 1959 and 1960 and restrictions continued, if in less strenuous form, until the termination of martial law in 1963. Two major parties were banned in 1960. The remaining parties that were legally sanctioned became subject to new rules requiring them to register their membership and report on their activities and finances to the government.

In spite of these restrictions, Indonesia's political parties not only managed to survive, they gradually regained some measure of their influence in the cabinet and bureaucracy, at the same time developing new power resources. What explains this striking and still largely unexamined phenomenon? What patterns did the party response to the specific conditions of existence imposed on them by Guided Democracy take?

The forces that influenced party development during the parliamentary period can be grouped under two general rubrics: intra-elite competition in the cabinet, parliament and bureaucracy; and the search for party constituencies based on religious-cultural divisions immediately prior to the 1955 elections. The Guided Democracy regime presented an entirely different situation to the political parties. To begin with, traditional sources of party power in the cabinet, the higher levels of the bureaucracy, and parliament were no longer with-

in reach. Restrictions were placed on party activities. The absence of elections deprived the parties of one important source of political legitimacy. At President Sukarno's proding, government institutions were increasingly mobilized to enforce national unity through the diminution of communal conflict and the imposition of a state-sanctioned ideology. In the early part of the Guided Democracy period, both President Sukarno and the Army leadership tried to create new participatory institutions as alternatives to the political parties.

These limitations on Indonesia's political parties grew out of the shift from the parliamentary to the Guided Democracy regime. Both President Sukarno and the Army leadership blamed the political parties for the increasing weakness of central government institutions and the intensification of regional insubordination. As new holders of power in the Guided Democracy regime, they were also anxious to lessen, if not altogether to eliminate, the political parties as competitors for power. They did manage to weaken the parties considerably, but they failed to eliminate them for various reasons, among them contradictions in the Sukarno-Army relationship, the failure to develop effective participatory institutions independent of the parties, and the parties' success in developing new sources of power.

Although President Sukarno and the Army leadership worked closely together to regain central government authority over the regions and to break party control over government institutions, their relationship was fraught with fundamental contradictions. President Sukarno's power depended upon his personal charisma, which in turn depended upon his unrivalled ability to wield the symbols of radical nationalism. Army power was based on a monopoly of the instruments of coercion, control over many government-owned economic enterprises and growing influence in the Djakarta bureaucracy and provincial administration. The thrust of Army power was towards increased central control; thus, both by conviction and because of its position in the political system, the Army leadership was generally politically conservative; Sukarno's power depended upon his ability to project change ideologically. His exercise of power thus tended to be expansive in that it encouraged mass participation if only in service to his personal projects.

During the early part of the Guided Democracy period, President Sukarno and the Army leadership attempted to organize various state-sanctioned mass organizations among the youth, workers, peasants and

other groups. Most of these efforts failed or at best succeeded only in part. Sukarno soon realized that political parties remained the most effective organizations for mobilizing mass support for his various projects. As the ideological contradictions between Sukarno and the Army leadership deepened, Sukarno turned increasingly to the political parties and in particular to the PKI and the left-wing of the PNI for support.

Thus where the years from 1957 to 1963 were characterized by a decline in party influence, the period from 1963 to 1965 was marked by a gradual increase in its power. This occurred partly because of the decrease in the Army's civilian powers after the termination of martial law in May 1963. Sukarno's encouragement and support also helped to make possible an improvement of the parties' position in the formal institutions of Guided Democracy. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the role of the political parties in the latter part of Guided Democracy was determined by their search for new sources of power.

Because of the inability of the parties to attain their goals through control of the cabinet, the bureaucracy or the parliament, party activity began to be directed towards mass action. Without elections as a means of legitimizing party existence as participatory institutions, the parties shifted their resources towards continuous mobilization of mass support. In this situation, ideology took on greater importance both for general organizational purposes and as a tool for mobilizing mass support for specific party demands.

The PKI, of course, had used these techniques much more than the other parties even during the parliamentary period. It can be shown, however, that the PKI used these techniques with greater intensity and frequency during the latter part of Guided Democracy. The shift in techniques was most pronounced in the PNI. But even the NU (Nahdatul Ulama Muslim Scholars' Party), the third largest party during Guided Democracy, employed mass action techniques in defense of the landed interests of its leadership in 1964 and 1965.

The change in party tactics was dictated by Sukarno-Army control over government institutions. The initial success of these tactics was made possible by the large reservoir of public dissatisfaction over the increasing deterioration of the economy in the latter part of Guided

Democracy. PKI efforts to build a strong peasant base of support through espousing faster implementation of the land-reform law passed in 1960 culminated in the *aksi sepihak*, the PKI-led peasant movement to wrest control over land through unilateral mass action. In the urban areas, the PKI worked with the left wing of the PNI in attacking corruption and mismanagement in the large and formerly Dutch-owned government enterprises. PNI-PKI propaganda accused the largely Army-dominated management of these enterprises of having established themselves as a new class of "bureaucrat-capitalists." The Army-organized labor federation, SOKSI (Sentral Organisasi Karyawan Sosialis Indonesia — Central Organization of Socialist Functionaries of Indonesia), which had tried to remove PNI-PKI influence among the workers of these enterprises, was attacked and considerably weakened. PNI and PKI labor unions led in the seizure of American and British enterprises. Other PKI and PNI organizations attacked Army-backed groups in universities, the bureaucracy, and the mass media — students, professionals, and intellectuals — in an overall effort to introduce a more progressive ideological line in these institutions and groups.

We know from hindsight that these activities were not sufficient to overcome Army power. But close examination of developments in the last two years of the Guided Democracy period will, I think, show that it was precisely these activities that served to raise the level of political tension during these years. The violent events after the catalytic coup of October 1, 1965, were foreshadowed by events in 1964 and 1965. The Army seizure of absolute power in 1966 was precipitated by the pressure on its interests generated by the political parties. If the downfall of the parliamentary regime in the mid-'fifties can be characterized as the outcome of an integrative crisis, one can also describe the breakdown of the Guided Democracy system as the result of a participatory crisis provoked by party use of techniques of mass action.

Nationalism in Search of an Ideology

The PNI in many ways represents a microcosm which mirrors the whole Indonesian political system during the twenty-year period covered in this study. It was and is Javacentric and secular, and yet it has also contained strong non-Javanese and Muslim elements. Elite, bureaucratic and national-capitalist groups have at various points in

time dominated its leadership but never without strong challenges from youth and worker elements. Its ideology has been torn between conservative cultural impulses and radical political ideals in much the same way as the Indonesian state.

Because of the existence of these contradictory elements, the PNI has had, for many people, a slippery and indeterminate quality. This should not mean that it is impossible to define a PNI "reality." To do this, one must see the PNI as a constantly changing entity, — as a dynamic reality. Its dynamism has derived from the conflict between various elements within itself. Its "reality" — its character at any point in time — has been determined by the dominance of a particular mix of elements over others.

The contradictions within the PNI reflected those within the Indonesian political system. In a narrower sense, they represented the contradictions within nationalism as a set of political ideas and impulses. This is not to say that the PNI subsumed within itself all segments of the Indonesian nationalist movement. Far from it. But of all the major political organizations in post-independence Indonesia, the PNI was the only one that premised its existence almost exclusively upon what it believed to be the truths of nationalism.

Ideology in its formal sense is not the focus of this study. Much of the material presented here is about the rough-and-tumble of politics, — the constant maneuvering for advantageous positions, the compromises, the betrayals along the road to and from power. The PNI story that follows is the story of individuals and groups fighting each other with what often looks like plain and simple political opportunism. But taken together, the collective story of these men and these groups forms part of the larger effort to fit the political ideas of the struggle for independence with the intractable realities of post-independence Indonesia. PNI men did this not only in their constant attempts to reformulate party ideology but also as they fought among themselves for control over the party or together, as they struggled with other groups for control over the government. In a very real sense, their story is also the story of Indonesian nationalism in search of a viable post-independence ideology.