

Curbing Communism:
American motivations for intervening militarily in Indonesia and Dutch
newspaper representations, 1953-1957

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Introduction

On May 17, 1958 US CIA pilot Allan Pope was shot down over the island of Ambon, Indonesia after a bombing raid. Several days later the downing of the aircraft was made public by President Sukarno, irrefutably exposing US military operations in the Southeast Asian archipelago. The US had covertly supported rebels in the outer islands that wished to secede from the central government in Jakarta. What had occurred that constituted such a breach of Indonesian sovereignty by the Americans?

The Cold War was in full swing when President Eisenhower assumed office in early 1953. According to Eisenhower and his policymakers the world was morally divided between good and evil, between the US led free world and the Soviet led communist world. One of the main US Cold War objectives was to contain the spread of communism worldwide. The Soviet Union continually challenged US security concerns. Still, against this background, there were regions in the world where other issues, such as development, were deemed more important than this Cold War rivalry. These non-aligned Third World countries were of major importance to the US. Their natural resources, prospective progress and large population meant that Third World countries could play an important role in the Cold War if they were to choose sides. The Eisenhower administration adopted various strategies in order to form ties with these countries, thereby attempting to strengthen the free world and restricting Soviet access to these assets. These countries were often highly nationalistic and often bore some discontentment of the Western world that made forming ties an often difficult task. Newly independent Indonesia was one of those Third World countries in which the US had a strategic and political interest. The country was to become a Cold War battleground. Indonesia is the fifth-largest country in the world and had in the 1950s around 70 million inhabitants. The country had great strategic importance wedged between the Pacific and Indian Ocean and between continental Asia and Australia. It bordered the important sea-lane in the Strait of Malacca and the country was pivotal in Australia's communication lines with the rest of the world. Also the country was home to copious amounts of natural resources such as oil, rubber, tin and copra. Indonesia declared independence in 1945 and under the leadership of President Sukarno Indonesia embarked on a mission to build a strong nation state. The domestic political situation was however characterized by the instability of successive cabinets. Indonesia's foreign political course proved to be more steadfast. Their foreign political

course actively propagated non-alignment. Their non-aligned stance resulted in the organisation of the Bandung conference which received quite some international attention, it clearly established the non-aligned movement on the international stage. Notwithstanding Indonesia's non-aligned position, the importance of Indonesia was both recognised by Russia and the United States. They both tried to gain influence in Indonesia via overt diplomatic means. Economic aid, personal diplomacy and technical assistance were some of the diplomatic instruments employed to garner influence. The effectiveness of this kind of diplomacy in Indonesia was heavily influenced by Indonesian domestic politics. The US had grave difficulties in finding a stable partner in Indonesian political life through which it could assert their policies. US-Indonesian relations can be characterized as cool. The West New Guinea issue was a hotbed for Indonesian discontent due to the US stance on the matter. The growing influence of the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI, was deeply worrying the Eisenhower administration. Within the Cold War framework this development was of utmost importance; a communist Indonesia was detrimental to US security concerns. Furthermore the Eisenhower administration felt increasingly that President Sukarno could not be trusted personally and politically.

The US had various diplomatic instruments at their disposal in order to reach their objectives, but it was decided that covert military operations were the best option to pursue. Main questions that will be answered in this thesis are: why did US foreign policy in Indonesia change its focus from diplomatic, personal relations and economic aid to covertly supporting rebels on the outer islands? Secondly this thesis investigates what was written in Dutch newspapers with regard to the US motivations that eventually led to military intervention. In hindsight there are important processes that have led to intervention, such as the perceived communist threat or the strained relations due to West New Guinea. The newspapers shed light on the importance of these themes at the time thereby providing an alternate view on the interpretation of certain events and processes happening in Indonesia. Dutch newspapers regarding this subject are a source that have not yet been used and therefore may provide new insights. With regard to the newspapers quantitative analyses will be conducted. This particular method counts the amount of hits a certain term is used in the total amount of researched newspapers. This method is used to discover trends that will be compared to qualitative analyses of the newspapers.

Chapter one will analyse the historical context in which US foreign policy toward Indonesia came to be. Also Indonesia will briefly be introduced in order to create more understanding of the (political) situation of the country. Chapter two is concerned with Eisenhower's first term foreign policy in Indonesia. It analyses the importance of Cold War imperatives and on the ways that it effectively rendered diplomatic instruments useless in the light of Indonesia's political situation. Chapter three proves the importance of the West New Guinea issue in US-Indonesian relations. The US could have vastly improved their relations with Indonesia by supporting them on the issue. Why did Washington not choose to eliminate the recurring hurdle? Chapter four focuses on the closing months of the first, and start of the second Eisenhower administration. Dissident colonels in Indonesia suddenly provided Washington with an alternative, receptive partner, something they had not encountered for years. This chapter researches the Indonesian events that eventually led to the decision to intervene militarily. Chapter five will analyse Dutch newspapers to see what these newspapers wrote on the motivations and processes that have contributed toward US intervention, which have been established in the previous chapters. The concluding chapter will analyse the most important factors that have contributed towards intervention set off against the findings from the newspapers.

Several sources have appeared that discuss the American intervention in Indonesia and the reasons for it the intervention. The first book written on the subject was, *Indonesia: The Impossible Dream: United States and the 1958 Rebellion*, by Jayashri Deshpande in 1981. Main theme in her work is that the fear and fight against communism in Indonesia dictated Washington's policies in Indonesia. Then, for over two decades the subject remained untouched. The most likely reason for this is that access to many important US sources remained classified. In 1995 the quintessential *Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles debacle in Indonesia* appeared by Audrey and George Kahin. Their research is specifically focussed on the intervention, it is up until this point the most comprehensive account on the American covert operations. The book draws extensively on interviews conducted between the late 1950's and 1993 with various US State Department, Defence Department and CIA officials. Under the Freedom of Information Act they also knew to collect some classified documents. They drew on Indonesian material as well as conducting interviews with key persons of Indonesian political life. Their strength is that they have been

researching this topic for over thirty years making the book simply unparalleled. The study is even more special because in 1994 the Office of the Historian in the United States State Department released classified CIA and government documents concerning foreign policy in Indonesia, including papers about the covert operation in their *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series. Although *Subversion as Foreign Policy* was published in 1995 the authors could not incorporate those sources in their own study. In fact some documents concerning certain details about US covert support to the rebels still remain classified. Nonetheless they managed to bypass the bureaucratic wall through their myriad of sources and lengthy study.

The Kahins book and new archival material might have sparked renewed interest in the topic looking at the number of books appearing after 1995. Paul F. Gardner's book *Separate Fears: 50 years of U.S. -Indonesian Relations* was published in 1997. In his book he mainly focuses on key individual players on both sides. Recollections of those players make the book very colourful. The narrative is deepened by highlighting personal relations, using personal papers, interviews and anecdotes. Gardner also made some use of the declassified documents of 1994. Gardner is very much interested in the personal interactions of the key players. His focus is thus less on the various policies of the two countries. One of his arguments stemming from this approach is that Washington should have focused more on personal diplomacy in order to achieve their goals in Indonesia. Effectively this means that the US should have wooed Sukarno more. Gardner shows the background of events, but all on a higher diplomatic level. He writes on how conflicting Indonesian and US policymakers were on creating sturdy foreign relations with each other.

Later that year in August 1997, Soo Chun Lu finished her dissertation *United States Relations with Indonesia 1953-1961* at Ohio University. Lu argues that the outlook of the Cold War was of vital importance for the Eisenhower administration's policies toward Indonesia. Indonesia proved not to be the ally the US hoped for. Lu examines the way US policy is shaped within a specific 'triangular' approach. One is the relationship between Indonesia, the People's Republic of China/ the Soviet Union and the US, and the other Indonesia, the Netherlands and the US. Her archival efforts make the book a valuable contribution to the discourse of the subject because since the Kahins, the released archive remained an important aspect of the topic that had not been fully researched. Due to the nature of her sources she mainly looks at the period from an

American perspective. Generally she keeps her focus on a US diplomatic level. The declassified released documents did not hold any major revelations or new insights on the Eisenhower administration, compared to what the Kahins already described. Due to her focus on the higher diplomatic level she reveals and pinpoints the origins of the 'loss of China' argument. The sources reveal that the US already had plans for intervention in the early 1950's and she is able to uncover the departmental quarrelling regarding the US' position on WNG.

Andrew Roadnight' *United States Policy Towards Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (2002) 'examines how successive post-war US administrations developed and executed policy towards Indonesia.'¹ Roadnight lies emphasis on Indonesian nationalism and the difficulties the US experienced reacting upon it since 1945. US policymakers continually failed to see Indonesian nationalism being important in its own right. Furthermore in an effort to deepen understanding about Western relations with Indonesia Roadnight claims that the Australians were crucial in the creation of US foreign policy. Canberra, he writes, wielded strong influence in Washington on the issue of Dutch sovereignty over WNG. US and Australian policy on matters concerning Indonesia converged as the decade wore on.

5 years later in 2007 *Cold War Shadow, United States Policy Toward Indonesia, 1953-1963* by Indonesian Baskara T. Wardaya, SJ appeared. The author has chosen to strictly write on US-Indonesia relations as in purely bi-lateral relations within the Cold War framework. Within this demarcation his work summarises the most important episodes and changes within US-Indonesian relation, commenting on the struggles within the Eisenhower administration and events in Indonesia. The narrative somewhat lacks depth because it summarily touches upon the awakening of Indonesian foreign politics and the role the country has between the Soviet Union and the US within the larger Cold War framework. He describes that US-Indonesian relations are mainly shaped by three factors. First was US perceived threat from Indonesian communism, second US political factors and economic interest, and third Sukarno as a political force. The aforementioned books cover in some way or another, the history of US foreign policy towards Indonesia. There are several other works that adopt a broader view which entails US foreign policy towards the Third World. *Confronting the Third World:*

¹ Andrew Roadnight, *United States Policy towards Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (New York 2002) ix.

United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1980, written by Gabriel Kolko in 1988 was one of the first major works published on the matter. This thesis will rely on the more recent *The Eisenhower Administration, The Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* by K.C. Statler et al. published in 2006. The book covers a wide array of topics that analyse the administration's attitudes towards the Third World. The authors note Washington's inability to handle the global forces of emerging nationalism in the Third World. Also they conclude that US foreign aid policies did not meet up to its expectation, being political alignment with the US. The authors do not only confine themselves in explaining US policy alongside lines of security and economy. They explore domestic racial inequalities and attitudes as a burdening and complicating factor in dealing with emerging nationalism. The authors furthermore attempt to explain US foreign policy by looking into cultural differences, propaganda and US leaders biases as contributing factors.

Now that the position of Indonesia in the Cold War is sketched, Indonesia's history should also be examined to gain deeper understanding of the country. *A History of Modern Indonesia c1200* by M.C. Ricklefs (2001) provides a good summary given the many centuries she is covering. Her introduction of the country mainly focuses on the political history. Complementary on the subject is *A History of Modern Indonesia* by A. Vickers (2005). Vickers tells the Indonesian story focusing more on social history rather than the more common nationalistic history. These two books thus provide a broad view in which Indonesia's history is told.

The *Foreign Relations of the United States* series provide primary sources concerning the Eisenhower administration's official documentary record of foreign relations decisions. This primary source will occasionally be consulted. For this thesis the Dutch newspapers are however the most important primary source. The Royal Library has digitalized several Dutch newspapers, including titles that appeared in Indonesia in the 1950's. Only recently digitalized, these newspapers can now be more efficiently analysed and searched than via conventional methods.

Chapter 1: Historical Context

'Merdeka atau mati'
free or die
Indonesian battle-cry

Colonial Rule

Dutch expansion in the vast Indonesian archipelago started on the northwest coast on the island of Java in 1619. In the next centuries the Dutch extended their economic activities and authority in the region. It was however only in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century that they fully consolidated their rule in the whole Netherlands East Indies. By 1850 the colony generated approximately 31% of the Dutch national income.² These revenues were the result of the *cultuurstelsel* or cultures system. The colonial government together with the *priyayi* (the native aristocratic class) coerced the Javanese peasants to cultivate 1/5th of their land for export crops. Additionally they were required to work 66 days per year to cash the valuable crops such as pepper, copra and indigo. The *priyayi* received surpluses that came of the land further encouraging exploitation. The government exercised full economic monopoly in the colony. This was to change in 1848 when the Netherlands became a parliamentary monarchy. The monopolistic system was abolished and private enterprise in the colony was encouraged. The cultivation system became increasingly criticized during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Eduard Douwes Dekker better known as Multatuli wrote the novel *Max Havelaar* (1860) that condemned the suffering the Dutch inflicted on the native population via the cultivation system. The book sparked controversy and the cultivation system was subsequently heavily criticised. Forced cultivation was abolished around 1870 but the oppressive and exploitative colonial society remained. Voices that called for a change in Dutch attitude became louder towards the end of the nineteenth century. In 1901 the Dutch embarked on a new policy towards the colony dubbed Ethical Policy (*Ethische Politiek*). The idea was that the Dutch had the moral obligation towards the native population for the wealth they had extracted during the centuries. A year later Minister of Colonies A.W.F Idenburg developed these ideas into concrete policies. He wanted to improve the socio-economic position of the natives by improving education, healthcare, improve infrastructure and irrigation. Furthermore his policy was

² B.T. Wardaya, *Cold War Shadow: United States Policy Toward Indonesia, 1953-1963* (Jakarta 2007) 22.

aimed at stimulating people to migrate people from heavily populated Java to the outer islands. Also careful steps were made to prepare the Indonesians for self-rule.

Towards Independence

During the Ethical Policy native students were offered Western style education either at home or abroad. These students were supposed to fill in jobs within the colonial government's administration. Good intentions aside; 'by late 1940, of 3039 higher-ranking civil service positions only 221 were held by Indonesians.'³ Western educated Indonesians not only had difficulties in finding high level government jobs but also in Dutch-controlled businesses, they were severely discriminated against.⁴ An unanticipated and unintended effect of the Ethical Policy was that Indonesian students were introduced to Western liberal ideas. 'This transfer [of ideas] promoted the beginning of national consciousness and the rise of national awakening among the natives that, in turn, led to the birth of independence movements throughout Dutch colonial possessions.'⁵ In the two decades preceding World War II Indonesia's nationalist movements began to pick up pace.⁶ The Dutch, however, heavily repressed political parties and nationalist movements in these years. Many nationalist and political leaders were interned, only to be released during the Japanese invasion in 1942⁷

Japanese Occupation

On March 1, 1942 Japanese imperial forces landed on Java. Swiftly they managed to conquer the island. The Japanese anti-Western tone and talks of Indonesian independence were at first welcomed. However, these feelings were short lived, 'like other occupied areas, Indonesia became a land of extreme hardship, inflation, shortages, profiteering, corruption, black markets and death.'⁸ Notwithstanding, Indonesian nationalistic feelings were increased during this period. The Japanese required Indonesian civil servants to administer Indonesia since they had locked up all

³ A. Kahin, G. M. Kahin, *Subversion As Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York 1995) 21.

⁴ Kahin, *Subversion*, 21.

⁵ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow* 25.

⁶ A. Vickers, *A Modern History of Indonesia* (Cambridge 2005) 82.

⁷ Kahin, *Subversion*, 22.

⁸ M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia c1200*, (Basingstoke 2001) 201.

Dutchmen. The Indonesians became increasingly aware that they could fill those positions with competence. This led to a belief that they were capable of governing themselves.⁹ Meanwhile the Japanese sought other ways of controlling Indonesia other than harsh military rule. Already famous, the nationalists Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta chose to cooperate with the military government. 'They believed that by cooperating with the Japanese they could manipulate events for the interests of the Indonesian people, thereby enhancing the chances of gaining independence.'¹⁰ Another factor that would become important in the Indonesian struggle for independence was the creation of Indonesian militia by the Japanese.¹¹ Japanese command feared Allied counterattacks in the archipelago so they trained Indonesians to defend the country in the eventuality of such an attack. The troops numbered 20.000 on Sumatra and 30.000 on Java. It was these militias who would later become the chief armed forces fighting the Dutch.

Revolution

The Japanese surrendered unconditionally on August 15, 1945. Two days later in the morning of August 17, Sukarno proclaimed Indonesian independence in front of his own house. The situation was, however, far from calm. There were no immediate Allied troops in the vicinity to restore authority. The Americans occupied north-western New Guinea and the Australians parts in eastern Indonesia. The Japanese were ordered to maintain law and order in the archipelago and to disarm the militia, which were orders they did not always obey.

In early September British troops under Lord Mountbatten were first to arrive in Jakarta and immediately met resistance from Indonesian freedom fighters. For many Indonesians it was clear that the British 'intended to help re-impose Dutch colonial rule.'¹² In November of the following year the Dutch garrisoned over 91.000 troops to face the fighters of the newly established republic. The Hague refused to accept Indonesia's proclamation of independence and in order to restore full authority the Dutch embarked on two so-called 'police actions'. These actions, however, should be interpreted as violent military operations. A change in the Indonesia mind-set had, however, occurred after the Japanese occupation. The Indonesians were prepared to

⁹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 23.

¹⁰ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 49.

¹¹ Roadnight, *United States*, 5.

¹² Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 75.

violently defend their newly achieved independence against a foreign power, particularly against returning Dutch power.¹³

Birth of US Policy

During the first three years of the Indonesian struggle for independence the Truman administration did not support the Indonesians. 'American policymakers fear of communism overrode their often genuine, though much weaker, opposition to colonialism.'¹⁴ And so 'US anti-colonial eloquence did not match US post-war global interests.'¹⁵ These global interests were very much defined by communism. The Truman administration began to 'perceive the Soviet-Union as a devious, expansionist, and aggressive global power that sought to put the world under control of its communist ideology.'¹⁶ The post-war economic recovery of Western Europe was deemed of vital importance in this light. The Marshall Plan was to foresee in this need. The Truman administration believed that war-torn Holland could also benefit if their colony in Asia returned under Dutch control. Historically the Netherlands East Indies was an important contributor to the Dutch national product so the US believed that reinstating the Dutch' control over Indonesia's natural riches would mean an easier road to economic recovery and reintegration in the world economy.¹⁷ The US subsequently provided funds for Dutch efforts to reconquer Indonesia. Meanwhile in 1949, the Indonesian nationalists were being classified as communist by the Truman administration. In light of ever expanding communism, this view on Indonesia became the cornerstone of US foreign policy towards Indonesia. Although at this time Indonesia was not the communist battleground it would later become. Foreign policy towards Indonesia was thought of in terms of the US' 'confrontation with the USSR, and later, the People's Republic of China.'¹⁸

The Americans changed their policy towards Indonesia in 1949. There were several reasons for this change to occur. In November 1948 a revolt took place in the town of Madiun, in central Java. Here, the communists fought against the leadership of Sukarno and Hatta. The Republican forces crushed this uprising. The message was clear:

¹³ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 73-74.

¹⁴ Kahin, *Subversion*, 29.

¹⁵ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 80.

¹⁶ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 82.

¹⁷ Roadnight, *United States*, 7-8.

¹⁸ Roadnight, *United States*, 75.

Sukarno and Hatta weren't communists as the Dutch had continually claimed.¹⁹ This greatly improved the administrations views of the, apparently anti-communist nationalists.²⁰ Even though the Dutch were still fighting the Republicans the CIA had now begun to transport promising young officers to the US in order to receive military training once it had become evident that Sukarno's forces were stronger than the communists.²¹ Also the Dutch military campaign was pivotal in changing US policy on Indonesia. Six weeks after the Madiun rebellion the Dutch launched their second military campaign; Operation Crow. In doing so, the Dutch broke the Renville agreement. This was a cease-fire agreement made with Indonesia and the UN under the auspices of the US. Dutch forces proceeded to capture Jakarta and intern Hatta and Sukarno. The Dutch actions did not fare well in the international community and the US. The Netherlands had broken an UN agreement and therefore they posed a threat to the credibility of the newly established organization. 'If the UN could not enforce its writ against a minor power like the Netherlands, it seemed likely it would soon end up just as impotent and discredited as the League of Nations.'²² The US pressured the Dutch heavily to give up the colony. Later that year, on December 27, 1949 the Dutch transferred sovereignty to Indonesia.

Indonesian Political Outlook

After independence was accomplished President Sukarno and Vice-President Mohammad Hatta faced the challenging task of creating a state and nation. Immediately there were difficulties on what the form of the state should be.²³ In the end there was general consensus of creating a democratic state.²⁴ In 1950 a unitary democratic republic was declared. Although the country was formally unified the political situation was not always representative of this fact. Indonesian Islamists proclaimed an Islamic state called *Darul Islam* (House of Islam) after independence and the Moluccan islands pronounced the Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS) in early 1950.²⁵ There were heavy debates about what political course the country should follow. Communists,

¹⁹ Vickers, *Indonesia*, 111.

²⁰ Roadnight, *United States*, 75.

²¹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 31.

²² Kahin, *Subversion*, 32.

²³ Vickers, *Modern Indonesia*, 115.

²⁴ Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 289.

²⁵ Vickers, *Modern Indonesia*, 120.

socialists, modernist Muslims and nationalists all had different ideas. Sukarno had to bring the ethnically, religiously, geographically and linguistically diverse country together to form a nation state, which proved to be a very arduous task. He proposed a national ideology that would promote unity in the archipelago and move Indonesia towards being a modern nation state. The new state philosophy was *Pancasila*, or the Five Principles: Structuring a Free Indonesia in Faithfulness to God Almighty, Consensus or Democracy, Internationalism or Humanitarianism, Social Prosperity, and Nationalism or National Unity.²⁶ Although many vied for the establishment of an Islamic state both Sukarno and Hatta aimed for a secular state. They believed that the 'size and importance of the country's minorities - amounting collectively to 10 to 15 percent of the population - would eventually tear the country apart if an Islamic state was established.'²⁷

The main parties in the 1950's were: Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI, The Indonesian Nationalist Party), this party was founded by Sukarno and Hatta and its origins lay in political and educational groups. The Muslim Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the modernist Muslim Masyumi party. Furthermore there was the Partai Socialis Indonesia (PSI, Indonesian Socialist Party) and the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI, Indonesian Communist Party). All of these political parties were in one way or the other committed to some form of socialism.²⁸

The Indonesian Economy

For centuries the colonial economy was dualistic in nature. One part of the economy was controlled by the Dutch and geared towards exporting on the global market. The other part was geared towards local needs. Independent Indonesia inherited this dualistic economic model and recognised that this model was insufficient if Indonesia wanted to modernize.²⁹ Newly formed economic policies were aimed to lead to structural economic change in order to modernise and to achieve control over productive resources.³⁰ The legacy of this dualistic economy meant that non-Indonesian interests, who controlled the productive resources, remained important.³¹ Foreign companies were strongly represented in the oil industry, such as Royal Dutch Shell and American

²⁶ Vickers, *Modern Indonesia*, 117. Kahin, *Subversion*, 27.

²⁷ Kahin, *Subversion*, 28.

²⁸ Vickers, *Modern Indonesia*, 123.

²⁹ B. Simpson, 'Indonesia's "Accelerated Modernization" and the Global Discourse of Development, 1960-1975', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2009) 468-469/472.

³⁰ J. T. Lindblad, 'Economic Growth and Decolonisation in Indonesia', *Itenario*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2010) 101.

³¹ Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 291.

Caltex. Banking was dominated by Dutch, British and Chinese interests. For international transactions the Indonesians had to rely on these banks. The Dutch owned three: *Nederlandsche Handels-Maatschappij* (Netherlands Trading Society), Escomptobank and *Nationale Handelsbank* (National Trading Bank).³² Furthermore the Dutch owned KPM (Koninkijke Paketvaart Maatchappij, Royal Packet Navigation Company) which in control of inter-islands shipping.³³ After the revolution these foreign investors had considerably less influence than before. 'Western economic enterprise was now confronted with a government in which most leaders were unsympathetic to an increase of foreign capital and who were endorsing socialism.'³⁴ Simultaneously Indonesia's economy was deteriorating. The export crops which were important before the war, became even more important for the economy afterwards. The volume of the exports was reduced to about one-half of the pre-war period making Indonesia unable to pay for its imports.³⁵ The export crops were the main source of revenue for the Indonesia treasury but fluctuating prices on the world market hampered further economic development.³⁶

Conclusion

This chapter shows that the start of American foreign policy on Indonesia was quite ambiguous. The Indonesian road to independence is characterized by turmoil. After World War II Indonesia was struggling to gain independence from the Dutch. And although the US presented themselves as anti-colonialists, their policies towards Indonesia weren't representative of this idea. For the Netherlands, the reconstruction of the post-war country leaned partly on the wealth Indonesia generated for the Dutch. Dutch authority in Indonesia was restored with the help of the US. Then in 1949 the US again changed their policy towards Indonesia, now supporting Indonesian independence. At the start of the Eisenhower administration the Indonesians were already familiar with the notion that US interests in their country were ambivalent and subject to change. Indonesia had become a pawn in the Cold War.

³² J. T. Lindblad, 'The Economic Decolonisation of Indonesia: a Bird's-eye View', *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 4, (2011) 8-9.

³³ Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 291.

³⁴ Kahin, *Subversion*, 37.

³⁵ Roadnight, *United States*. 83.

³⁶ Kahin, *Subversion*, 36.

Chapter 2: The Eisenhower Administration's Foreign Policy on Indonesia

'Why the hell did we ever urge the Dutch to get out of Indonesia?'
President Dwight D. Eisenhower³⁷

The First Eisenhower Administration

Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower's foreign policy in Indonesia was very much dictated by Cold War concerns. In chapter 2 Indonesian domestic and international politics will be examined to determine what influence they had on US foreign policy between roughly 1953-1956. Furthermore, this chapter will look into the effects of diplomatic instruments, such as US economic policies and personal diplomacy, to analyse and determine what effects these had on US-Indonesian relations.

The most important actors in creating US foreign policy during Eisenhower's first term towards Indonesia were President Eisenhower, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Allen Welsh Dulles and Vice President Richard M. Nixon. Foreign policy was created during meetings of the National Security Council (NSC). These men shared a common view 'of a world ideologically divided by the communist camp, led by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, and countries of the Free World, led by the United States'.³⁸ Furthermore they asserted that the central objective of US foreign policy should be the containment of international communism. Within Cold War thinking they believed that nations following a neutralist foreign policy were immoral.³⁹ Washington experienced a constant struggle in befriending newly independent and often highly nationalistic countries in order to prevent them falling in the communist camp.

US foreign policy towards Indonesia was greatly influenced by the Indonesia/China analogue, or the loss of China. During the 1952 presidential campaign the Republicans criticised Truman's foreign policy, especially the staunch anti-communist Senator Joseph McCartney.⁴⁰ When China became communist in 1949,

³⁷ Memorandum of Discussion of the National Security Council, December 1, 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume 12, (1), 1005.

³⁸ Baskara, *United States*, 152.

³⁹ P. F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Boulder 1997) 112.

⁴⁰ S.C. Lu, *United States Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ohio University (1997) 15. Baskara, *United States*, 154.

Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles believed it had to do with US persistence on maintaining and over accentuating China's territorial integrity. This persistence eventually led to a total communist victory. They asserted that, if at some stage the Chinese nationalists would have yielded some territory to the communists, then that would have allowed their leader Chiang Kai-shek to conserve his armed forces' strength. The concept was that eventually the communists would alienate the population, which in turn made re-conquering the territory an easier mission.⁴¹ Secretary of State Dulles and Eisenhower believed that this scenario was applicable to Indonesia as well. The importance of Cold War imperatives and the China/Indonesia analogue is exemplified by Secretary Dulles' instructions to Ambassador Hugh S. Cumming in October 1953. Dulles told Cumming that he would rather see Indonesia fall into different geographical units than see a territorially unified communist Indonesia.⁴² The desire to prevent Indonesia from falling into the communist camp was a cornerstone of US foreign policy on Indonesia. The Indonesia/China analogue and NSC policies were not the only contributors to US foreign policy in Indonesia. The assessment of the Indonesian domestic and international situation also contributed towards the views that the US administration held about the country. The next section will examine Indonesia's domestic and international politics as well as the countries' economic situation and Washington's assessment of President Sukarno. How and in what way did these factors influence Washington views towards Indonesia?

Indonesian Domestic Politics and the PKI

In August 1953 the Ali Sastroamijoyo cabinet came to power. Sastroamijoyo had been Ambassador to the United States in Washington before heading the cabinet. He was well regarded by the Department of State.⁴³ The Eisenhower administration perceived his cabinet as leftist. The ruling coalition consisted of the Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI, The Indonesian Nationalist Party), the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), a traditional Sunni Islam party and several other parties of which two were influenced by the communist ideology. The opposition consisted of Masyumi, a modernist Islamic party and the Partai Socialis Indonesia (PSI, Indonesian Socialist Party). The Partai Kommunis Indonesia (PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party) supported the new government but they were

⁴¹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 75.

⁴² Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 133.

⁴³ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 116.

not represented in the cabinet. This was a beneficial position since the PKI was not responsible for the current situation in Indonesia, and could voice against it. Eventually there were four members in the cabinet that were influenced by communism and four that sympathised with the PKI, but weren't members of the party, out of a twenty-member cabinet. These numbers greatly worried the Eisenhower administration because it showed that communism was spreading and its power and influence was growing.⁴⁴ Although the PKI was not included, their popular influence had been growing since their defeat at Madiun in 1948. Their new leader Dipa Nusantara Aidit, who also had been imprisoned by the Dutch, managed to attract a large following. The Indonesian workers union, SOBSI (Sentral Organisasi Seluruh Indonesia, All-Indonesia Workers Organization) was under communist control and by March 1954 they had between 600.000 to 750.000 members.

The party proposed vigorously the needs and concerns of the people while also demanding repairs of public infrastructure, such as schools, bridges, and roads. In a relatively short period of time the PKI's influence exceeded that of other political parties, projecting the image of a dedicated community organizer, committed to addressing the basic social and economic needs of the people on grass roots level.⁴⁵

The PKI also managed to amass a following among the peasantry, although mainly on leftist Java.⁴⁶ They were prevalent in cities such as Surabaya and Surakarta. The party maintained a highly nationalistic tone, stressing the need for a unified Indonesia. They opposed Dutch presence in West New Guinea (WNG). To them this was a representation of continued Dutch imperialism. The American neutral stance on WNG was also denounced and they were very weary of foreign influence in general. Initiatives such as the US initiated Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) was interpreted by the PKI as US interference in the region. Even though the party was not in the cabinet of 1953, Washington saw Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo's collaboration with the PKI as their main criticism of the government.⁴⁷ The rise of PKI fuelled Washington's

⁴⁴ R.J. McMahon, "'The Point of No Return': The Eisenhower Administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960", in K.C. Statler and A.L. Johns, *The Eisenhower Administration The Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (New York 2006) 79.

⁴⁵ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 162.

⁴⁶ Vickers, *Modern Indonesia*, 123.

⁴⁷ Roadnight, *United States*, 116.

determination to contain communism in the archipelago since the current government and Sukarno did not seem to do anything to thwart this trend.⁴⁸ CIA officials, however, assessed that 'the communists were unlikely to achieve a dominating position within the next twelve months, either through force of arms or political action.'⁴⁹ This assessment did not seem to satisfy Washington's top policymakers. Dulles admitted that it was difficult to assess the real risk of Indonesia turning communist, but at the same time he acknowledged that Indonesia's current course was not favourable to the United States.⁵⁰

SEATO and the Bandung Conference

The NSC met on November 19th 1953, just a month after the installation of the Ali cabinet to discuss the course of action on Indonesia. The most important members of that council were the Dulles brothers. They were primarily responsible for creating US foreign policy towards Indonesia.⁵¹ US intent in NSC 171/1 was as following:

To prevent Indonesia from passing into the Communist orbit; to persuade Indonesia that its best interests lie in greater cooperation and strong affiliations with the rest of the free world and to assist Indonesia to develop toward a stable, free government with the will and ability to resist Communism from within and without and to contribute to the strengthening of the free world.⁵²

The policy further stated the strategic importance of Indonesia and its natural resources. Also the Eisenhower administration should assist Indonesia with their dire economic situation. Washington found it of utmost importance to balk any non-communist government becoming communist. Heavily emphasizing the communist objectives became 'a tendency of the Eisenhower administration.'⁵³ Now Indonesia was defined as a country 'to be saved from Communism rather than a nation worthy of Washington's attention in its own right.'⁵⁴

Under Prime Minister Ali, Indonesia embarked on a more dynamic non-aligned foreign policy course. Actively, Indonesia would pursue an independent course dealing

⁴⁸ Roadnight, *United States*, 115.

⁴⁹ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration* 79.

⁵⁰ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 80.

⁵¹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes* 112.

⁵² NSC 171/1 'United States Objectives and Courses of Action with respect to Indonesia', 20 November 1953, Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 398 in Lu, *United States*, 55.

⁵³ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 80.

⁵⁴ Roadnight, *United States*, 108.

with the free world, the communist bloc and third world nations. With respect to the Cold War, Indonesia would remain neutral, neither aligned with the US nor the communists. 'This idea of a neutralist but active foreign policy worried Eisenhower's policymakers.'⁵⁵ Among those policymakers was Secretary Dulles. He was quite unhappy with new Indonesia's course. He argued that Indonesia was morally obliged to align themselves either with the United States or the communists. This problem was further exacerbated in late 1954 when Indonesia did not wish to sign the Manila pact. Indonesian refusal to sign the pact, which was the predecessor of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO), meant that the US did not have any security treaties with the Indonesians. Despite claiming to be a Southeast Asian pact its members were not representative of the area. Its members were: the UK, France, Australia, New Zealand, the US, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand. The pact clearly was based on Western countries having an interest in the Southeast Asian region. After the Manila pact was signed Secretary Dulles clearly was uncomfortable with the situation. SEATO was initiated to curb communism in the region so the real problem was that Indonesia's refusal to engage in any bilateral or regional collective security arrangements meant that US intervention, in case of communist subversion or aggression, was impaired. It was eventually decided in NSC meetings in late 1954 that a paragraph should be added to the US policy towards the Far East. The paragraph stated, among others:

Employ all feasible covert means, and all feasible overt means including, in accordance with constitutional processes, the use of armed force if necessary and appropriate, to prevent Indonesia or vital parts thereof from falling under Communist control by overt armed attack, subversion, economic domination, or other means.⁵⁶

Eventual military intervention in Indonesia had now been made part of policy if the US deemed it appropriate to keep Indonesia out of communist hands. Also, the China/Indonesia analogue had become policy, Washington was not committed to maintaining Indonesia's territorial integrity. More importantly, the military intervention of 1957-58 can be seen as already warranted since late 1954.

⁵⁵ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 160.

⁵⁶ Extracts of NSC 5429/4, 'Current U.S. Policy Toward the Far East', December 10, 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 (1), 1036-1037.

Indonesia took its active and neutral foreign policy to a higher plan when they organised an international conference that discussed the position of non-aligned countries toward the world's two superpowers. In December 1954 they invited 29 Afro-Asian nations to attend a conference between 17-24 of April 1955 in Bandung, Java. The administration believed the conference proposed a threat to US interests. It was thought that the conference was breeding ground for communists and anti-colonialists to form groups that would nurture deep anti-US sentiments to the advantage of the Soviets.⁵⁷ Washington therefore tried to influence the conference via their Asian SEATO partners. In the end, however, US fears were ungrounded. The conference did not harm US objectives nor did it imbalance the Cold War rivalry.⁵⁸ The anti-colonialist theme did not lead to disapproval of the SEATO alliance or the West in general, which was a great relief to Washington.⁵⁹ While US objectives remained unharmed, Indonesia and Sukarno rose to the international stage as proponents of the global movement of nonalignment.

The 1955 Elections

The Ali cabinet eventually fell due to a dispute with the army concerning the appointment of a new Chief of Staff on July 25, 1955. This demonstrated the political power of the military. Washington was pleased with the fall since they did not view the Ali government in a favourable light. The following government headed by Burhanuddin Harahap can be characterized as a care-taker government. Its duty was to oversee the upcoming elections due in September of that year and it was to focus on 'attacking inflation, stamp out corruption and to settle grievances of the regions.'⁶⁰ Among the members of the cabinet were Foreign Minister Anak Agung and Finance Minister Sumitro Djojohadikusomo, 'both were highly respected by US officials for their expertise and their moderate positions.'⁶¹ The new government provided the US with new possibilities to gain more influence in Indonesia. Ambassador Cumming clearly showed his content:

⁵⁷ Gardner, *Shared hopes*, 118-119. Baskara, *United States*, 168-173. Roadnight, *United States*, 126-128.

⁵⁸ Lu, *United States*, 104.

⁵⁹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 119.

⁶⁰ Roadnight, *United States*, 130.

⁶¹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 122.

To any American who has lived through two years of the Ali government with its usually correct but always cool attitude toward the United States and U.S. policy, its catering to Indonesian left wing elements and especially in the last few months to Communist China, and its subservience to the demands of a highly emotional nationalism, the alterations of the last forty-eight hours in the political climate are short of breathtaking.⁶²

On September 29, 1955, for the first time in Indonesia's history national elections were to be held. The Eisenhower administration recognised that it was unlikely that they could enjoy this interim governments favourable position for a considerable time. Washington relied on the Masyumi party for 'much of their political intelligence, including its predictions of the elections outcome.' The US administration covertly supported the party with \$1 million and even had an undercover associate working for them.⁶³ The administration thus believed that Masyumi was the ally that could provide the counterforce on which to rely in preventing further communist influence in Indonesia. The 1955 elections were a huge success, there was a 91.5 % turnout of 39 million registered voters.⁶⁴ The way the votes were distributed was, however, not what Washington expected. The PNI received 22.3% of the votes, Masyumi 20.9% and NU 18.4%. To Washington's grave dismay the PKI received 16.4% of the votes. Even though the US had assisted Masyumi, they did not come in first, which exposed 'the poverty of US intelligence and its understanding of the political situation.'⁶⁵ Washington therefore had to deal with the PKI's popularity. Undeniably the communist's influence in Indonesia was growing which signified Indonesia's political outlook was further shifting towards the left. While the votes were still tallied, Foreign Minister Anak Agung met Secretary Dulles on October 3, 1955 in Washington. Dulles stated that there was a real danger of Indonesia becoming communist.⁶⁶ Agung responded that 'this was the reason his government needed more economic and financial aid.'⁶⁷

A deeper analysis of the outcome of the elections is required to fully understand the contribution to Washington's perception of the Indonesian political outlook. The US had concentrated its influencing power on Masyumi. This meant it could not steer the

⁶² Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 16, 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 181.

⁶³ Roadnight, *United States*, 131.

⁶⁴ Baskara, *United States*, 174-175.

⁶⁵ Roadnight *United States*, 131.

⁶⁶ Baskara, *United States*, 175.

⁶⁷ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 123.

PNI towards a favourable PNI-Masyumi-NU coalition government.⁶⁸ Now the PKI, who had supported the PNI in 1953, would form a partnership together with Sukarno, Secretary Dulles concluded.⁶⁹ Historically Sukarno backed the PNI but he also managed to again restore his power by appealing to popular sentiment.⁷⁰ Now that the PKI began to play a more important role in national politics it appeared that the party had quite some issues in common with Sukarno, such as the Indonesian stance on WNG and the continual struggle for Indonesian independence. They both rejected foreign powers gaining influence in Indonesia. The PKI and Sukarno therefore shared various political points, heightening US apprehension of Sukarno and Indonesian domestic politics in general.⁷¹ It seemed as if the earlier US objective, the prevention of the Indonesian government falling into communist orbit, were far from being materialized because of the growth of the PKI. The new government was unlikely to be favourably disposed to the US and so the Eisenhower administration had to come up with a new strategy to gain influence in Indonesia's domestic politics.

The West New Guinea Dispute

West New Guinea (WNG) is the second largest island in the world. It lies in the eastern part of the Indonesian archipelago. The Dutch refused to give up their 362.000 square kilometre western half of the island to Indonesia in 1949. Despite several centuries of Dutch presence in the archipelago they only consolidated most of the territory in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century. In 1945 Sukarno and Hatta had 'a major dispute whether WNG should be part of Indonesia since the Dutch held on to it'.⁷² Sukarno won the argument so henceforth Indonesia asserted that the Dutch should relinquish all the territories that made up the Dutch East Indies. However, the Netherlands claimed that WNG was ethnologically, racially, and religiously different from the rest of the archipelago. Indonesia had therefore no cultural or ethnic ties with WNG and thus WNG did not belong to Indonesia.⁷³ Indonesia referred to this area as West Irian. For practical reasons, however, I will use West New Guinea throughout this thesis. During the Round Table Conference Talks in 1949 the Republic of Indonesia and the Netherlands could not

⁶⁸ Roadnight, *United States*, 131.

⁶⁹ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 179.

⁷⁰ Roadnight, *United States*, 131

⁷¹ Ricklefs, *Indonesia*, 252.

⁷² Vickers, *Indonesia*, 139.

⁷³ Lu, *United States*, 133.

agree on the future of the island. Both Indonesia and the Netherlands tried to convince Washington to support their claim to the territory. This chapter will analyse the position of WNG on the world stage and on how the WNG issue steadily grew to become a continual source of friction in US-Indonesian relations.

Personal Diplomacy

After the US had miscalculated the 1955 elections, President Sukarno might have been the obvious choice for Washington to invest in, in order to gain more influence in Indonesia. Ambassador Cumming knew that Sukarno wished to visit the US. But not all within the US administration aspired to build a relationship with Sukarno.⁷⁴ Eisenhower and Director Dulles were positive about extending an invitation, Secretary Dulles was not. Cumming always had his doubts and Nixon personally did not like Sukarno but recognised that it was important to work with Sukarno.⁷⁵ Cumming was recalled to Washington in early 1956 to discuss the invitation of Sukarno. Cumming describes the difficulties of the administration in deciding whether to invite Sukarno. At the same time while the US were discussing the invitation there were signals that the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were preparing to invite Sukarno over to their respective countries. Which meant that there was a real chance Sukarno would be influenced by the communists and so Cumming stated on this: "we would never know whether it had been our failure to invite him here or not, that would have been the cause."⁷⁶ Some regarded Sukarno as a womanizer and unpredictable, not someone who ought to be invited. An invitation might also put off the Dutch. Eventually it was decided that Sukarno was to be invited. Secretary Dulles personally extended the invitation to Sukarno during a twenty-four hour visit (March 12-13, 1956) to Indonesia. They had a conversation in which Dulles warned Sukarno that the Soviet Union was trying to 'impose their system on the whole world'. Also Sukarno should refrain from using the WNG dispute in order to 'sharpen international conflicts to serve their own conflicts'. Sukarno responded by admitting US assistance during the revolution but he also reflected on the current situation:⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Roadnight, *United States*, 134.

⁷⁵ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 179.

⁷⁶ Hugh S. Cumming, Jr., interview, December 3, 1966, The John Foster Dulles Oral History Project, Princeton Library, 21-22 in Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 124.

⁷⁷ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 181

The problem for Asians is not pro or anti-Communism but that the whole Asian scene is showing the stamp of nationalism... Every attitude taken by other countries is measured by the Asian people in respect to their national aspirations. The American voice is not so clear now as in the period 1945 to December 1949; on the question of Asian nationalism the Communist voice is clearer.⁷⁸

Their sharp differences in focus and views were clear. Coincidentally, these were also the days of the formation of a new Indonesia government coalition. A few days later it was announced that Ali Sastroamijoyo would return as prime minister and that the three largest parties would form a coalition. A coalition that was favourable to the US since it lacked communist representation. So there was an opening for constructive talks, during a visit that might bring the two countries closer together. Sukarno was flown in by Eisenhower's personal airplane *the Columbine* on May 16, 1955 and was welcomed with all honours and respects. Sukarno received honorary degrees at the University of Michigan and at Columbia University. On the program was among others a tour of Disneyland hosted by Walt Disney himself and visits to several automotive plants. Furthermore, he received a tickertape parade in New York. Living up to his womanizer reputation he requested to meet Hollywood star Ava Gardner. Unfortunately, she was in Spain at that time so he was 'introduced to a bevy of other Hollywood beauties.'⁷⁹ The visit was a great success. The most important feature of his trip was his speech before a joint session of the US Congress. Sukarno, renowned for his dazzling orating skills, delivered a speech that received a louder applause than Winston Churchill had.⁸⁰ He linked the American Revolution with African-Asian themes. He expressed his admiration for Jefferson and Lincoln and he welcomed assistance on the basis of mutual benefit and not "exchanging intellectual and spiritual independence or physical liberty for monetary advantage."⁸¹ He added that Indonesia still was not totally free of colonial shackles due to the WNG burden, thereby ignoring what Dulles had earlier said to him. Even though Sukarno was at times quite harsh, the speech received a standing ovation. After Sukarno returned to Indonesia he gave a speech in Semarang in which he spoke highly of the US.

⁷⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 14, 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 241-242.

⁷⁹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 126.

⁸⁰ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 127.

⁸¹ New York Times, 18 May, 1956 in, Baskara, *United States*, 183.

Ambassador Cumming reported that he believed that the trip successfully brought Sukarno and thereby Indonesia closer to the United States.⁸²

The US were, however, not the only country who applied personal relations as a diplomatic instrument. Both the Soviet Union and China invited Sukarno too. He visited the communist countries in mid-August and late October, 1956. The Eisenhower administration was not happy about Sukarno's open overtures with the communist bloc. Many Americans deemed his visit as an 'improper response to their hospitality.'⁸³ During his visit to China he paid homage to Mao Tsetung's economic policies that had rebuild China's economy. Sukarno felt that the 'achievements of an underdeveloped country such as China were more relevant to Indonesia than those of advanced Western economies, such as United States.'⁸⁴ The encouraging atmosphere in US-Indonesian relations quickly cooled down due to Sukarno's positive comments on the communists. The Eisenhower administration again focused on the dangers of the PKI and what it meant to the political orientation of Jakarta. They began to view Sukarno as 'wily, untrustworthy, mercurial, and either a hopeless naïve or an outright communist sympathizer.'⁸⁵ Although Cumming posed a different, more moderate and placating attitude of the Indonesian situation and Sukarno, he too began to change his views in early 1957. Now Eisenhower, the Dulles Brothers and Cumming all joined 'the ranks of those who believed that Indonesia was rapidly reaching the point of no return.'⁸⁶ An aspect that was supplemental to this attitude was the ineffectiveness of US economic policies in Indonesia.

US Economic Policies towards Indonesia

Indonesia was the fifth-largest country in the world and had around 70 million inhabitants in the 1950s. Not only did the country have millions of potential customers, the country was also home to copious amounts of natural resources such as oil, rubber tin and copra. Its potential was recognised by contestants Russia and the United States. Restricting Soviet access to these resources was within the light of the Cold War a logical choice for the United States. Both super powers offered Indonesia 'visions of

⁸² Kahin, *Subversion*, 81.

⁸³ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 185.

⁸⁴ Kahin, *Subversion*, 81.

⁸⁵ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 84.

⁸⁶ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 84.

development and programs as well as military, economic and technical assistance'.⁸⁷ From 1956-1963 Soviet aid reached \$ 1 billion representing more than 20% of all Soviet aid to non-communist countries. American aid from 1950-1963 reached a mere \$327 million.⁸⁸ These aid efforts had the ultimate goal of gaining influence in Indonesia. This section analyzes US economic policies towards Indonesia. How did the US employ financial aid as a diplomatic instrument and what effects did these policies have on US-Indonesian relations?

Incorporating the Indonesian economy in the capitalist world economy would mean that Indonesia would be less prone to falling into communist hands. Also offering different economic models enabled the Indonesians to move away from the colonial economic model. An example of how this was attempted was via a partnership between the Faculty of Economics at the University of Indonesia and the University of California at Berkeley and various other institutions such as MIT and Cornell. These American trained Indonesian academics proved to be quite influential in directing Indonesian economic development towards 'Keynesianism and American modernization theory'.⁸⁹ This collaboration crystallized in 1951 and 1956 with the creation of the first and second five-year economic development plan together with foreign aid.⁹⁰ Remarkably, Indonesian officials did not see a contradiction in formulating Soviet style five-year plans combined with a Western economic approach.⁹¹ It does signify that modernization along liberal-capitalist lines proved to be an ambivalent matter. Indonesia did not wish to align itself economically, neither with the Soviet Union nor the United States. Besides the US, the communist bloc also recognised economic assistance linked with their ideology as a way of drawing Indonesia into their sphere of influence.

Economic assistance could be seen as a powerful diplomatic instrument. This instrument should be considered part of US security policy because it represented an US objective; which was to keep the Indonesian government from falling into Communist orbit. But it appeared that the US did not want to invest economically considering the small amount of funds they made available. The US aid programme, the Mutual Security

⁸⁷ Simpson, *Accelerated Modernization*, 468.

⁸⁸ www.thejakartapost.com/news/2007/09/02/how-cold-war-influenced-usindonesia-relations.html-0, review of B.T. Baskara, *Cold War Shadow: United States Policy Toward Indonesia, 1953-1963* (Jakarta 2007).

⁸⁹ Simpson, *Accelerated Modernization*, 469.

⁹⁰ Simpson, *Accelerated Modernization*, 469.

⁹¹ Simpson, *Accelerated Modernization*, 472.

Programme was quite modest. In 1953 the aid amounted to \$13.2 million and the next year it fell to \$4.3 million. The main problem was that the US did not always find the Indonesian government a good receptive client. The first Ali government (1953-1955) consisted of elements that were pro-communist. So any aid given to this government meant indirect aid to communists as well. At the same time Washington could not risk to totally alienate the Indonesian government. Ambassador Cumming nonetheless advised not to increase aid, because it would mean more prestige for the Ali government. Nonetheless, also Cumming felt that the Indonesians were not yet worthy of receiving more sizeable aid.⁹² Cumming was at that time, certain that Musyumi would win the upcoming elections in 1955, and that this would produce a government worthy of receiving more aid. After the Ali government fell, just before the elections, the interim government led by Harahap proved to be such a government. Foreign Minister Anak Agung wished to have friendlier relations with the US. This was capitalized with the Public Law 480 programme which meant that US agricultural surpluses were exported to Indonesia, over the course of two years, worth \$48 million. Even though Indonesia requested \$200 million. Agung furthermore tried to get hold of more assistance by stating that the government needed more funds to battle the communist threat, knowing that this was a soft spot of the US administration. The elections of 1955 did not produce the Masyumi victory as the US thought. Not only was this an error of judgement, it also weakened the idea that the Masyumi party was a suitable ally within the government. The Indonesians, however, continually made efforts to receive more funds from the US. In 1956 the US offered \$15 million in credit. In the next years the Americans did not prove to be more generous, something Sukarno had waited and asked for. Washington's policies in Indonesia were however not focused on truly fixing the economic problems. The need for economic reform combined with Indonesia's foreign policies allowed the communist bloc to gain a foothold in Indonesia.

Stalin's death in March 1953 signalled the starting point of renewed policies regarding the West and the developing world. Peaceful coexistence was the new fad. The Soviets embarked on a charm offensive by promoting their ideology and economic industrializing development programs in third world countries. They provided the

⁹² Lu, *United States*, 77.

underdeveloped world a model to aspire to.⁹³ Indonesia wished to move itself away from the colonial economic model and so both ideas met.

In December 1953, Jakarta and Beijing signed a barter agreement of the small sum of \$2 million. The Soviets and Eastern European countries were extending their modest economic aid from 1955 onwards. East Germany contributed in 1955 \$ 8.6 million for a sugar refinery and a year later Czechoslovakia provided a \$ 30 million line of credit for economic development, for example. The Soviets offered Indonesia in 1956 a \$100 million dollar industrialization plan to be shared with India. Sukarno did not immediately accept the offer. Already Indonesia had asked the US for funds, however when these loans were not granted, the Indonesian government finally accepted \$100 million in credit by the Soviets in 1958. This sum was more than the total aid given by the US at that time. Sukarno stated in his memoirs about the Soviet loan:

There were no long, cold negotiations. His [Khrushchev] finance men deliberated just long enough to determine our rate of repayment and grace period. Two minutes later everybody said, 'Da,' and that was it. Nor did they dictate my future behaviour before giving me my crust of bread.⁹⁴

Intensifying US-Indonesian trade relations can also be seen as a way of incorporating Indonesia into the free market economy. However, Indonesia's economy did not prove to be favourable for American investors. 1954 was an especially economically harsh year for Indonesia. The country had attained political independence, but economic independence was still far away. The Indonesian government still had little control over the modern segments of the economy, such as financial services.⁹⁵ Economic Minister Iskaq Cokroahadisurya introduced a reform policy that focused on indigenising the private sector which was mainly in the hands of Chinese and Dutch merchants. Iskaq 'rapidly distributed import licenses, bank charters, and government credits to people whose principal qualification was an association with the PNI.'⁹⁶ His policies failed and by the end of the year, the national debt rose more than threefold, foreign exchange

⁹³ Roadnight, *United States*, 118.

⁹⁴ C. Adams, Sukarno: An Autobiography, 297-98 in Lu, *United States*, 122.

⁹⁵ T. K. Wie, 'Understanding Indonesia: the Role of Economic Nationalism', *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 3 (2010) 59-61.

⁹⁶ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 120.

reserves were depleted and the Indonesian rupiah lost 75% of its value against the US dollar.⁹⁷ These sort of economic policies had made Washington apprehensive on providing any financial aid. The bad state of the Indonesian economy was also shown by the low amount of US investments in Indonesia, which amounted to \$66 million and between 1949-1954 US investments rose only by 6%. Investing in Indonesia was discouraged due to Indonesia's unhealthy investment climate. The country had inadequate infrastructure, high taxes, lack of trained personnel and internal and regional instability.⁹⁸ Notwithstanding, trade in general was very much needed for Indonesia who experienced great shortages in every sector due to WWII.

To make matter worse for the Indonesians the UN had issued a trade embargo against the People's Republic of China. Indonesia could no longer export its most important export commodity, rubber, to China without alienating the US. Indonesia accounted for about 40% of the world's market output and the rubber export represented the countries' most valuable export commodity and was thus an important source of foreign exchange.⁹⁹ The world market prices of rubber, however, greatly fluctuated. The end of the Korean War caused rubber prices to plummet sending Indonesia into a financial crisis. The US was Indonesia's main rubber trade partner. Indonesia contributed over 30% of the US' natural rubber imports.¹⁰⁰ However, the rise of US fabricated synthetic rubber made this relation more strenuous. The Indonesian government accused the US of subsidizing this new industry and thereby undermining their foreign reserve earnings.¹⁰¹ The US, however, did not wish to stabilize the world market prices of rubber, thereby frustrating the Indonesians and US-Indonesian relations. In turn Indonesia made overtures with China by claiming to send a ship with low-grade rubber to China, thereby violating the UN trade embargo. The shipment did not take place and the US did not feel pressurized to change their stance on rubber. Eisenhower had inherited these export control policies but he too recognised Indonesian frustration for being unable to sell the goods that their economy greatly depended upon. Especially because the US refused to buy Indonesian rubber.¹⁰² This problem lingered throughout the 1950's.

⁹⁷ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 120.

⁹⁸ Lu, *United States*, 68.

⁹⁹ Lu, *United States*, 31-33.

¹⁰⁰ Roadnight, *United States*, 90.

¹⁰¹ Lu, *United States*, 33.

¹⁰² Lu, *United States*, 39.

US economical policies towards Indonesia were quite unsuccessful due to a variety of reasons. Indonesia was clearly neutralist in their political activities but also in their economic policy. They would accept help from any corner, without rewarding aid with political alignment, something that the US found difficult to accept. The economical and political situation in Indonesia hampered US investments in Indonesia. US economical policies towards Indonesia did not manage to draw Indonesia closer in the US sphere of influence.

Conclusion

Washington's top policymakers were very much pre-occupied with the bigger picture of the Cold War. The NSC documents show how the China/Indonesian analogue was eventually up scaled to policy which warranted the use of violent force if Indonesia was to fall into communist orbit.¹⁰³ US miscalculations on the 1955 elections and the subsequent growth of the PKI made these fears more real even though the PKI was kept out of the government after 1955. Moderate voices in Jakarta, such as Cumming's claim that Indonesia's drift to the left should not be exaggerated, were lost to Eisenhower's top policymakers. The growth of the PKI was a process that was a source of great US apprehension on the Indonesian political outlook. The problem was even greater because the US had difficulties to establish relations with anti- or non-communist elements in Indonesia. Indonesia's refusal to join the SEATO showed that on the world stage Indonesia was not about to align themselves with the US. The Bandung conference, organised by Indonesia made this even more unambiguous. Their active and free foreign policy carried them at the forefront of countries unwilling to participate in the Cold War rivalry. US efforts to personally warm their relations with Sukarno were short lived and did not provide any results due to Sukarno approaching the communist bloc. Their non-aligned stance made them however open for any economic overtures of either bloc, without making concessions to their neutral principal. Moreover, due to modest US economic aid, the US could not force Indonesia into making certain decisions that were pro-US. The small sums simply meant Indonesia could live without it, thus severely limiting Washington's influence. An important reason for the modest economic aid was Washington's problem in finding a stable client. The Indonesian governments were perceived as leftist and unstable which made them in American eyes unsuitable for aid.

¹⁰³ Lu, *United States*, 54-55.

Elements within the government were deemed unreliable, unreceptive or incompatible with American objectives. As such economic motivations were not particularly influential on US policy in Indonesia. Trade in general was also very limited. The Indonesian economic climate was very unstable; it did not provide fertile ground for good economic relations. This essentially meant that intensifying trade relations as a means of drawing Indonesia further into the US' sphere of influence was unlikely.

Chapter 3: The West New Guinea Dispute – Wedged Between Interests

'Indonesia free – from Sabang to Merauke'
Revolutionary slogan

Dutch-Indonesian Relations with West New Guinea

The Dutch were adamant about retaining WNG. The government made this very clear on February 15, 1952 when the 'Netherlands Parliament voted to incorporate the area into the realm of the Netherlands, further negotiations on matters of WNG sovereignty were thus out of the question.'¹⁰⁴ In light of Indonesia's active foreign policy the government sent a delegation to The Hague in early 1956 to discuss, but moreover, to solve the WNG matter. Earlier in the decade the Dutch continually refused to discuss WNG sovereignty during bi-lateral meetings. The 1956 talks failed, but this time Indonesia attached consequences to the failure. The government unilaterally dissolved the Dutch-Indonesian Union and Indonesia would not adhere any longer to the agreements made during the, The Hague Round Table Conference talks of 1949. One of the agreements that was cancelled were the payments made to cover debts made by the Dutch colonial government after the Japanese surrender. Indonesians felt that they were paying the costs to counter their own revolution and freedom. The remainder of these debts, 196 million guilders, were abrogated.¹⁰⁵ During the transfer of sovereignty the Dutch had enforced favourable economic measures to ensure the continuation of Dutch businesses. The abandonment of the Union meant that this favourable economic position existed no longer. Clearly, the newly established nation asserted their sovereign rights strongly. Anti-Dutch sentiments grew further and eventually culminated in an anti-Dutch Indonesian policy in December '57. All Dutch nationals were expelled and the Indonesian government called for the nationalisation of their businesses. The communists were quick to react but rapidly the Indonesian army took control of these operations. The nationalisation of businesses by the army meant that they now had created a strong economical foothold for themselves.

Besides constitutional arguments the Dutch contended that West New Guinea and Indonesia had no cultural, ethnic and religious ties therefore Indonesia had no right to claim the territory as part of unified Indonesia. The Dutch were in favour of native

¹⁰⁴ Kahin, *Subversion*, 45

¹⁰⁵ C.A. Fisher, *Southeast Asia: A Social, Economic and Political Geography* (Methuen 1966) 311.

self-determination, but for now the indigenous population was incapable of governing themselves. Under Dutch guidance and leadership they would be prepared for their task since Indonesia could better focus their time and energy on creating their own state.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile the Netherlands was actively seeking US support for their position with regards to WNG. Whenever Dutch high-ranking officials spoke with representatives of the US government, WNG was usually brought up during the decade.¹⁰⁷ They tried to do this in various ways. An illustrative example is the Dutch ratification of the European Defence Community. The Dutch thought that US support on WNG would follow after ratification. This, however, was not the case and Minister of Foreign Affairs Luns, who was an avid proponent of the Dutch colony, exalted that the US 'sacrificed Dutch interests for a cheap and brief victory in Asia.'¹⁰⁸ The Dutch tried to pressure the Americans mainly by stressing their role in the NATO and the danger of detrimental effects on American-Dutch relations whenever Washington proved not to be on the Dutch side.

Australia

Australia was involved in the region due to several reasons. First of all the Australians administered the eastern half of New Guinea. They were also opposed to Indonesian sovereignty over WNG since the start of the decade.¹⁰⁹ Australia's policy on WNG was inspired by geo-strategical reasons. The swift capture of the island by the Japanese during WWII had prompted the Australians to adjust their geo-strategical defence policies accordingly. The island was to be a buffer between a possible enemy and Australia. This policy was furthermore justified due to the communist takeover of China in 1949. Canberra feared that if Indonesia took over WNG they might as well push on through and seize the Western part as well.¹¹⁰ The Australians also used the same argument as the Dutch: the native population had the right of self-determination, to maintain administrative control. Strategical imperatives, however, remained the most important argument for Canberra.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Roadnight, *United States*, 87.

¹⁰⁷ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 117.

¹⁰⁸ Lu, *United States*, 146.

¹⁰⁹ Roadnight, *United States*, 87.

¹¹⁰ Lu, *United States*, 148.

¹¹¹ Lu, *United States*, 148.

West New Guinea, Indonesia and the US

Before and during the Indonesian struggle for independence the Dutch had run a prison camp in the south-eastern tip of WNG, near the town of Merauke. Among the mainly nationalist prisoners who were incarcerated were the future Vice-president of Indonesia Mohammad Hatta and President Sukarno. The claim to WNG was therefore a strong emotional one, closely connected with the anti-colonial struggle for independence.¹¹² WNG became the embodiment of the incomplete Indonesian revolution. Sukarno 'used it [WNG] to unify people beset with divisive issues'¹¹³ In fact, WNG was the sole political issue that brought the otherwise divided Indonesian people together. Why would the US not support a free people in their struggle against colonialism?

US policy on WNG commenced when Indonesia had become independent in 1949. M. Cochran, who would later become the first US ambassador to Indonesia, now in his role as the US representative of the UN Commission on Indonesia suggested that both countries would delay the issue over WNG's sovereignty for a year. Effectively, this was the start of the US maintaining a neutral position with respect to WNG. It was only until 1962 that the US actively sought a solution by sponsoring talks between the Dutch and Indonesians in New York. Washington's neutrality had several reasons. The Eisenhower administration recognised that security interests were at stake if support to either the Netherlands or Indonesia was overtly given. The US wanted to befriend Jakarta but not at the expense of alienating an important NATO ally.¹¹⁴ Following a neutralist policy seemed the best course of action. Maintaining this policy, however, proved to be a difficult position in several respects. This meant that among US policymakers there was strife on what course to follow at what particular point. These voices, however, weren't strong enough to change the current policy. Curbing communism was innately the single most important theme in constructing policy concerned with WNG. In 1950 the Deputy Under Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, sketched the US standpoint:

It has been the view of the Department that the interests of the inhabitants of Dutch New Guinea would be best served by the continuation of Dutch control in some form.

Furthermore, it is believed that Dutch control would provide better insurance against

¹¹² Kahin, *Subversion*, 45.

¹¹³ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 117.

¹¹⁴ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 78.

possible Communist infiltration into or military domination of Dutch New Guinea than would incorporation of the territory into Indonesia.¹¹⁵

The Eisenhower administration starting in January 1953 did not change political course nor the outlook sketched above with respect to the dispute and thus maintained neutralist policies.¹¹⁶ Maintaining status quo meant achieving US geo-strategical objects without supporting either Indonesia or the Netherlands. On the 15th of October 1952 President Sukarno spoke with then Assistant Secretary of State John M. Allison on the subject. Sukarno asserted that the US should handle its Far Eastern policy separately from its Western European policy, recognising the connectedness of the US stance on WNG and their allies in the West.¹¹⁷ The only way for the US to win Indonesian friendship was 'through political support that touches their heart. This meant that among other Indonesia must obtain freedom from union, achieve recognized sovereignty over West Irian and liberate itself from Netherlands economic and financial bondage.'¹¹⁸ In the same cable Sukarno was quoted by M. Cochran saying that recognising the Indonesian sovereignty claim over Irian would mean greater 'internal solidarity and security as well as orienting the sentiment of Indonesians toward the US.' Supporting Indonesia in the WNG effort would mean improved relations between the two countries. Sukarno's overtures were very clear. Washington acknowledged the strained relation due to WNG, as Lu shows. She reveals National Security Council sources that 'point out the US ability to influence Indonesia was limited by the 'lack of effective US response' on issues which 'Indonesia consider[ed] important', among these was WNG.'¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, 'the inability of American officials to appreciate Indonesia's virtual obsession with West Irian proved to be an even more serious impediment to the development of Washington and Jakarta during the early post-independence period.'¹²⁰ From the inception of neutralist policies the US had to navigate a paradox. The US proudly presented themselves as freedom fighters and champions of self-determination.

¹¹⁵ Rusk to Assistant Secretary for Foreign and Military Assistance (Major General James Burns), March 22, 1950, FRUS, 50 6:985-7 in, Lu, *United States*, 135.

¹¹⁶ Baskara, *Cold War Shadow*, 151-213.

¹¹⁷ J. Deshpande, *Indonesia, The Impossible Dream, United States and the 1958 Rebellion* (New Delhi 1981) 61-62.

¹¹⁸ The Ambassador to Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 16, 1952, FRUS, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, (2), 331.

¹¹⁹ National Security Council Report, May 3, 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 153-157.

¹²⁰ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 77.

However, these ideas were not reflected in the Southeast Asian archipelago. The Office of Dependent Area Affairs best described the situation in 1953:

How can the U.S. reconcile its security interest under NATO with its traditional policy of sympathy for the aspirations of non-self-governing peoples for self-government, and our need to retain the friendship and support in the East-West struggle of the anti-colonial states and peoples of the world?¹²¹

Internationalisation of the Dispute

Non-aligned policy was the spearhead of Indonesia's foreign policy at the time and WNG was to play an increasing role in their international affairs. International recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over West New Guinea became very important for Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo.¹²² Jakarta was unable to solve the WNG issue with the Dutch and the Americans, so from 1953 onwards Indonesia tried to internationalize the dispute. The bi-lateral quarrel was to be seen as an anti-colonial problem. The newly installed Ali government of August '53 made efforts to place the dispute on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The reason for the request was the Dutch refusal to enter negotiations with Indonesia on WNG. Washington did not like the internalisation of the dispute at all because the communists 'could reap a propaganda advantage from the Indonesian initiative.'¹²³ In line with their neutralist policy the US continually abstained from voting when the issue came up in the UNGA. The division of UN votes of 1954 is exemplary. The Soviet Union and Greece voted in favour of the resolution just as Eastern European, African and Asian nations, with the exception of Nationalist China.¹²⁴ All other Western nations were opposed. As a result, the Indonesians could not collect the two-thirds majority needed to bring their proposal on the agenda; this was repeated in the following two years.

During Sukarno's visit to the United States in the early summer of 1956 he was given the opportunity to speak to Congress. He told Congress that 'they have nothing to fear from Asian nationalism and praised congressional support for anti-colonialism, reminding the assembled dignitaries that Indonesians would not consider their

¹²¹ Memorandum Prepared in the Office of Dependent Area Affairs, February 17, 1953, FRUS, 1952-1954, Vol. 3, 1305.

¹²² Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 117.

¹²³ *Roadnight*, United States, 119.

¹²⁴ Lu, *United States*, 150.

revolution completed until West Irian was recovered.’¹²⁵ Afterwards Eisenhower, Dulles and Sukarno spoke about the difficult position of WNG. Sukarno questioned the US’s double standards on neutralism. Indonesian neutrality in the Cold War was considered wrong by the US but American neutrality on WNG was apparently admissible. Dulles replied that he ‘drew a distinction between matters of profound moral import and those that were strictly political.’¹²⁶ Dulles answer is quite clarifying. It shows how the policymaker viewed the relation between both countries. The pro-colonial stance was justified due to the inclination of black and white ethical thinking derived from Cold War imperatives.

Not all within the Eisenhower administration were in favour of extending the neutralist course. Ambassador Allison recognised Indonesian anger and he devised a plan that would keep all, the US, Indonesia, Australians and the Dutch satisfied. The plan was a renewed attempt to solve the WNG deadlock. Allison ‘believed it would keep Sukarno away from working with the communist and away from his commitment to undertake endeavours in WNG.’¹²⁷ Washington was to drop its neutral stance on WNG and support the Indonesian cause. Allison, who had already spoken with Sukarno in 1952 on the issue, believed this would positively influence the Indonesian political scene and would definitely bring Sukarno closer to the US.¹²⁸ The Australians would be kept satisfied by Indonesia’s guarantee that the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States) pact would be extended to cover any hostile attack of New Guinea. The Dutch meanwhile would be given an opportunity to open negotiations that would re-establish Indonesia’s payments to them and other favourable economic circumstances in Indonesia. Also the Dutch would be given several years to train officials, paid for by Indonesia to establish good governance in WNG. Indonesian leaders thought the plan indeed provided an opening, but the State Department did not respond to the plan even though Allison claimed Secretary Dulles must have read it.¹²⁹ Dulles views on WNG were very clear: ‘in view of the pro-Communist trend of Sukarno; the fact that their own

¹²⁵ Roadnight, *United States*, 137.

¹²⁶ F. W. Marks, *Power and Peace: The Diplomacy of John Foster Dulles* (Westport and London 1993) 75, in Roadnight, *United States*, 138.

¹²⁷ Kahin *Subversion*, 109

¹²⁸ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 89.

¹²⁹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 110.

government is now extra constitutional, and the unrest in their own country- it is almost absurd to be neutral toward the extending of the Indonesia authority to a new area.’¹³⁰

In November '57 another UN voting round on WNG was planned. Sukarno changed his strategy in the hope that other countries would not follow the US in abstaining from voting. Foreign Minister Subandrio and Sukarno got increasingly frustrated about the situation. Subandrio gave a speech before the General Assembly, he stated:

The only question whether the United Nations is the place where its solution may be worked out, or whether we must embark upon another course, even at the risk of aggravating conditions in South-East Asia and perhaps invite ‘cold war’ tensions to muddy further the waters of peace in that region of the world.¹³¹

Indonesian leadership resorted to quasi-bellucose language to encourage movement in the WNG stalemate. However this was to no avail and again the issue did not gain enough votes to be put up on the agenda. The Indonesian government was now severely angered and disgraced, and stimulated the army and labour unions to take over Dutch businesses. The army quickly took over the reins of this operation and general Nasution gained a firm economic basis for his troops.

Conclusion

The WNG issue was a recurring matter that continually frustrated the Indonesians and was subsequently damaging US-Indonesia relations. The Indonesians believed that the Dutch could be forced by the US to surrender their part of the island. Such a move would coincide with US ideas about anti-imperialism and self-determination. However Cold War arguments proved to be more important. ‘Washington was not about to see a regime they believed to be at risk of falling under Communist domination extend its control into WNG.’¹³² This idea gradually got worse due to the growth of the PKI and their electoral victories in 1955 and 1957. Sukarno’s visit to the US in 1956 did not

¹³⁰ Memorandum of a conversation between Dulles, Howard Jones, and Walter M. Walmsley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization affairs, August 21, 1957, Indonesia folder, Records of the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Regional Planning adviser, RG 59, NA, in R.J. McMahon, “The Point of No Return”: The Eisenhower administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960, in K.C Statler and A.L. Johns (eds.), *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (New York 2006) 89.

¹³¹ UN doc A/PV 700 quoted in FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 483 in Kahin, *Subversion*, 109.

¹³² Lu, *United States*, 191.

change the administration's view on the issue. The PKI and Sukarno thought the same about WNG which made the administration even more weary of changing their standpoint. Nonetheless WNG was a clear opportunity to improve relations with Indonesia, but it was trumped by Cold War objectives. Politically the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China made full use of the anti-imperialist standpoint, which came alongside supporting Indonesia in WNG. But the administration could not do the same. The US had two options left. First it could support the Dutch and second it could remain neutral. For the US, favouring the Dutch would be in this respect an unwise decision that would only benefit communists worldwide and it would tremendously antagonise the Indonesians. But supporting the Dutch case in the UN would mean that the islands authority would remain in Western hands, and so less prone to communism and thereby meeting US objectives.¹³³ At the same time the Australians would retain their security buffer. The Dutch were lobbying to get the US on their side, but the US had on earlier occasions ignored Dutch desires. So Dutch grievances about the WNG issue would eventually be of no influence on Washington's decision. Alienating Indonesia further was an option the US would rather not pursue. If the US would choose the Dutch side then undoubtedly they would have estranged Indonesia completely. Full Dutch support was thus not an option and neither was full support for the Indonesians. In fact, it was out of the question that the US would support Indonesia on WNG.¹³⁴ Maintaining a neutral policy towards the issue meant that both parties were angered, but not totally estranged. Neutralism simply meant prolonging the status quo thereby fulfilling US objectives, which was to keep the region free from communist control. Therefore US neutrality on WNG was a steadfast course driven by anti-communist factors. The price to pay was a continuously increasing estrangement between the US and Indonesia.

¹³³ Lu, *United States*, 156.

¹³⁴ Lu, *United States*, 156.

Chapter 4: The Army, the Dawn of the Rebellion, Guided Democracy and the American Response

'We are not intervening in the internal affairs of this country.'
Secretary of State John F. Dulles ¹³⁵

In 1956 Sukarno became increasingly apprehensive about Indonesia's Western style parliamentary system and multi-party democracy. Cabinets fell constantly and corruption was rampant. In early 1957 Sukarno proposed a radical reorganization of Indonesia's political life called 'guided democracy'. In the summer of that same year regional elections were held. Indonesia also had to cope with dissident army elements in the outer islands who were dissatisfied with the central government. Therefore in this Chapter I will briefly introduce the Indonesian army. In this way we can see how its organisation developed after the revolution and what effect this had on Indonesian political life. The Eisenhower administration naturally followed all these developments and concluded that covert military measures had to be taken in order to prevent the entire archipelago from falling into communist hands. This chapter analyses how Washington interpreted these developments during the last months of Eisenhower's first term and the start of his second term.

The Indonesian National Army

Political leaders and Sukarno fought over whom controlled the armed forces, which caused army-civilian conflict and general instability of succeeding governments.¹³⁶ Instability in the army, economic interests and dissatisfaction with central government would eventually lead to a rebellion of commanders in the outer islands. Even though the military was predominantly anti-communist the US did not find a stable client in the army.¹³⁷

The post-revolutionary army consisted of various components. There was the Dutch colonial army, Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger (KNIL), which was demobilized and dissolved by June 1951. Half of that force was to be incorporated in the new Indonesian national army. Furthermore, there were elements of the revolutionary republican army, Tentara National Indonesia (TNI), which was in itself heterogeneous

¹³⁵ Congressional Testimony about Foreign Policy in Indonesia, March 1958.

¹³⁶ Kahin, *Subversion*, 48.

¹³⁷ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 80.

due to the various republican militias across the archipelago. They had received various levels of training, experience and ideological differences. The Japanese occupational army had trained the officers' corps or the officers had earned their stripes when they fought against the Dutch. Another factor that impeded integration and unification was the fact that the army was divided into regional divisions. These divisions represented army units that were tied to the territory in which they operated, often 'regarding themselves as representatives of the civilian society.'¹³⁸ And so they took up certain responsibilities for administrative and political functions. Functions which they did not wish to relinquish after the revolution.

Major impact on the army had Army Chief of Staff Nasution. He attempted to reorganize the army, bringing down the number of soldiers from 200.000 in 1950 to 150.000 in 1954. The aim was to make the army more modern, higher skilled, apolitical and cheaper. Japanese trained troops were especially hard hit. Troops in the outer islands already had great difficulties in supporting themselves economically. Losing their jobs would result in inhumane living conditions.¹³⁹ The conflict escalated in what became to be known as 'the October 17 affair'. Eventually the demobilization issue divided 'parliament and the government, with Sukarno supporting the PNI, the communists, and allied political parties against the armed forces command, the Ministry of Defence, and the other political parties.'¹⁴⁰ On October 17 the army marched to Sukarno's palace, pointing the barrels of their tanks ominously towards it and demanding dissolution of Parliament and general elections. Sukarno managed to diffuse the situation in a speech before the palace. The then Wilopo government fell and made way for the Ali government in June 1953. Nasution's position was untenable and he was forced to leave on December 18, 1952. 'Two key issues would however return: these were political party influence within the military and the degree of the armed forces headquarters' control over regional military commands.'¹⁴¹

Besides economic assistance Indonesia also asked for technical and development assistance for their armed forces. Indonesia was allowed to send officers to the US for training at military schools. Between 1953-1956, 130 officers were trained at these US

¹³⁸ Kahin, *Subversion*, 47.

¹³⁹ Baskara, *United States*, 167.

¹⁴⁰ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 114.

¹⁴¹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 114.

army schools.¹⁴² The program allowed the US to influence the officers to make them more positively disposed towards the US. Ambassador Cumming felt in 1956 that the program was a success. He mentioned that in all lines of Indonesian command US-trained officers were present and that the program meant that these officers were inclined to think more positive of the US. Moreover they “tended to consolidate the anti-Communist position of the Indonesian armed forces.”¹⁴³ Cumming had already indicated in 1955 that the armed forces were predominantly anti-communist.¹⁴⁴ Eventually four of these officers held key positions within the Indonesian army staff. The NSC also approved of the program and advised that these sorts of training programs should be extended whenever possible.¹⁴⁵ The NSC’ advise was however not binding. In 1955 Indonesia requested material assistance, not only to update their military equipment but also to modernize the police force and equip them adequately. These deliveries were constantly delayed, ostensibly due to Dutch protests. The Dutch feared that the equipment would most likely backfire and be used against them in WNG.

The army’s internal problems were not over with Nasution’s discharge. Intra-army rivalries and dissent among regional commands caused great frictions. Regional commanders found ways to generate revenues by trading with foreign countries and thereby increasing their standard of living. The commanders named this trade bartering, but Jakarta interpreted it as smuggling.¹⁴⁶ The problem was most evident in North Sumatra and Sulawesi. Regional commanders also felt that the outer islands were assessed as unimportant not only by their military leaders but also by their political counterparts. Industries such as the oil industry generated revenues for the government. Revenues they did not see locally reinvested. The country’s organization was too Java centred and the army had also too little political power they argued. At that time Sukarno was criticizing Indonesia’s political system and the army feared this would play into the hands of the communists and lead to a government take-over. Washington shared these fears.¹⁴⁷ Eventually all this led to an Army conference in February 1955 in Jakarta, which resulted in 270 military officers as well President Sukarno, Vice-President

¹⁴² Lu, *United States*, 73.

¹⁴³ Cumming to State Department, ‘Current Program Review’, 23 October 1956. RG 59 Lot 59D338 Records of the Officer of the Special Assistant for Mutual Security Coordination Office of the Undersecretary of State (U/MSO) 1952-1959 Circular 168 Replies-FE Folder, in Lu, *United States*, 75.

¹⁴⁴ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 80.

¹⁴⁵ Lu, *United States*, 74.

¹⁴⁶ Baskara, *United States*, 167.

¹⁴⁷ Baskara, *United States*, 188-189.

Hatta and Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjoyo signing the 'Charter of Unity'. The charter entailed the commitment to the unity of the nation and the unity of the army. Relations between government and army seemed to be growing in a more positive direction due to the charter. However, a mere three months after signing, the Ali government had to resign over a dispute with the army. The cause for the fall was the appointment of the new Army Chief of Staff, South Sumatran, Major-General Bambang Utoyo. Utoyo was associated with the anti-17 October group and he had close relations with the PNI. The army, under leadership of territorial commander and interim Chief of Staff Colonel Zulkifli Lubis stopped his appointment by publicly politicizing his ties with the PNI. Due to this crisis the Ali government had to resign and was followed by the formation of the interim Harahap government. The post of army Chief of Staff was to be filled after the elections. There were several nominees for the post; the most important were Colonel Maludin Simbolon, territorial commander in North Sumatra, Colonel Lubis and surprisingly, the rehabilitated Nasution. Eventually Nasution proved to be the best candidate. Sukarno more or less approved and so did most of the officer corps and the Harahap government.¹⁴⁸

Nasution's position, however, remained fragile. He was dependent on the civilian government, which he could not criticize, due to the delicate army-civilian relation.¹⁴⁹ Nasution again started to reform the army, much to the dismay of the regional commanders. In early 1956 he wished to rotate the territory commanders' positions to counter the barter trades in the regions, to detach military command from their economic base and prevent any further autonomous action, which he and the government felt was threatening the unity of the army and nation. Colonel Simbolon, Colonel Lubis, regimental commander of Padang, West-Sumatra Lieutenant-Colonel Ahmad Hussein and Colonel John F. Warouw commander of Eastern Indonesia were among the main actors that continued to resist Nasution's plans. Therefore they were targeted first due to their doubtful loyalty to the central command or due to their smuggling activities.¹⁵⁰ Tensions heightened when on November 15, 1956 Colonel Lubis attempted to launch a coup to gain the position of his first-cousin and arch-enemy, Nasution. The coup was foiled and Lubis was forced into hiding. But the unrest remained.

¹⁴⁸ Kahin, *Subversion*, 51.

¹⁴⁹ Baskara, *United States*, 189.

¹⁵⁰ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 134.

The army clearly represented a force to be reckoned with and although often anti-communist, surprisingly the Eisenhower made little effort to investigate the position of the army. The administration somehow believed that the Army was a 'hotbed of communist intrigue'.¹⁵¹ But their intelligence information on the army was quite minimal, they had no clear understanding about Nasution, on what his political views were for example.¹⁵² During the later stages of the rebellion they had no means of knowing whether the army might eventually support the rebellion.

The Early Stages of the Rebellion

The rebellion took serious shape when on December 20, 1956 Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein took over civil government in central Sumatra. Simbolon did the same two days later in Medan, pronouncing severance of the central government in North Sumatra. Lieutenant-Colonel Herman N. 'Ventje' Samual was now leading the opposition in Eastern Indonesia after Warouw had been transferred to Beijing to work as military attaché. Interestingly, army command had made a mistake with respect to Samual's loyalty. The dissident leaders were mainly discontent with the Indonesian government, they continued to remain loyal towards Sukarno. The long lasting internal conflicts within the military and the continuously strained relationship between central government and military command made it very difficult for the Eisenhower administration to recognize the army as a suitable and stable client. The simmering unrest in Sumatra and Sulawesi was a threat to the unity of the nation. The roots of these dissident regional movements are complex as Lu explains:

They stem from ethnic conflict between Java and non-Javanese outer islands; economic hostility that divided along the same regional lines; disagreement over the structure of the state and the authority of the center; dissatisfaction of the regional army commanders in a territorially organized army with the command at the center. Jakarta's crackdown [...] on illegal trading and barter in the outer islands further exacerbated the rift.¹⁵³

Communism thus played no role in the reasons for the rebellion to occur.

¹⁵¹ Lu, *United States*, 269.

¹⁵² Lu, *United States*, 241-242.

¹⁵³ Lu, *United States*, 195.

Guided Democracy and the Regional Elections

On February 21, 1957 Sukarno declared he a new *konsepsi* (concept) of governing. The revolution had not brought Indonesia what he had hoped. Western parliamentary democracy had not produced prosperity, peace and stability. According to Sukarno Indonesia needed to move away from this and adopt a new concept that was more suitable to the Indonesian spirit. His *konsepsi* (conception), guided democracy entailed a new form of government, more suited to the national character he claimed. Mutual Cooperation or *Gotong Royong* was to be the main pillar. The cabinet was to include all major parties including the PKI, advised by a National Council headed by Sukarno consisting of functional groups (youths, workers, peasants, religions, regions, armed forces and so on) rather than political parties.¹⁵⁴ Sukarno based it on the principle that: "all members of the family should eat at a single table and work at a single workbench."¹⁵⁵

Sukarno's ideas proved to be quite disruptive in the already troubled political landscape. In fact, 'parliamentary democracy, such it had been in Indonesia, was [now] dead.'¹⁵⁶ Sukarno's announcement of Guided Democracy more or less coincided with rebellions breaking out in the outer islands. Also his long time political ally and anti-communist Vice-President Mohammad Hatta had already resigned late 1956 when hearing of Sukarno's plans for a new course. Adding, the PKI was still showing signs of growth. Their political points were their commitment to Indonesia's national interests, such as unity of the nation, against Western neo-imperialism (WNG) and they also found the separatist tendencies in the outer islands a source for concern. Furthermore they vehemently persisted Dutch economic dominance.¹⁵⁷ Also the PKI made clear that Indonesian communism was not the same as Russian or Chinese communism. The second Ali Cabinet had resigned on March 13, 1957 over their inability to handle the crisis in the outer islands and was replaced by Sukarno's Gotong Royong government. This mutual-assistance business cabinet was headed by non-party Prime Minister Djuanda Kartawijja and commenced on April 4, 1957. In the summer of 1957 and early 1958 regional elections were held. Again the PKI gained territory by winning more votes. On Java the PKI managed to increase their share of the votes to just over

¹⁵⁴ Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 315.

¹⁵⁵ Dewan Nasional, 25, as quoted in Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca 1968) 540 in, Baskara *United States*, 217.

¹⁵⁶ Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 255-256.

¹⁵⁷ Baskara, *United States*, 217.

30%.PKI's leader Dipa Nusantara Aidit became increasingly confident of the party's strength. Because the PKI had no governmental experience, they had not encountered the problems and corruption scandals that frequently plagued the ruling parties. President Sukarno recognised the party's increased popularity and he was conscious of the need for the party to play a bigger role in the nation's politics. Although the party's popularity increased there were still many countervailing political forces, including the army that was very apprehensive of any growth in communist political power.¹⁵⁸ The US government had to reassess the situation in light of Sukarno's new political course and the growth of the PKI.

A New Cabinet, New Ambassador and Washington's Response

Ambassador Cumming was not immediately put off by Sukarno's political overhaul, which would eventually give the PKI a place in the cabinet. Cumming believed that reorganising the political system was a true attempt to come up with an 'effective alternative' because the current system had failed. He even praised Sukarno for his courage in doing so.¹⁵⁹ Cumming's opinion on Sukarno and Indonesia's political situation would, however, change radically within a year. Other policymakers in Washington thought that Sukarno's aversion of Western democracy meant that he was now deeper under the influence of the communists. Combined with the rise of the PKI in fact the whole country was turning communist.¹⁶⁰

Secretary Dulles interpreted Sukarno's new course a transition 'towards a totalitarian form of government.'¹⁶¹ Director Dulles commented that events in Indonesia had taken a dramatic turn and it had created a critical situation for the US.¹⁶² Sukarno's personal credit had by this time vanished. Any efforts to influence Sukarno were to no avail because his links with the communists were now too tight. Diplomatic rapprochement with the Indonesian government was highly unlikely. In the meantime the Indonesian nation was facing its biggest crisis since independence. The eruption of a civil war seemed inevitable. But Indonesia's core problems 'had little to do with the communist issue per se; rather, they resulted from long-standing tensions between Java and the outer islands, tensions rooted in complex cultural, ethnic and historic

¹⁵⁸ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 137. Baskara, *United States*, 220-221.

¹⁵⁹ Lu, *United States*, 201.

¹⁶⁰ Baskara, *United States*, 192-193.

¹⁶¹ Baskara, *United States*, 192.

¹⁶² Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 85.

differences, and conflicting economic and political interests.’¹⁶³ For the Eisenhower administration, however, the rebellion combined with the new political course were two problems that were reinforcing each other, making the situation in Indonesia volatile and unstable. Washington was not interested in the nuances and origins of the rebellion.

Early 1957 an important US staff replacement occurred. Ambassador Cumming was recalled to Washington after four years of service and was replaced by Ambassador John M. Allison on February 21. Allison was to play a crucial role on creating policy towards Indonesia.¹⁶⁴ Allison was warned prior to his departure that a communist take-over was imminent. Ambassador Allison comments on his instructions:

The only instructions I had been given before leaving Washington had almost entirely been negative. ‘Don’t let Sukarno get tied up with the Communists. Don’t let him use force against the Dutch. Don’t encourage his extremism’ The only positive note was when Secretary Dulles said, ‘Above all, do what you can do to prevent Sumatra [the oil producing islands] doesn’t fall to the Communists.’¹⁶⁵

When assessing the Indonesian political situation Allison came to the conclusion that, in fact, a communist take over was not imminent. Allison furthermore did not interpret Sukarno’s guided democracy as an anti-American move.¹⁶⁶ He recognised that the relation between the rebels and the government was troubling but he thought that rapprochement was possible. Allison’s views on Indonesia proved to be moderate and more realistic than his superiors in Washington. His outlook would in the future often clash with policymakers in Washington. Meanwhile Cumming was assigned to several functions within the State Department before finally being appointed Chairman of the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Indonesia, essentially becoming Secretary Dulles main advisor on affairs concerning Indonesia. Cummings views on Indonesia were influenced by Dulles.¹⁶⁷ He departed from his positive views on Indonesia and Sukarno, to increasingly viewing Indonesia within the communist framework. On March 5, 1957 Allen Dulles reflected on the crisis:

¹⁶³ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 85.

¹⁶⁴ Baskara, *United States*, 214.

¹⁶⁵ John M. Allison, ‘Ambassador from the Prairie or Allison in Wonderland (Boston 1973), 304 in, Baskara, *United States*, 223.

¹⁶⁶ Deshpande, *Indonesia*, 91.

¹⁶⁷ Baskara, *United States*, 215.

in conjunction with Sukarno's willingness to accept Communist support, will continue to offer excellent opportunities for the Communists to improve their position and have the potential of leading to major civil disturbances, an attempted coup d'état, or political fragmentation of the Indonesian Republic.¹⁶⁸

Dulles became increasingly outspoken against Sukarno and his alarmist outlook did not realistically reflect the political situation of the day.¹⁶⁹ His views were still built upon the black-and-white thinking of the Cold War. The crisis nonetheless continued when the second Ali cabinet resigned on March 13, 1957 due to its inability to handle the revolt in the outer islands. In order to take charge of the rebellious situation Sukarno decreed the stage of siege a couple of days later. This meant that Sukarno and the army gained a firmer grip on the country. US assessment of the Indonesian political situation was dire. They believed that the upheavals in the outer islands could seriously lead to a breakup of the country.¹⁷⁰ Secretary Dulles stated that the 'process of disintegration has continued to the point that only Java remains under control of the central government'.¹⁷¹ Indonesia was almost at the point of no return.¹⁷² Increasingly it became apparent that earlier US policies aimed at attempting to move Indonesia into adopting a friendlier attitude towards the US were unsuccessful and were no longer pursued. Washington had to analyse whether a breakup of Indonesia was in their best interest. Would Indonesia be kept free from communist control if such a course was pursued. These contingency plans already had been constructed in the past. And it seemed increasingly inevitable that the dissidents would create a separate republic thereby meeting US objectives as mentioned in the NSC contingency plans. Although the CIA was not yet actively supporting the rebels, early contacts had already been made to explore the possibility of covert support. State Department officer John Mein thought that pursuing such a course would not in the end benefit the US. The only chance for the rebels to succeed was if they were assisted by the US. Mein argued that if the US were to support the rebels, 'political chaos and economic dislocation' would almost

¹⁶⁸ Report of the Intelligence Advisory Committee, March 5, 1957, FRUS, 1955-1957 Vol. 22, 361-364.

¹⁶⁹ Roadnight, *United States*, 148.

¹⁷⁰ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 86.

¹⁷¹ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 136

¹⁷² McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 86.

certainly ensue, and it 'would probably, in the long run, serve rather than hinder communist efforts to win control over the archipelago.'¹⁷³

Ambassador Allison consistently advised the State Department that Indonesia and Sukarno had not reached the point of no return. He also recognised that the US stance on WNG was detrimental in US-Indonesian relations. A more positive stance on WNG would undoubtedly bring Sukarno closer.¹⁷⁴ His plans for rapprochement on this issue, however, failed. Also he critiqued the quality of the reports the CIA made. He felt those assessments were unbalanced. Moreover the ambassador felt that the CIA's impact on policy-making in Indonesia was considerable. Allison did not consider guided democracy an anti-American move. Indonesia was trying to find a form of representative government, guided democracy was a mere stage in the development towards this goal.¹⁷⁵ These different outlooks did not change the perspectives of the top policymakers in Washington. President Eisenhower, the Dulles Brothers, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Walter S. Robertson and CIA Director of Operations Frank Wisner commenced planning around May 1957 on how to support the regional rebels.

President Eisenhower believed that 'the best course would be to hold all Indonesia in the free world. The next best course would be to hold Sumatra if Java goes Communist.'¹⁷⁶ These fears were exacerbated by the communist regional electoral victories. Robertson felt that the elections were a clear sign that the communists were about to play a bigger role in Indonesia's political life. What was happening in Indonesia reminded Robertson of similarities in Guatemala under Jacobo Arbenz.¹⁷⁷ Just a few years before, in 1954, the White House had taken covert measures to overthrow the pro-communist tendency of the Guatemalan government. Thereby already hinting on what course Washington would pursue.

In August 1957 Allison commented again on the harsh outlook the policymakers in Washington had. He attributed the views the Indonesians had on the US, on the track record the US had in Indonesia. The US hadn't supported Indonesia in their struggle

¹⁷³ Memorandum From the Deputy Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Mein) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), May 17, 1957, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22 381-385.

¹⁷⁴ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 87.

¹⁷⁵ Deshpande, *Indonesia*, 91.

¹⁷⁶ Memorandum of Discussion NSC meeting, September 23, 1957, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 401.

¹⁷⁷ Baskara, *United States*, 221.

against the Dutch for quite some time nor had they forgotten it was American arms and supplies that helped the Dutch in regaining control. Nor was their current stance on WNG helping. The communist bloc on the other hand had continually supported the Indonesians with their struggles, including in the UN.¹⁷⁸ These historical notions were lost to Washington's top policymakers. The moderate voices of embassy staff in Jakarta remained unheard. Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles heavily relied on the prejudiced information delivered by the CIA than the generally more moderate and reliable reports from their ambassadors to Jakarta, including their military attaches.¹⁷⁹

On September 3, 1957 the Special Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia also underlined a forthcoming total communist takeover. The report commented on US security implications if Java or the whole country would turn communist. The political and psychological consequences would be severe. If in the middle of Southeast Asia a communist stronghold would appear, it would gravely threaten the military strategic situation of Malaya, Singapore, British Borneo, the Philippines, New Guinea and Australia.¹⁸⁰ Sea lines of communication would be severed and air communication between the Pacific and Indian Ocean would be hindered. 'Furthermore the Communist bloc would benefit from the exploitation of Indonesia's oil, rubber and tin; these resources could also be denied as an economic warfare measure to discomfort the Free World.'¹⁸¹ The report recommended that Washington 'would employ all possible covert means to strengthen the anti-communist elements on the outer islands, in particular the rebellious military commanders from Sumatra and Sulawesi who were currently defying the central government.'¹⁸² Again Cold War geo-strategic and economic considerations were very important. The perceived successes of earlier covert operations in Guatemala (1954) and Iran (1953) also reinforced the idea that US foreign policy could be shaped by covert operations.¹⁸³ The CIA had in these operations proven their track record. In South America the agency's involvement remained secret and in any way these operations were thought to be cost-effective.¹⁸⁴ The administration also deemed Indonesia's regional geography provided a favourable

¹⁷⁸ Baskara, *United States*, 225.

¹⁷⁹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 17.

¹⁸⁰ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 88.

¹⁸¹ Report Prepared by the Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia for the National Security Council, September 3, 1957, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 437.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 436-440.

¹⁸³ Kahin, *Subversion*, 16.

¹⁸⁴ McMahon, *The Eisenhower Administration*, 91.

onset for covert operations. The wheels of the operation were set in motion in late September. Via arming and supplying the rebel commanders the Eisenhower administration sought to weaken or overthrow the central government and Sukarno, to weaken the army's strength on Java, and to dispose of the communists. The US expected that the rebellion would act as a catalyst sparking anti-communist sentiment nationwide. Also the US 'encouraged the rebels to form a government independent of Jakarta.'¹⁸⁵ This would provide the Indonesians and the US with a viable alternative to the central government. This would furthermore shake Indonesian nationalism that was perceived to be fragile.

Operation Haik

After Eisenhower approved the September 3 Interdepartmental Committee report, the CIA swung into action. Operation Haik commenced when via surreptitious airdrops the rebels in Sumatra and Sulawesi were supplied with arms and ammunition. Colonel Husein of West-Sumatra issued on February 15, 1958 a five-day ultimatum to the central government. Husein demanded that the current cabinet resigned, Vice-President Hatta and the Sultan of Yogyakarta were to form a new cabinet, and he demanded Sukarno's return to his constitutional power.¹⁸⁶ Husein, however, did not make clear what he would do if the central government did not comply. The Djuanda government rejected the ultimatum. Upon hearing this news the rebels, encouraged by the CIA, declared an independent state with sovereignty over all Indonesia, the PRRI (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia). Nasution, consequently, dishonorably discharged Husein from the army. On March 2, 1958 Colonel Samual on Sulawesi proclaimed *Permesta* (Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam, Charter of Inclusive Struggle) which essentially called for 'greater local autonomy, economic development, and control of revenue, and nationally for the introduction of decentralization [of the government] and restoration of the Sukarno-Hatta duumvirate.'¹⁸⁷ However, Samual repeatedly stated that his movement was not a movement that wished to free itself from the Republic of Indonesia.¹⁸⁸ Eventually, Permesta aligned themselves with PRRI making Samuals claim untrustworthy.

¹⁸⁵ Baskara, *United States*, 234.

¹⁸⁶ Baskara, *United States*, 233.

¹⁸⁷ Kahin, *Subversion*, 65.

¹⁸⁸ Lu, *United States*, 197.

Throughout 1957 Jakarta had not reacted violently to the simmering rebellion. Via diplomacy the government had attempted several times to sort out these issues. However, when the rebels declared a new independent state Jakarta decided to act. On March 12, 1958 the Indonesian National army launched *Operasi Tegas*, Operation Firm. Its aim was to suppress the rebellion in Eastern Sumatra and to capture Pekanbaru, the largest city in that area. Without too much effort the armed forces accomplished the mission but more importantly they discovered unopened boxes of dropped American military equipment. US involvement in the rebellion was a fact. The army pushed through under the command of First Deputy of the Army Chief of Staff Colonel Ahmad Yani. Ironically anti-communist Yani was one of the first officers who had received American military training at Fort Leavenworth, Texas.¹⁸⁹ Even more intriguing was the help that US Assistant Army Attaché in Jakarta Major George Benson offered. He assisted Yani one night in February 1958 with his invasion plans and provided him maps of Sumatra.¹⁹⁰ Even Benson was at the time not aware of Washington covert policies. Ambassador Allison was neither briefed on his governments' covert actions. This clearly shows that US embassy officials weren't consulted over propositions concerning supporting the rebels. Allison was already removed from his post on January 28, 1958 shortly before operations commenced. The main reasons for his removal were his continual defiance of the alarming assessment that his superiors in Washington made. The most important reason for the Ambassador's removal was his refusal to agree on the CIA's predicted outcome of the rebellion and his refusal to allow CIA officers to work under the cover of his embassy.¹⁹¹

Colonel Yani quickly secured Padang in West-Sumatra on April 17. It was clear that even though the rebels were supported by the US their opposition proved no match for the national army. Surprised by the turn of events Washington now even opted to give the PRRI official belligerent status in order to intervene openly. This did not come into being due to the uncertainty that the dissidents could be of any significant challenge to Jakarta. Nasution's troops virtually crushed the rebels on Sumatra, leading Director Dulles to lament on the situation. The rebels weren't inclined to fight, and their leaders

¹⁸⁹ K. Conboy and J. Morrison, *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis 1999) 93.

¹⁹⁰ Gardner, *Shared Hopes*, 151.

¹⁹¹ Kahin, *Subversion*, 87-99.

appeared to be unable to convey a clear message of why they were fighting, he stated.¹⁹² It was highly unlikely that the rebels would emerge victorious. Also the general Indonesian population did not share great anti-communist or anti-central government sentiments, something the Eisenhower administration had expected. The goal of the covert operations seemed to backfire. The central government proved to be very determined in combating the rebels and the communists could now present themselves even stronger as the promoters of national unity and defenders of the central government.¹⁹³ Even after the rebels' defeat in Sumatra, Washington had not shut down its efforts in Sulawesi. Now Sumatra had almost been secured, it was time to turn Nasution's attention to Sulawesi.

Permesta had established their own air force called AUREV (Angkatan Udara Revolusioner, Revolutionary Air Force) which the CIA was adamant to support, despite Eisenhower's doubts on its effectiveness in jungle warfare. Eventually, it was decided to support the PRRI with 15 B-26 bombers among other aircraft. These particular bombers were used by several air forces in the world, so to a certain extent they possessed plausible deniability in case anything went wrong. The CIA delivered the pilots for these airplanes. The Indonesian government had already several indicators that the US were involved in the rebellion. Prime Minister Djuanda spoke to newly appointed Ambassador Howard Jones about the arms crates that clearly had US markings on it. Djuanda was, however, careful not to imply US involvement. American support for the rebels was precarious and it became more unlikely that continuing this course would meet US objectives. Jones recognised that the Indonesian army was the most likely ally in resisting the communists. Just a week after overt support was opted, US policy began to shift. Jones identified the main actors in Indonesia as Sukarno, the PKI, the army and the losing rebels.¹⁹⁴ Jones was especially charmed by Nasution who had strong anti-communist feelings. Nasution and his army would be the best counterweight against the PKI and Sukarno he reasoned.

Before this sudden change in US policy Washington was shocked and embarrassed by an event unfolding on May 17, 1958. CIA employed AUREV pilot Allan Pope and his Indonesian radio operator were shot down over the island of Ambon. Pope parachuted and crashed into a palm tree breaking his leg. The Indonesian army

¹⁹² Memorandum of conversation at NSC meeting, April 24, 1958, FRUS, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 121-122.

¹⁹³ Baskara, *United States*, 250.

¹⁹⁴ Statler, *Eisenhower*, 94.

subsequently captured him. Initially Washington denied any American involvement, claiming Pope was an ordinary mercenary. Pope, however, had certain incriminating documents with him, making US involvement undeniable. The administration decided three days later to abandon the rebels, or in Dulles words, we are 'pulling the plug'.¹⁹⁵ Sukarno showed considerably 'restraint and skill' by announcing his capture only on the 27th of May.¹⁹⁶ Jakarta's controlled response pleased the Eisenhower administration.¹⁹⁷ The Americans were not pressurized which gave Jakarta more room to negotiate with the Americans. Now the US seized to support the rebels, Washington tried again to influence Jakarta but mainly via the army. Immediately, Washington approved of the deliverance of military equipment, equipment which was denied several years earlier. Nasution was to become the US' favourable client and he was invited to visit the US to negotiate further assistance. Without US support the rebellion dwindled and was over within months.

Aftermath of the Rebellion

What did the covert operations achieve for Washington? The central government and Sukarno were still in office. The country had not turned away from Sukarno's guided democracy and neither was the communist threat minimized let alone eradicated. The rebellion caused the exact opposite of what the Eisenhower administration had attempted to achieve. As proponents of national unity and anti-western imperialism it is clear that Sukarno and the PKI came out stronger. Washington clearly misjudged the rebels fighting capabilities and was overconfident about the results of covert operations in general as a means to meet US objectives. Furthermore, the Eisenhower administration misjudged the political effects of supporting the rebels. It did not generate massive anticommunist sentiment. It represented clear miscalculation of Indonesia's political life.

Conclusion

Eisenhower administration's second term was still very much driven by Cold War imperatives. Washington was virtually obsessed with a communist take-over in

¹⁹⁵ Statler, *Eisenhower*, 95.

¹⁹⁶ Kahin, *Subversion*, 179.

¹⁹⁷ Baskara, *United States*, 255.

Indonesia.¹⁹⁸ This is continually exemplified by comments made by top policymakers on the communist threat and Sukarno. The policymakers that created foreign policy on Indonesia in Washington remained unchanged, besides Hugh S. Cumming. Cumming's moderate voice on Indonesia completely changed when he returned to the US. Cumming's replacement Ambassador John M. Allison provided sensible reports on Indonesia's political life. His reports, however, weren't heard in Washington, instead Washington proved more receptive to CIA reports that stressed the communist threat. After less than a year Allison was recalled to Washington due to his moderate views.

The US government found it increasingly difficult, nearly impossible to locate a stable and favourable ally within the Indonesian government and political life. The Indonesian Army was more anti-communist than communist but nonetheless the US made no real efforts to build a relationship with the army. The growth of the PKI, Sukarno's perceived leftist inclination and the introduction of Guided Democracy were perceived by the US as threatening. The outbreak of rebellions in the outer islands made NSC policies, drafted in 1953 and 1954 a feasible option. The rebellions provided the US government with an alternative ally. Thereby using NSC policies in supporting the rebels would lead to the breaking up of Indonesia and so the curbing of communism. Washington, however, miscalculated the rebels' fighting strength and the anti-communist reaction it was thought to provoke. In the end American objectives were not achieved and the interventionism was in fact counterproductive. It reinforced the PKI's stature as proponents for national unity and anti-imperialism. The way for guided democracy was open which gave Sukarno more power and the army having a firmer grip on the country.

¹⁹⁸ R. J. McMahon, 'Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists', *Presidential Quarterly* 101 (1981) 461.

Chapter 5: Dutch Newspaper Representations

'I have come here to America to learn something from America - not in the first place from America merely as a country, or a nation, but from America as a state of mind, from America as a centre of an idea.'

President Sukarno ¹⁹⁹

Dutch Newspaper Representations: a New Source

The goal of this chapter is to examine a wide selection of Dutch newspapers written between 1953 and 1957. A number of national and regional newspapers will be researched as well as several Dutch newspaper titles that have appeared in Indonesia. Also one Dutch newspaper from the Dutch Antilles will be analysed. In 2012 the Royal Dutch Library has finished the digitalization of a selection of newspapers which provides a valuable new source for detailed research. The library's selection of newspapers was committed to provide a balanced representation of Dutch society.²⁰⁰ The choice of sources for this thesis was solely driven by the selection of newspapers offered by the Royal Dutch Libraries digital archive. The aim is to find out what was written about the factors that have contributed towards US military intervention in Indonesia. The newspapers were aware that the US attempted to draw Indonesia into its sphere of influence. However, the newspapers do not give us any mentioning's or any information about the anti-communist objectives of the US in Indonesia, as drafted in the NSC policies. Preventing Indonesia from falling into communist orbit was the most important objective of the NSC policies. The main question that will be answered in this chapter is whether the perception of Washington about developments in Indonesia correlates with what was written about Indonesia in Dutch newspapers. The first section of chapter 5 will look at the PKI. Did the newspapers agree that the continual growth of the PKI would lead to a communist take-over in Indonesia as the administration believed? The second section will look at the perception of Sukarno. The US found it increasingly difficult to work with Sukarno, he worked closer with the PKI and his political reforms were perceived as dangerous. Did the newspapers share this view on Sukarno? The third section will investigate the West New Guinea issue. How did the Dutch newspapers report on the issue? Last but not least how did the Dutch

¹⁹⁹ President Sukarno's arrival speech at Andrew Air Force Base, 16 May 1956.

²⁰⁰ www.kranten.kb.nl/about/1945-1995.

newspapers report on US economic aid toward Indonesia and on the Bandung conference?

Search Methodology

Qualitative research was conducted via the Royal Library's search engine.²⁰¹ After the period had been determined, keywords were inserted in the search engine. Search results usually yielded either several thousand articles or very few. Keywords that brought up several thousand hits would be searched manually. Many of the hits proved to be of zero value as keywords were found in advertisements or articles that did not cover the subject. Search results showed parts of the articles header and on that basis a selection was made for further reading. Although laborious, searching through these amounts of articles allows for a certain degree of serendipity due to the wide range of articles that include the specified keyword. Secondly more specific keywords were used to find articles which contents matched the subject. This narrow search strategy varied greatly in result. Surprisingly, using several precise keywords does not guarantee articles which content were usable. The majority of those articles were in fact not useful. Occasionally, however, it would provide results. Therefore the more laborious search strategy was preferred.

Besides qualitative research this thesis also incorporates a quantitative element. Via an experimental search engine accessed via the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, it was possible to conduct so called n-gram searches.²⁰² This type of searches quantifies the amount of entered keywords in newspaper articles and presents the findings in a type of graph called a histogram. In this study the x-axe represents the year and the y-axe the total amount of hits in all the selected newspapers. Via this method trends can be detected throughout a period of time. The same search strategy – broad and narrow searches - was used in the quantitative analysis. The same occurred with quantitative searching: broad searches generated the best results. Quantitative analysis delivers the best results when keywords are analysed over a longer period of time. Therefore I will limit quantitative analysis for newspaper representations concerning the PKI, Sukarno and the West New Guinea issue. Economic assistance towards Indonesia and the Bandung conference will solely be qualitatively researched.

²⁰¹ kranten.kb.nl.

²⁰² www.zookma.science.uva.nl/ENS/kb_search/n-gramsearch.html.

The Rise of the PKI

Cold War imperatives made the Eisenhower administration apprehensive of the growing influence of the PKI in Indonesia and this was one of the main motives for intervening military in the archipelago. The US therefore perceived the PKI as a dangerous movement that had to be restricted. This chapter will investigate Dutch newspapers and their representations of the PKI. The popularity of the PKI was growing during the two Eisenhower administrations. But did that growth mean more influence and therefore an imminent communist take over of the Indonesian republic, as Washington believed? What did Dutch newspapers write about the PKI growth and was the Eisenhower administration correct in believing that a communist take over of the Republic was unavoidable if the US remained idle. This section will also investigate whether US apprehension of the growth of communism in Indonesia can be verified quantitatively in Dutch newspapers.

The Perceived Communist Threat in Indonesia

In the years before the general elections of 1955 the newspapers noted the growth of the PKI.²⁰³ The growth resulted in more attention for the PKI's political points. Well before the elections the contours of the party's programme became very clear. The PKI was very much against western imperialism.²⁰⁴ A particular point of the PKI was that the Dutch should surrender West New Guinea. Dutch economic assets in Indonesia were also quite important. The Dutch dominated the import and export companies and had control of natural resources.²⁰⁵ Therefore the PKI wished that the Dutch were to be expelled and their assets nationalised.²⁰⁶ Not only were Dutch assets targeted but also American capital, such as investments in the oils fields.²⁰⁷ The PKI was all in favour of the protection of national businesses and against foreign capital in their nation.²⁰⁸ Furthermore the PKI placed heavy emphasis on Indonesian nationalism, the unity of the country was of utmost importance.²⁰⁹

The newspapers mainly attribute the growth of the PKI to the success of the continually increasing number of memberships of the Indonesian Workers Organisation,

²⁰³ *De Waarheid*, 01-07-1953, 4.

²⁰⁴ *De Vrije Pers*, 05-05-1953, 2.

²⁰⁵ *Nieuwsgier*, 31-05-1955, 2.

²⁰⁶ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 30-04-1955, 4.

²⁰⁷ *De Waarheid*, 03-06-1953, 4.

²⁰⁸ *De Waarheid*, 21-05-1953, 4.

²⁰⁹ *De Waarheid*, 30-07-1953, 4. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 08-06-1953, 2.

SOBSI (Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia). The newspapers analysis of the growth in membership is not attributed to the communist ideology as such. The SOBSI was well organised and they voiced the generally dissatisfaction of the population with regard to the situation in the country. Although clearly focused on workers many joined the SOBSI without having any idea of the ideological background of the organisation.²¹⁰

The elections of 1955 had been postponed several times. This meant that there was quite a build-up of news surrounding the elections. However many of these articles overwhelmingly report on local news. PKI men being arrested for their views²¹¹, fights breaking out between the PKI and other political parties or the local government and bans on PKI gatherings for example.²¹² Furthermore the PKI tried to position themselves on the political scene, agitating against other political elements in the society, such as the *Darul Islam*.²¹³ Naturally the PKI was also a target. The Liga Pembela Demokrasi (Democratic Defence League) for example warns against growth of PKI. They believed the PKI was being led by the Soviets who wished world revolution. They recall Madiun and inform the people that those who are responsible were not yet punished.²¹⁴ These kind of reports, however, were not written by the newspapers themselves but reprinted from Indonesian sources. The growth of the PKI is thus met with a myriad of reports covering a wide array of subjects. There is thus far no general anti-communistic tone in the newspapers that match the anti-communistic feelings the Americans have on Indonesia. Interestingly, the PKI's leader Aidit states that he does not wish to establish a communist state.²¹⁵ Thereby stating the exact opposite of what the Americans thought was going to happen in Indonesia.

Half a year before the elections the New York Times' P. Durden publishes an article on the growth of the PKI in Indonesia. She claims "Indonesia is not staggering on a communist cliff".²¹⁶ Indonesia was not on the brink of falling apart and neither was it sliding towards communism. This particular article was reprinted in three Dutch newspapers.²¹⁷ As of yet there were no Dutch newspapers, even the Communist

²¹⁰ *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 06-06-1953, 1.

²¹¹ *Java-bode*, 21-04-1953, 2. *Java-bode* 22-04-1953.

²¹² *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 17-02-1955, 4.

²¹³ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 28-04-1953, 2. *Nieuwsgier*, 29-04-1955, 1.

²¹⁴ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 11-09-1953.

²¹⁵ *Nieuwsgier*, 14-09-1955, 1.

²¹⁶ *Friese Koerier*, 14-03-1955, 2.

²¹⁷ *Friese Koerier*, 14-03-1955, 2. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 19-03-1955, 1. *Nieuwsgier*, 19-03-1955, 2.

oriented *De Waarheid*, that write pre-election, in any way about an upcoming communist victory. Interestingly, whenever the communist threat was discussed in Dutch newspapers they quote foreign, often US news sources.²¹⁸ Before the elections the newspapers make no effort to discuss the PKI within the larger Cold War framework.

De Nieuwsgier published an analysis of the Indonesian elections after the votes had been tallied. The article first appeared in *Het Algemeen Handelsblad*. The communists, they write, have used the country's general problems and the, for them favourable circumstances to develop a large following. Nonetheless the newspaper write that the millions of Indonesians who develop in 'an atmosphere of social dissatisfaction, the growth of the PKI does not have as a consequence that Moscow has won Indonesia'.²¹⁹ The articles do not show or mention in any way that the communists were about to take over Indonesia. This was also represented in the difficulties Indonesian policymakers had with the formation of government. The PKI was eventually not given a place in the second Ali cabinet, even though they received 16.4% of the votes, and wished to be part of the cabinet.²²⁰ The PKI shows continuous efforts of cooperation and support albeit with critical notes or dissatisfaction of the Indonesian government. Even though they weren't allowed to participate they did not exert too much pressure on the government.²²¹ The newspapers report on the PKI's approval of Indonesia's foreign political course, and to the adherence of the agreements made at the Bandung conference, which should serve as future guideline. Indonesia should call in the help of their international friends inside and outside the UN to force the Dutch to surrender WNG. Furthermore the PKI accepted economic and technical assistance notwithstanding foreign interference. In the reports following the elections there were also no sign of the communists having the upper hand or that they are were any way willing or planning to overthrow the government or take control via subversive means.

The 1957 elections provide another point to analyse the PKI. Regionally the PKI experienced growth. Again the Dutch newspapers did not perceive the increase of the party's popularity as being alarming. The other political parties gave sufficient counterweight to the PKI. With respect to the PKI there was more news on their leaders' visit to the communist bloc several months earlier than their influence in the

²¹⁸ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 09-03-1954, 1. *Java-bode*, 28-07-1954, 1. *Nieuwsgier*, 06-03-1954, 2.

²¹⁹ *Nieuwsgier*, 10-10-1955, 2.

²²⁰ *Java-bode*, 19-03-1956, 2.

²²¹ *Nieuwsgier*, 06-03-1956.

government. The rebellions in the outer islands and Sukarno's proclamation of Guided Democracy received more attention. The PKI's standpoints on these issues were very clear. They positioned themselves as the guardians of Indonesian unity so immediately they denounced the rebellion and called for support of the central government.²²² Local PKI members were even defying the rebels and were arrested for doing so.²²³ After Sukarno had announced his Gotong Royong cabinet he wished to incorporate the PKI in the government. The PKI had, along with 6 million votes, proved themselves to be part of Indonesian society and political life and therefore had a right to govern.²²⁴ The SOBSI threatened with a general strike nation-wide if the PKI wasn't incorporated in the government. The strike was a method of pressure because still many felt that the PKI should not be incorporated.²²⁵ This threat received a lot of attention in the newspapers. The US was very apprehensive of Guided Democracy, but the newspapers did not share this feeling.²²⁶ *De Waarheid* discussed American views on the matter, accurately depicting the US perceived threat of Guided Democracy, which was undermining democracy and paving the way for a communist state. By this time Sukarno was thinking of accepting the PKI in the government which Washington believed would mean the rule 'of red terror'. Already the current situation was, according to the Americans, full of danger.²²⁷ Another article published by *Het Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* also warns of the dangers of communism. This time the article's source is the US government's information service.²²⁸ It is illustrative of the fact that newspapers weren't concerned with the danger the PKI represented in Indonesia, and within the large Cold War framework.

Of all the newspapers *De Waarheid* had the clearest signature. The newspaper was the voice of the Dutch Communist Party. Here, the articles report on the struggles the PKI had with the government or the problems they encountered on a local level. They were not only not allowed to participate in the government but often they clashed locally with various groups. This sort of news is really too small for other newspapers but not for *De Waarheid*. Their report therefore provides an insight of the position the

²²² *De Waarheid*, 27-12-1956, 5.

²²³ *De Waarheid*, 15-01-1957, 1. *Java-bode*, 01-02-1957. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 08-10-1957.

²²⁴ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 22-02-1957, 1.

²²⁵ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 21-03-1957, 1. *De Waarheid* 20-03-1957, 1.

²²⁶ *Java-bode*, 17-01-1957, 1.

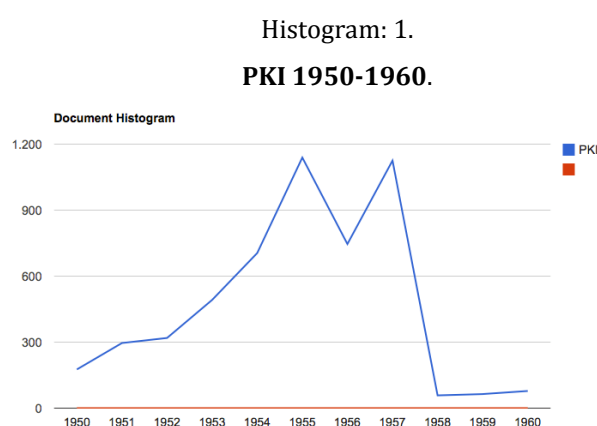
²²⁷ *Waarheid*, 05-03-1957, 3.

²²⁸ *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 30-12-1957, 1.

PKI had within the Indonesian political arena. These reports show that the actual power the PKI wielded was not yet very large until 1956. The PKI only began to assert their influence around the Guided Democracy period.

Quantitative Analyses

The continual growth of the PKI is reflected in the amount of times the PKI is mentioned in the newspapers. From 1953 until 1955 the amount of hits rises from respectively 492 to 1139. The frequency with which the PKI is referred to experiences a dip in 1956 after which it again increases, until it drops dramatically after 1957.²²⁹

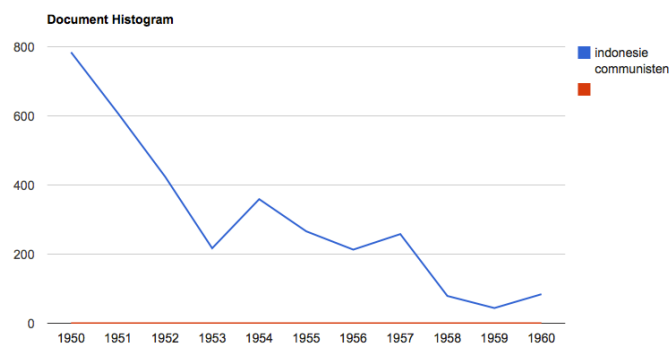


From an American perspective the PKI histogram makes sense. Clearly the climbing frequency in which the PKI appeared in newspapers is a sign of growing communist domination. Qualitative analysis of the newspapers has shown that the overwhelming majority of the articles do not discuss the communist danger the PKI represented. These articles were filled with news, such as strikes, inter-party quarrels and political developments for example. There was very little concern for a communist take-over in Indonesia. In fact reports that include Indonesia and communists show a steady decline throughout the years.

²²⁹ Appendix, histogram 2: PKI 1953-1958.

Histogram: 3.

Indonesia and Communists 1950-1960.



Histograms 1-5 show an interesting dip in 1956.²³⁰ The best explanation for this is that it is most likely caused by the elections. The votes were tallied late 1955 after which the attention for the PKI declines. The rise of journalistic attention may then be attributed to the PKI trying to get included in the government and the proclamation of Guided Democracy, which the communists heartily supported in late 1956 and early 1957.

Searching with more specialized keywords that have to do with the communists in Indonesia yield considerable less hits and also show a dip in 1956. The precision of these histograms is debatable. 'Growth' and 'red' for example are words that do not solely appear within the written context about the PKI or the communists. This means that searches that use multiple keywords that are taken from articles that discuss the growth of the PKI and the effect this had on US-Indonesian relations do not yield significant results. The reason for this is twofold. Precise searches do not guarantee a precise result. There are many articles that do not cover the subject but merely find a specific keyword, thereby not giving an accurate description of the article. When these searches are quantified throughout time the result will be an unrepresentative histogram. Employing different search methods such as proximity searching proved not to overcome this problem.²³¹ The detail of searches on the rise of communism therefore remains on a more general level.

²³⁰ Appendix, histogram 4: *Indonesia and the Red Danger 1953-1958* and histogram 5: *Indonesia, Growth, Communists, Danger, 1953-1958*.

²³¹ A proximity search looks for a set of key words within a fixed numbers of words surrounding the key word.

President Sukarno in the Newspapers

President Sukarno took a special place in Indonesian politics. All Indonesians accepted him as the leader of the nationalist movement and he wielded considerable strength in the Indonesian political arena. Sukarno was very much a promoter of national unity which he perceived as being of utmost importance. Internationally he was an avid proponent of neutralism. He wished to align Indonesia neither with the US nor the communist bloc. The US top policymakers in Washington did not manage to draw him in the US' sphere of influence. He was increasingly seen as communist and unreliable in general. Sukarno's visit to the US made him popular, however, due to his overtures with the communist bloc these feelings were very short lived. Did the Dutch newspapers share the idea that Sukarno became progressively pulled towards communism, and increasingly unreliable as the US administration believed?

One of Sukarno's earliest encounters with the Eisenhower administration was Vice-President Nixon's four-day visit to Indonesia in late 1953. Nixon visited the Southeast Asian region to gauge the attitudes towards communist China. He concluded that the communists had not made much progress in Indonesia.²³² The newspapers stated that Nixon's goal was to 'observe and listen', but not particularly with respect to the communist situation in Indonesia.²³³ Sukarno stressed that Indonesia and the US could work closer together in the future if the two countries would respect each other's social and economic differences as well as the differences in social structure.²³⁴ Furthermore the newspapers stated that the encounter was quite cordial.²³⁵ At the start of the Eisenhower administration there are therefore no signs in the newspapers of a strained relationship.

The Americans perceived Sukarno as continually shifting to the left. This partly had to do with Sukarno and the PKI sharing views on several subjects such as national unity and anti-imperialism. This could sometimes be read in the newspapers.²³⁶ Sharing certain political views was not interpreted by the newspapers as an active collaboration of Sukarno and the communists. The PKI highly regarded Sukarno, they even stated that

²³² Baskara, *United States*, 165.

²³³ *Java-bode*, 22-10-1953, 1/ 24-10-1953, 1

²³⁴ *Nieuwsgier*, 23-10-1953, 1. *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 21-10-1953, 1. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 23-10-1953, 4.

²³⁵ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 26-10-1953-1

²³⁶ *Het Vrije Volk*, 14-11-1955-2. *Amigoe di Curacao*, 22-11-1955-4. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 03-05-1956, 2.

if they would win the 1955 elections they would put Sukarno forward as president.²³⁷ Comments like these attributed to Washington's views on Sukarno. In reality the PKI gained more votes than expected but was they still not included in the cabinet. So the PKI was not as influential as the US believed.

In 1956 Dulles personally invited Sukarno to visit the US. It was an attempt from Washington to woo the Indonesian President. The Indonesian based newspapers report extensively on the visit. The topic received more attention than any other subject that combines the keywords 'Sukarno' and the 'US'. The official part of Sukarno's visit is even reported day by day. The newspapers recognized that the visit was a unique opportunity to personally warm relations and to create goodwill.²³⁸ Even the usual critical foreign articles adopt a positive tone.²³⁹ Although Sukarno made a passionate plea against colonialism in Congress, both leaders refrained from discussing sensitive political topics.²⁴⁰ From the Dutch side there was nonetheless some fear that the trip might seduce Eisenhower to change his stance on WNG.²⁴¹ Nonetheless, Sukarno's visit was a great success and had resulted in closer ties with the US.²⁴²

The Indonesian President also wished to enhance mutual understanding with the communist bloc on the same neutral basis.²⁴³ His trip to Moscow was reported but received less newspaper attention than his trip to the US. Washington was not happy with Sukarno's open overtures with the communists and the goodwill that was created quickly dwindled. Reports on this change are somewhat ambiguous. Newspapers reports suspected that Washington was not pleased with Sukarno²⁴⁴, but Washington denied this.²⁴⁵ The newspapers were nonetheless aware that his visit to Moscow caused friction, but it was also interpreted as a logical step within Indonesia's neutral foreign policy. News on Sukarno's communist trip coincided with the boiling rebellious situation in the outer islands. The situation in the outer islands quickly became the most important news.

²³⁷ *Java-bode*, 14-09-1955, 1.

²³⁸ *Java-bode*, 05-05-1956, 2. *Nieuwsgier*, 07-05-1956, 1. *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 16-05-1956, 2.

²³⁹ *Java-bode*, 17-05-1956, 2.

²⁴⁰ *Java-bode*, 26-05-1956, 1/8.

²⁴¹ *De Telegraaf*, 18-05-1956, 3. *Nieuwsgier*, 25-05-1956, 1.

²⁴² *Gereformeerd Gezinsblad*, 01-06-1956, 1. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: de Preangerbode*, 05-06-1956, 1. *Leeuwarder Courant*, 03-07-1956, 5. *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 10-07-1956, 1.

²⁴³ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 11-07-1956, 1. *Java-bode*, 31-07-1956, 2.

²⁴⁴ *Friese Koerier*, 17-09-1956, 2.

²⁴⁵ *Java-bode*, 12-12-1956, 1.

Sukarno's announcement of Guided Democracy was another moment that stirred US policymakers. The overhaul of the political system meant that the PKI, which had gathered 6 million votes, would eventually be allowed to participate in the government. This, Sukarno said repeatedly, did not mean that this would become government more leftist, but rather more all-inclusive.²⁴⁶ Articles that were clearly against Guided Democracy were reprinted articles that originated in the US. Guided Democracy made the government more centralized, giving more political power to Sukarno. These US articles draw similarities between this fact and the communist tendency to choose for a heavily centralized form of governing. The US articles claimed that the 'centralization of power will lead to a communist coup'.²⁴⁷ The Dutch newspapers did attempt to unravel Sukarno's new political course. They stressed among others the difficulties of bringing together the religious and nationalist parties and they report on Hatta's resentment of Sukarno's new course.²⁴⁸ The PKI approved of Sukarno's new political course and he wished to incorporate them in the government in line with Guided Democracy thinking. Dutch newspaper articles that linked Sukarno with the communists are mainly prevalent in the latter half of 1957. When analyzing Guided Democracy the newspapers also did not make the assumption that Sukarno's political views were changing nor do they report that Sukarno was a communist.

²⁴⁶ *Java-bode*, 22-02-1957, 1. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: de Preangerbode*, 22-02-1957, 1. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: de Preangerbode*, 25-02-1957, 2.

²⁴⁷ Washington Post in, *Java-bode*, 02-03-1957, 2.

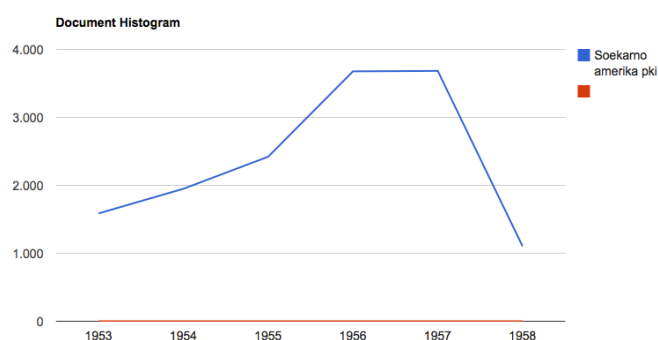
²⁴⁸ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 05-03-1957, 2/3. *Java-bode*, 04-03-1957, 2. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 16-03-1957, 2. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 18-02-1957, 1. *Java-bode*, 28-02-1957, 1.

Quantitative Analysis

Articles that contain a variation of keywords that link Sukarno with communism, the PKI and the US show remarkable consistency.²⁴⁹

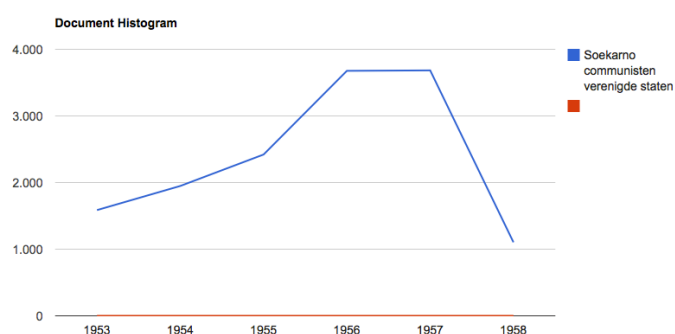
Histogram: 6.

Sukarno, America and the PKI, 1953-1958.



Histogram: 7.

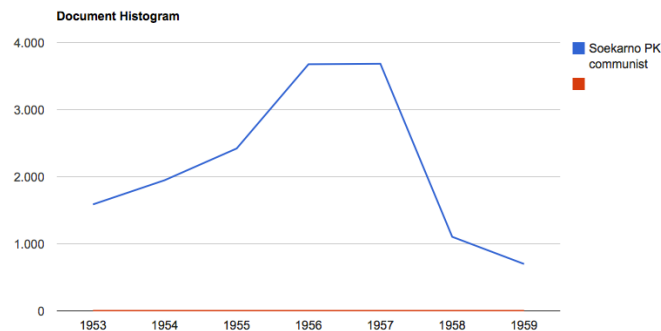
Sukarno, Communists and the United States, 1953-1958.



²⁴⁹ Appendix, histogram 6: *Sukarno, America and the PKI, 1953-1958*, histogram 7: *Sukarno, communists and the United States, 1953-1958* and histogram 8: *Sukarno, the PKI and the communists, 1953-1958*.

Histogram: 8.

Sukarno, the PKI and the Communists, 1953-1958.



From 1953 onwards the numbers steadily rise from 1587 hits to 3684 in '57. After which the numbers decline rapidly. The histograms correlate with the qualitative analysis of the newspapers, particularly with respect to Sukarno's visit to the US in the summer of 1956. This event received lot of attention in the newspapers and the histograms show a clear reflection of the amount of attention paid to this visit. Sukarno also visited the communist bloc later that year. These visits also received attention adding to the growth of articles that included Sukarno and the communists in 1956. Also the histogram which presents 'Sukarno' over a period of 10 years shows the same peak.²⁵⁰ Growing US apprehension of Sukarno is however not shown quantitatively, the introduction of Guided Democracy and the inclusion if the PKI in the new government was a disturbing trend that might have gotten more attention if the Dutch newspapers would have shared Washington's fear of a communist take-over. If this had been the case the histograms most likely would not have shown a steep decline in hits after 1957, the year of the introduction of Guided Democracy and the regional elections.

West New Guinea Newspaper Representations

In the West New Guinea dispute there were three key players: Indonesia, the United States and the Netherlands. US policy towards WNG was mainly determined by the Cold War implications and the assessment of the Indonesian political situation at the time. Any communist advances needed to be stopped and WNG proposed an opportunity in this global battle. The issue was a recurring detrimental theme in US-Indonesian

²⁵⁰ Appendix, histogram 9: *Sukarno, 1950-1960.*

relations. Nonetheless there were other arguments that signified the importance of the region for the Dutch and Indonesians. From 1949 onwards the Indonesians were unified politically with all matters concerning WNG. The Indonesian revolution was not completed until WNG was part of the Republic. The fact that WNG was in Dutch hands signified the continuation of Western imperialism and US neutrality strengthened the Dutch. The Dutch deployed legal arguments for retaining WNG and the argument of self-determination concerning the native population. The Dutch argued that the Papuans were better off governed by the Dutch than by the Indonesians who could not even govern their own country properly.

This section is concerned with Dutch newspaper representations about the position of WNG within the triangle the Netherlands, Indonesia and the US. Particularly, this section also looks into what was deemed important by the Dutch press about WNG and what the press wrote about the position of WNG within US-Indonesian relations. The newspapers will be analysed qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

During the initial investigations in the newspapers it became apparent that there was one newspaper that continually defies the Dutch standpoint in WNG. Throughout the 1950's *De Waarheid* adopted an anti-Dutch or anti-imperial standpoint on the issue. Their views on the issue were not shared by any other newspaper. Therefore *De Waarheid* will be separately discussed at the end of this section.

Unquestionable Sovereignty and the UN

The neutralist policy Eisenhower inherited and maintained, regarded the WNG dispute as an issue that needed to be resolved bi-laterally and within 'the framework of the Indonesian-Dutch Union.'²⁵¹ The Round Table Conference (RTC) in 1949, where the Union was created, stipulated that the WNG issue should be discussed within one year. These discussions, however, failed and so the 'New Guinea issue' was born.²⁵² Dutch refusal to hand over WNG eventually resulted in the abrogation of the RTC agreements. Still the Dutch were adamant about retaining WNG. There were several Dutch arguments for retaining WNG. First they had international law on their side. WNG was part of the Netherlands, so any claims on the territory by Indonesia were illegal. The Dutch argued that Indonesia could not claim the territory because the indigenous people were religiously, ethnically and racially different from the rest of the archipelago.

²⁵¹ Lu, *United States*, 142.

²⁵² *Java-bode*, 22-02-1952, 2.

However, the natives were currently unable to govern themselves, but with the help of the Dutch they would have a chance to develop and eventually govern themselves.²⁵³ These views were shared by all political parties in the Netherlands, except for the Dutch Communist Party (CPN).²⁵⁴

The internationalization of the dispute by the Indonesians was a move that brought international attention to the problem and made the dispute a matter of anti-colonialism. At the end of 1954 the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) discussed WNG. The resolution stated that the governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands should try to come to a solution of the issue within the Principles of the Charter of the United Nations.²⁵⁵ Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Luns called US abstinence on voting on the WNG 'disappointing'. The Minister asserted that, although the resolution was rejected, the US should have supported the Dutch because of their alliance and on 'the merits of the case'. Further, he stated that the result of the discussion was that the UN did not see the conflict as a colonial dispute. Luns interpreted 'colonial dispute' as following. He said that it was not about denying the native population the right to discuss self-determination.²⁵⁶ Luns stated after the first UN meeting that he would 'never discuss Indonesia's claim ever again'.²⁵⁷ A year later, however, in August 1955 the issue was again brought up in the UNGA, and the process was repeated. The Dutch would under no circumstance discuss the transfer of WNG sovereignty to Indonesia.²⁵⁸ The Indonesians also made efforts to convince the Americans about the legitimacy of their case. The Indonesians were lobbying as well. This did not spur the majority of the Dutch newspapers to assess the WNG issue in a different manner. Most of the newspapers supported the Dutch government's position. The communist oriented newspaper *De Waarheid* held a different view. From the start of the dispute they argued that the Dutch had to relinquish all their territories to the Indonesians including WNG. They saw the continuation of Dutch presence in the archipelago in colonial and anti-

²⁵³ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 25-09-1954. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 19-10-1954, 3. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 10-11-1955, 3. *Nieuwsgier*, 24-09-1954, 2. *Java-bode*, 03-06-1957, 2. *Java-bode* 26-09-1957.

²⁵⁴ *Leeuwarder Courant*, 15-12-1954.

²⁵⁵ Lu, *United States*, 149.

²⁵⁶ *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 13-12-1954, 1.

²⁵⁷ *Nieuwsgier*, 25-11-1954, 1.

²⁵⁸ *Java-bode*, 15-11-1956. 1.

imperialistic terms.²⁵⁹ By addressing the dispute in these terms they adopted a view that correlates with the PKI and the Indonesian government.

Internationalization of the dispute meant that the Dutch had to defend themselves in the UN and had to lobby for their case in Washington, which was exactly what the newspapers wrote about. The majority of reports clearly voiced government dissatisfaction with American abstinence from voting and the Dutch government's frustration with the US in doing so. The explanation given by the papers for US neutralist policy was that the US did not want to offend two friends by choosing sides. This was according to a statement which was made by the US government. There is no further indication that the newspapers tried to deepen their understanding on this particular US course. The Indonesian side of the story was not discussed and neither were the international consequences of the US standpoint.

De Waarheid viewed the internationalisation of the dispute in broader terms. They noted that Western democracies were frustrating Indonesian efforts to obtain the territory. The newspaper acknowledges that the US' was driving factor behind the failure of Indonesian attempts to bring WNG on the UN agenda.²⁶⁰ Indonesia was embroiled in a struggle that was part of freeing people from a colonial oppressor. Therefore they point their arrows mainly toward the policies of the Dutch and US government.²⁶¹

Notably, the papers reported continually on Luns speaking to US representatives on WNG. These reports were usually published as simple statement of Luns visiting Washington. The reports were short and often did not offer insights into what was actually discussed.²⁶² Several meetings between Luns and US ambassador to the Netherlands Matthews did not make the newspapers at all.²⁶³ Even more interesting is that Dutch newspapers, *De Waarheid* included, did not write on Ambassador Allison's unofficial plan to mediate in the Dutch-Indonesian dispute. Allison's offer to act as a peacemaker was picked up by Indonesian newspapers, however.²⁶⁴ Dutch newspapers did not follow up on these reports. When Allison was forced to resign a year later in

²⁵⁹ *De Waarheid*, 13-10-1954, 4.

²⁶⁰ *De Waarheid*, 11-12-1954, 1. *De Waarheid*, 10-10-1956 5.

²⁶¹ *De Waarheid*, 11-05-1956, 1/3. *De Waarheid*, 14-11-1957, 3.

²⁶² *Amigoe di Curaçao*, 05-03-1953, 4 *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 05-05-1954, 1. *De Waarheid*, 28-09-1954, 1. *Gereformeerd Gezinsblad*, 24-03-1956, 1. *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* 29-08-1957. *Java-bode*, 20-11-1957. *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 27-11-1957, 4. *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 04-04-1958.

²⁶³ Lu, *United States*, 148.

²⁶⁴ Lu, *United States*, 188.

1958 the newspapers merely reported that during his career there were rumours of his mediating efforts.²⁶⁵ Until this stage there were no comments in the Dutch newspapers that attempted to explain what Dutch policy meant for US relations with Indonesia.

Communists and Geo-strategic Imperatives

The previous section on WNG identified containment of communism as the main reason behind the neutralist policy of the US. Consequently WNG became a continual source of friction between Indonesia and the US. So far newspaper reports did not comment on what Dutch policy meant for the US and Indonesia. The newspapers' views focused on the Dutch policy. Whenever strategical issues and communism were considered within the WNG framework there are several details noticeable. Dutch newspapers did not motivate their arguments for retaining WNG along strategical or communist lines. Whenever the geo-strategical aspect of WNG comes into play it was often linked with Australian national security interests.²⁶⁶ Although the Australians made note of the communist threat, the Dutch often did not. Newspapers were aware that these aspects did play in the American policy on WNG, but they did not link that to Dutch policy.²⁶⁷

De Waarheid viewed the Americans were just as the Dutch, they are portrayed as imperialists who wished to retain, expand or consolidate their power in the world. Which was exemplified by their stance on WNG. The explanation of *De Waarheid*, does, however not entail US fear of communists combined with the strategic value of the territory. *De Waarheid* was aware of the strategical importance of WNG, but the Indonesian sovereignty over WNG got more attention.

The communist electoral victories of 1955 and 1957 provided a starting point of renewed analysis on the position of WNG within the larger Cold War context. Whereas the Americans saw the communist rise as a danger, the Dutch newspapers did not seem to link communist expansion as being solely responsible for WNG security. The Dutch' problem with Indonesia did not entail any communist arguments. The security of the island was important since 1949. Security became a more important theme when Sukarno began to speak in more bellicose terms after 1955 and in combination with the growth of the PKI. Peculiarly, whenever the newspapers reported on the communist

²⁶⁵ *Leeuwarder Courant*, 21-01-1958. *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 23-01-1958 /25-01-1958.

²⁶⁶ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 12-02-1952. *Het nieuws: algemeen dagblad*, 01-05-1954. *Amigoe di Curacao*, 07-09-1954. *De Waarheid*, 25-01-1955. *Friese Koerier*, 22-11-1957, 9.

²⁶⁷ *Leeuwarder Courant*, 09-09-1955. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 25-05-1956, 1/4.

threat that endangered WNG, they often quoted foreign news sources, or foreign dignitaries.²⁶⁸ Articles that combined the rise of Indonesian communism, the more threatening rhetoric of Sukarno and his perceived instability, and the consequences this had for the Dutch in WNG, only became more important at the end of 1957 when the Dutch were ordered to leave Indonesia. Attention for the threat the communists posed for WNG is very marginal.

The Dutch and the Americans had different motivations for retaining WNG for quite some time during the 1950's. The Dutch felt the territory was lawfully theirs and they argued that they had taken responsibility for the well being of the natives.²⁶⁹ WNG needed to be defended, against aggressive Indonesia and not against aggressive communists before late 1957. More importantly the Dutch newspapers weren't concerned with the position of WNG in US-Indonesia relations, or what their adamant stance on holding on to WNG meant for US policy regarding Indonesia. They were more focused on reporting on retaining the territory and on the search to draw the US on the Dutch side. There were no commentaries that discussed the WNG problem beyond the Dutch viewpoint. The only conclusion that can be drawn, is that the newspapers were not interested in the position of WNG between Indonesia and the US. So the newspapers did not offer insights on that part of the WNG issue.

Quantitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis of the newspapers shows that the Dutch newspapers were merely concerned with Dutch arguments to retain WNG. They did not emphasize the importance of WNG in light of Indonesian communist threat or the geo-strategic importance of the territory for the US.

Quantitative searches were conducted via broad keywords such as 'communism', 'strategical interests' and 'self-determination'. These were words that occupied either the US or the Dutch with respect to WNG. The histograms show the clearest results between 1952-1955. Nearly all histograms show an increase in hits during this period. After 1955 virtually all histograms show a decrease in hits for these terms. The amount of hits WNG receives was usually in the thousands. These numbers are higher than any other subjects in this chapter. This coincides with the general conclusions made in the

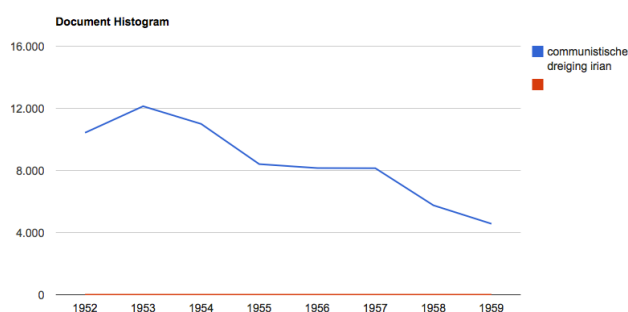
²⁶⁸ *Het nieuws: algemeen dagblad*, 01-05-1954. The New York Times in, *Nieuwsgier*, 19-03-1955. The Economist in, *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 18-09-1957. *Java-bode*, 10-08-1957, 1.

²⁶⁹ *Java-bode*, 12-02-1957.

previous section that reports in Dutch newspapers were more concerned with the Dutch views on the case, and did not give as much weight to the communist threat as the US. The importance of WNG for the Dutch is reflected in the significantly higher amount of hits the topic received. If the Dutch newspapers reports would share the US fear of growing communism in Indonesia and especially the repercussions of that trend for WNG then the reports on communism should grow throughout the years, especially after the communist electoral successes in 1955-1957. This was, however, not the case. The number of Dutch newspapers' articles that combine communism and WNG were declining throughout the latter half of the 1950s.²⁷⁰

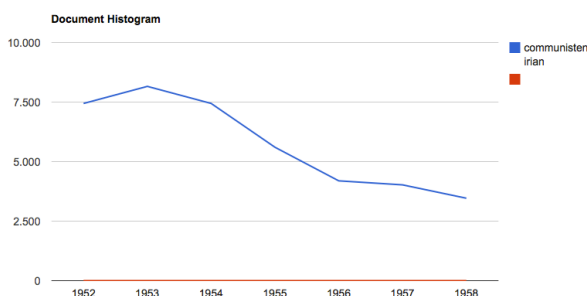
Histogram: 11.

Communist threat and Irian, 1952-1959.



Histogram: 12.

Communists and Irian, 1952-1958.

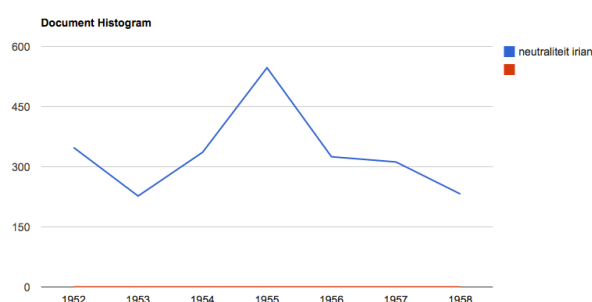


²⁷⁰ Appendix, histogram 10, *Communist Danger, and Irian, 1952-1958*, histogram 13: *Dulles, Communists and Irian, 1952-1949* and histogram 14: *The PKI and Irian, 1952-1958*.

These histograms do not match with the American idea of the growing strength of the PKI and the supposed danger that would entail for WNG. Other themes such as the strategical interest of WNG did not receive very much hits either.²⁷¹

Important issues for the Dutch such as self-determination and international law peaked during 1953-1954 and sometimes in 1955, coinciding with the Bandung conference or during the first failed talks between the Netherlands and Indonesia.²⁷²

Histogram: 17.
Neutrality and Irian, 1952-1958.



It remains difficult, however, to distil further conclusions on the position of WNG between US-Indonesian relations from this data. Quantitative analysis is a precarious method in this case. It shows only the number of hits of certain (combination) of keywords. The histograms do have relevance for the years 1952-1955 but afterwards when the situation becomes more complex because of the rise of the PKI, the Dutch being expelled and Sukarno's guided democracy, the trends essentially become increasingly blurred. This makes a sound interpretation harder because nothing stands out. A specific quantitative analysis on the importance of WNG measured by the amounts of hits leaves too much room open for interpretation. It is in this case difficult to measure the aspects that were important due to the specific granularity needed to investigate WNG in US-Indonesia relations in Dutch newspapers. Therefore quantitative

²⁷¹ Appendix, histogram 15: *Strategical Interests, 1952-1958.*

²⁷² Appendix, histogram 16: *Luns and Irian, 1952-1958*, histogram 18: *Irian and Sovereignty, 1950-1959* and histogram 19: *International Law and Guinea, 1950-1959.*

analysis in this case provides only minor assistance in explaining the importance of WNG in US-Indonesia relations.

Economic Assistance

The failure of US economic assistance policies towards Indonesia is another process that had contributed regarding military intervention in Indonesia. These were overt measures that were discussed in the newspapers. This section will analyse if the newspapers were aware of the consequences of these policies. Neutralist Indonesia accepted and asked for economic assistance. Indonesia did not accept help if the conditions entailed alignment with either power bloc. This was something the US struggled with. US economic aid would, however, not change Indonesia's neutral foreign political course. Moreover, the amount of aid given was not enough to make any changes in Indonesian foreign policy. Cold War geo-strategic imperatives meant that the US could not afford Indonesia falling to the communist bloc. Combined with the idea that Indonesia became increasingly influenced by the communists severely limited the use of economic aid as a diplomatic instrument.

In the press Indonesian aversion of economic help with strings attached already became apparent in 1953.²⁷³ *De Vrije Pers*, published a *Business Week* article about for the American standpoint. The article noted that discontinuation of the little economic assistance given might very well drive Indonesia into communist hands.²⁷⁴ In early 1955, before the elections, the US again pledged economic support.²⁷⁵ In the light of Indonesia's foreign policy *Het Vrije Volk* therefore sees the support as a positive sign of 'closer cooperation'.²⁷⁶ Later that year the interim Harahap government openly wished to have more friendly relations with anti-communistic countries. Harahap advances to the US and asked for more assistance. The US grants his wishes with a cash-for-food programme. The newspapers adopted a positive tone when reporting on this subject. All newspapers agreed that economic aid truly meant better US-Indonesian relations.²⁷⁷ The Indonesians did not limit themselves purely to US aid. From 1956 onwards the newspapers reported about Soviet assistance to Indonesia. At first they merely report

²⁷³ *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 13-01-1953, 2. *Nieuwsgier*, 09-06-1953, 2.

²⁷⁴ *Business Week* in *De Vrije Pers*, 16-11-1953, 3.

²⁷⁵ *Java-bode*, 17-03-1955, 2.

²⁷⁶ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 15-01-1953, 4. *Het Vrije Volk*, 27-01-1953, 2.

²⁷⁷ *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland* 08-09-1955, 6. *Nieuwsgier*, 09-09-1955, 1. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 10-09-1955, 1. *Java-bode*, 10-09-1955, 1. *De Waarheid*, 13-09-1955.

about the probing of such efforts. The Soviets have started handing out economic and technical assistance to various countries in the world. Eventually the Soviets would offer the Indonesians an economic help plan.²⁷⁸ The plan was accepted in the summer of 1956 and entailed a modest line of credit and a deal for agricultural machines.²⁷⁹ Also the articles clearly stated the aid is only accepted if it is in line with Indonesia's neutral foreign policy. The plan was eventually scaled up to \$ 100 million dollars after Sukarno's visit to Moscow. The newspapers thoroughly covered Russian aid to Indonesia, including the US' response which is derived from US sources. The US' view the increasing communist aid as a propagandist move in order to undermine US aid in Indonesia. It was designed to increase influence in Indonesia.²⁸⁰ The US openly doubted whether this aid did not breach Indonesia's sovereignty.²⁸¹ The New York Times labelled the 'Russian-Indonesian agreement as proof of the success of Russian psychological and economic warfare in Southeast Asia.'²⁸²

Economic aid from either power bloc received quite some attention. The newspaper reports clearly showed understanding of Indonesia's neutral foreign policy. Economic aid was only accepted when there were no further obligations conflicting with neutrality. This was in larger articles always mentioned. Indonesian neutralism therefore meant that the effectiveness of economic aid would not mean political alignment. A fact which was known beforehand but which the US had difficulties in accepting.²⁸³ The aid given by the US was regardless met with Indonesian enthusiasm and the US very well understood that ceasing aid might alienate Indonesia further. In the Dutch newspapers Russian aid was viewed in the same neutral way as the US aid. The newspaper had a clear vision and understanding of the implications of Indonesian neutralism on economic assistance.

The Bandung Conference

Although the conference was not part of the motivation behind the US intervention, it did represent values that were detrimental to US objectives. The conference provided an

²⁷⁸ *Friese Koerier*, 03-02-1956, 7. *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 11-04-1956, 1. *De Telegraaf*, 05-03-1956, 1. *De Telegraaf*, 12-04-1956, 5.

²⁷⁹ *De Telegraaf*, 15-05-1956, 3. *Java-bode*, 20-06-1956, 1.

²⁸⁰ *Nieuwsgier*, 24-07-1956, 2. *Java-bode*, 24-07-1956. *De Telegraaf*, 24-07-1956, 3.

²⁸¹ *Java-bode*, 17-09-1956, 2.

²⁸² The New York Times in, *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 17-09-1956, 1.

²⁸³ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 02-03-1956, 1.

opportunity for the newspapers to reflect on Indonesia's neutral foreign policy and the implications it had for the US.

The Bandung conference received quite some attention in the newspapers. Washington was interested in the outcome of the conference, comparing it to Pandora's box.²⁸⁴ This analogy was a clear sign that the US was very uncertain that the end results would be in the favour of the US. The US was content that some of their Western allies were attending the conference.²⁸⁵ Their attendance was to provide counterweight to the domination of the Chinese and the neutrals.²⁸⁶ The US was very concerned that the Chinese would use the conference in order to spread their ideology and anti-western sentiment. Their Western-allied countries could provide pro-western viewpoints and lobby for policies that strengthened their own position.²⁸⁷ The newspapers recognised that the US was very apprehensive of the conference fearing its anti-western and pro-communist tone.²⁸⁸ As the conference approached these fears were somewhat toned down.²⁸⁹ Reports published during the conference show that the tenure was by no means pro-communist and so 'fears for an anti-western demonstration were unfounded.'²⁹⁰ The conference was not another Cold War battleground as Washington believed.²⁹¹ It did however clearly show that Indonesia had set a certain course to which it was very unlikely to divert from. For the US it meant that any overt diplomacy that was aimed at drawing Indonesia into its sphere of influence would fail. The newspapers did not analyse the conference within the anti-communist framework as the US did. They reported on Indonesian neutrality on its own terms, not conveying the US' negative connotation on neutrality.

Newspaper Analyses: Conclusion

Most of the news concerning Indonesia was written in the newspapers that were based in Indonesia. They reported more widely and frequently on the various issues in Indonesia. Generally the tone of all the newspapers was pro-Dutch. This becomes most evident in articles concerning the West New Guinea issue. The only exception was *De*

²⁸⁴ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 30-12-1954, 1.

²⁸⁵ *Nieuwsgier*, 17-02-1955, 1. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 22-02-1955, 2.

²⁸⁶ *Nieuwsgier*, 19-02-1955, 1.

²⁸⁷ *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: De Preangerbode*, 19-02-1955, 1.

²⁸⁸ *Nieuwsgier*, 01-04-1955, 1.

²⁸⁹ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 12-04-1955, 3.

²⁹⁰ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 19-04-1955, 3/4. *Nieuwsgier*, 21-04-1955, 1/2. *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 21-04-1955, 1. *Nieuwsgier*, 23-04-1955, 1.

²⁹¹ *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*, 28-04-1955, 1.

Waarheid. This communist oriented newspaper reported vehemently against any Dutch presence in the archipelago

The goal of this chapter was to see whether the newspapers shared some of the US worries about Indonesia. These US fears were most clear concerning the evaluation of the communist situation in Indonesia. When looking at the reports of the Dutch newspapers the fear of Indonesian communism and the eventual take-over of the country by the communists was the biggest motivation for intervening militarily. When looking at the reports of the Dutch newspapers, the most important conclusion that can be drawn is that the newspapers did not share these fears.

There are several things noticeable when analysing the newspaper articles. The picture presented by the Eisenhower administration of the PKI's role in Indonesian domestic politics cannot be read in the analyzed Dutch newspapers. The Dutch articles that cover the PKI paint a neutral and factual picture of events. The PKI was growing and attempted to gain more political influence. Although the party was getting more influential as time progressed they could not materialize their influence because they were successively kept out of the government. Only after a major political overhaul they were finally accepted in the government in 1957. The newspapers did not make any note and did not indicate in any way about the communists taking over, overtly or subversively, the government in Jakarta after or before their inclusion in the government. Typically whenever the American view on the PKI in Indonesia is represented they quote an article which already had appeared in foreign media. There were however only several of such articles. Based on qualitative analyses of these newspaper articles an imminent communist take-over of Indonesia was unlikely. This means that the newspapers did not share Washington's views on Indonesia. The quantitative analysis shows that newspapers increasingly report on the PKI, but these reports vary greatly in context and content. The growth in attention for the PKI therefore shows no correlation with the growth of US apprehension of the PKI.

The Dutch newspapers did not consider Sukarno a communist nor did they consider him leaning towards communism. Therefore there is grave variation between the way the Eisenhower administration perceived him and how the newspapers portray him. Washington's assessment of Sukarno, which became increasingly negative as events unfolded, was not represented in the newspapers. Events that severely influenced US policymakers on Sukarno, the PKI electoral victories, Guided Democracy

and the inclusion of the PKI in the government receive significantly less attention than Sukarno's visit to the US. Qualitative analyses show that the newspapers did not assess Sukarno as becoming increasingly communist even after the announcement of the Gotong Royong government. After Sukarno's visit to the US, US-Indonesian relations enjoyed a brief stint of rapprochement. Due to Indonesia's neutral stance Sukarno also accepted invitations from the communist bloc. But within strict Cold War thinking any advances towards the communist bloc were interpreted by Washington as hostile, which reinforced the view of Sukarno being unreliable. Dutch newspapers viewed Sukarno's foreign visits to Washington and Moscow as being a result of Indonesia's neutral foreign policy. Quantitatively Sukarno receives a lot of newspaper attention. With respect to Sukarno's relation with the US, the 1956 visit clearly stands out, yielding over 3500 hits. The tone of these articles was positive. The increasing distrust of Sukarno by the Eisenhower administration cannot be shown quantitatively.

It was fear for communism that dictated US policy during the WNG issue. The (communist) circumstances in Indonesia, and the assessment of Sukarno were the engines of US WNG policy. Neither Indonesia nor the Netherlands was satisfied with Washington's neutralist course. It meant maintaining status quo, which in turn met US strategic goals without totally alienating The Hague and Jakarta. Dutch newspapers did not analyse WNG in these terms. For the newspapers WNG was primarily to be seen as a bi-lateral dispute, and they followed the Dutch government's view. The pro-Dutch standpoint did not leave any room for comments on the position of WNG within US-Indonesian relations. The Dutch centred view thus limited the newspaper in the scope in which they analysed the dispute. US Cold War imperatives concerning WNG were thus not analysed. The importance of WNG as being detrimental to US-Indonesian relations was not reported. Quantitative analyses of the newspapers show an increase in the number of results between 1952-1955. This reflects heightened interest by Dutch newspapers of events that were important for the Dutch, such as the internationalization of the WNG dispute. Generally the WNG topic receives thousands more hits in the newspapers than other subjects discussed in this chapter, clearly showing the focus of the Dutch newspapers.

US economic aid was an overt diplomatic instrument on which the newspapers could report. They were very well aware that US economic aid was not meant as charity. Within the light of Indonesia's foreign policy the Americans could not expect alignment.

The newspapers had a clear vision on US aid in Indonesia. The Bandung conference was a very well reported event. The US thought the conference would not only lead to a condemnation of the West, but also to an ideological communist victory. It shows US apprehension and the difficulties Washington had with neutralism in general were well represented in the newspapers.

The quantitative element of the newspaper research proved to be quite challenging. A sound quantitative interpretation was only possible in combination with the results of the qualitative research. The most striking example was the interpretation of the growth of the PKI. From an American perspective the growth of the PKI would lead to a communist take-over. Qualitative research has shown that the newspapers did not share this interpretation. Also the histograms correlate the most when very specific keywords were used. 'West New Guinea' and 'Sukarno' are relatively exact terms, 'danger' or 'communists' will yield more results that are not always linked to each other. The analysis therefore always balances between specificity and generalisation. Very elaborate searches with several keywords result in histograms that do not reflect usable information. Also the instrument is more practical when trends are analysed over a longer period of time. Nonetheless the histograms are useful to show certain trends, such as the heavy emphasis on Sukarno's visit to the US.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Washington's decision to intervene militarily in Indonesia was a decision foremost influenced by Cold War imperatives. Containment of communism worldwide was a primary objective of the US. If Indonesia was to become communist, the Soviet Union would gain control of Indonesia and the US would lose a crucial geo-strategically region and access to Indonesia's natural resources. These imperatives heavily shaped US policy in Indonesia.

In 1953 the contours of Eisenhower's foreign policy on Indonesia became apparent. Curbing communism was the most important objective in Indonesia. In the event of a communist take-over in Indonesia the administration preferred a territorial breakup of the country rather than a unified communist Indonesia. The National Security Council created policies which stated that the US should employ all possible overt and covert means to prevent Indonesia from falling under communist control. During the 1950's the Eisenhower administration worked to prevent Indonesia from passing into communist orbit. The US found it very difficult, if not impossible to identify and cultivate a stable partner through which it could assert their policies. The army could have been such a client but the Eisenhower administration generally mistrusted the army, rendering them unfit. The Eisenhower administration covertly supported the Masyumi party because Washington believed they would become a suitable client which could implement US policies mainly designed to counter the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. Their faith in the Masyumi party appeared to be a miscalculation. Through overt diplomacy, personal relations and economic aid Washington did not manage to develop a stable and Western oriented Indonesian government, which was aligned to the US.

The Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI showed continual growth throughout the years, which was a development that greatly worried US top policymakers. The PKI came in fourth in the 1955 elections, clearly showing growth of the communist appeal in Indonesia. The outcome of the 1955 elections thus proved to be unfavourable. The growth of the PKI was apparent but the fact that the party was kept out of successive cabinets did not sooth Washington. The outcome of the 1957 elections also enhanced the US idea that communist domination in Indonesia was a very real scenario. Adding to this was the way the Eisenhower administration perceived Sukarno. Throughout the decade the administration felt he was increasingly shifting to the left. US-Indonesian

relations were summarily improved in 1956 due to Sukarno's visit to the US but these feelings quickly disappeared after Sukarno made friendly overtures with the communist bloc shortly after his visit. Sukarno then introduced a new form of governing in early 1957 called Guided Democracy. Sukarno believed this major overhaul of the political system was better suited for the Indonesians. It also entailed that the PKI was to be included in the government. For Washington this development was a prelude to the PKI taking over the country. By this time Sukarno became seriously out of favour in Washington. The US believed it could no longer work with Sukarno to achieve US objectives. Not all of Eisenhower's top policymakers felt that the events in Indonesia were a clear sign that the country was turning communist. Throughout the years the US embassy staff in Jakarta held quite moderate views on the PKI and Sukarno. They conveyed the message that Indonesia was not falling into communist hands and that Sukarno was not beyond salvation. Washington unfortunately did not share this view. The perception of the Eisenhower administration of the communists and Sukarno was thus of major importance for the decision to intervene militarily.

Analyses of Dutch newspapers concerning the growth of the PKI and Sukarno paint a very different picture. The most important conclusion that can be drawn from these newspapers is that Washington had over exaggerated fears about the communists in Indonesia. The Dutch newspapers articles do not interpret the outcome of the elections, Sukarno's willingness to cooperate with the communists, and the introduction of Guided Democracy as signal of an impending communist take-over. US top policymakers interpreted the growth of the PKI as Indonesia falling into communist orbit, effectively overstating the power of the PKI. These fears were sporadically discussed in the Dutch newspapers, and when they did, the papers quote foreign, often American sources. There was a grave discrepancy between the way the Dutch newspapers and Washington perceived the communist threat and the role of Sukarno in Indonesia. Containment of communism was Washington's number one objective and they overestimated the expansion of the communist ideology in Indonesia. The Dutch newspapers perspective showed that those fears were unwarranted for, effectively eliminating the most important motive for intervention.

Indonesia's neutral foreign policies on the world stage was another element that was frustrating US-Indonesian relations. In the light of the Cold War, the Eisenhower administration felt that neutrality was immoral in a bi-polar world. The newly

independent country, which only recently shrugged of the Dutch imperial yoke, did not wish alignment with either power bloc. Their neutral policies eventually culminated in the organisation of the Bandung conference. The conference proved not to be the communist breeding ground that the US expected, but it nonetheless clearly asserted the Indonesian standpoint and the conference improved Sukarno's prestige on the world stage. Their neutral policy was also reflected in their guidelines for accepting economic aid. Indonesia would accept financial help when it entailed no further political obligations with either super power. Indonesia's neutral stance and the consequences it had for economic aid is clearly reflected in the Dutch newspapers. Still the US found it difficult to come to terms with this policy. Granting economic aid to a country that was becoming increasingly communist was inappropriate. At the same time terminating economic aid might also result in the country drifting further leftward. For the Eisenhower administration Indonesia's neutral standpoint had far reaching consequences. Economic aid was not an instrument of overt diplomacy, which could be employed in order to draw Indonesia in the Western camp. The newspapers were very aware of what Indonesia's neutral standpoint meant for the Americans. They did not share US frustration on Indonesian neutralism. Neutralism was viewed on its own terms recognizing that the US and communist aid were met by the same criteria.

The West New Guinea dispute seriously strained US-Indonesian relations. The island was a crucial political factor in Indonesian nationalism, it unified the people of the vast archipelago. It was a symbol of the unfinished Indonesian revolution, of the fight against Western imperialism. The US could have made serious improvements in their relations with Indonesia if they would have supported them on the issue, instead it was an ever present obstacle. Partly because the Dutch would under no circumstance relinquish their part of the island to the Indonesians. Embassy staff in Jakarta recognised that major improvements could be made if the US supported the Indonesians and made suggestions to resolve the problems tri-laterally. But Washington maintained a neutral standpoint on the issue, effectively maintaining the status quo. Their standpoint on the issue matched NSC policies drafted in 1953 and the risk of Indonesia becoming communist and with it the risk that WNG would fall too, was an important consideration. Cold War geostrategic views trumped US ideas on self-determination. The Indonesians rightfully interpreted US neutrality as pro-Dutch.

The majority of Dutch newspapers did not make such analyses. The West New Guinea issue was very much discussed from a Dutch viewpoint. The Netherlands wished that the US supported the Dutch on the matter and this is mainly what the newspapers report about. The communist oriented newspaper *De Waarheid* was the only newspaper which voiced clear dissatisfaction of Dutch presence in the archipelago, mainly stemming from anti-imperialistic ideas. *De Waarheid* looks at West New Guinea in somewhat broader terms but they too, do not discuss US Cold War considerations nor the further implications WNG had for US-Indonesian relations.

The digitalization of newspaper titles provides academics with unprecedented easy access to newspaper archives. Also it allows for new methods of exploring these historical archives. Concerning US-Indonesian relations it would be interesting to see what Indonesian newspapers write on issues such as the growth of the PKI or the West New Guinea issue with respect to the US. Therefore I would recommend further research in these newspapers to gain more understanding of the US military intervention in Indonesia.

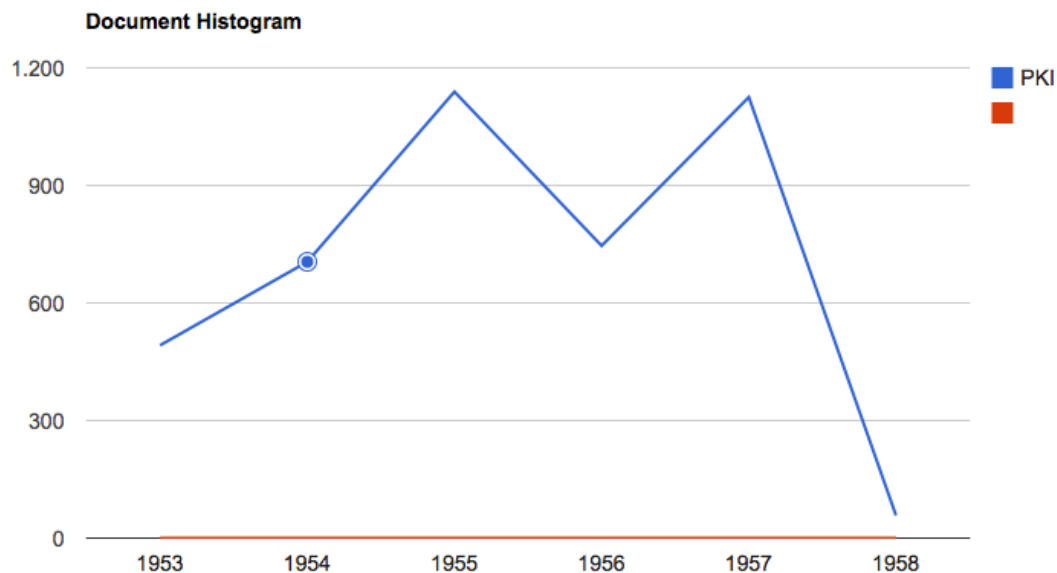
Appendix

Histograms

The histograms were created via an experimental website. It is not yet possible to export the histograms from the website for further editing. The histograms can be reproduced by inserting the period and the selected keywords located in the upper right hand corner via the following website: zookma.science.uva.nl/ENS/kb_search/n-gramsearch.html.

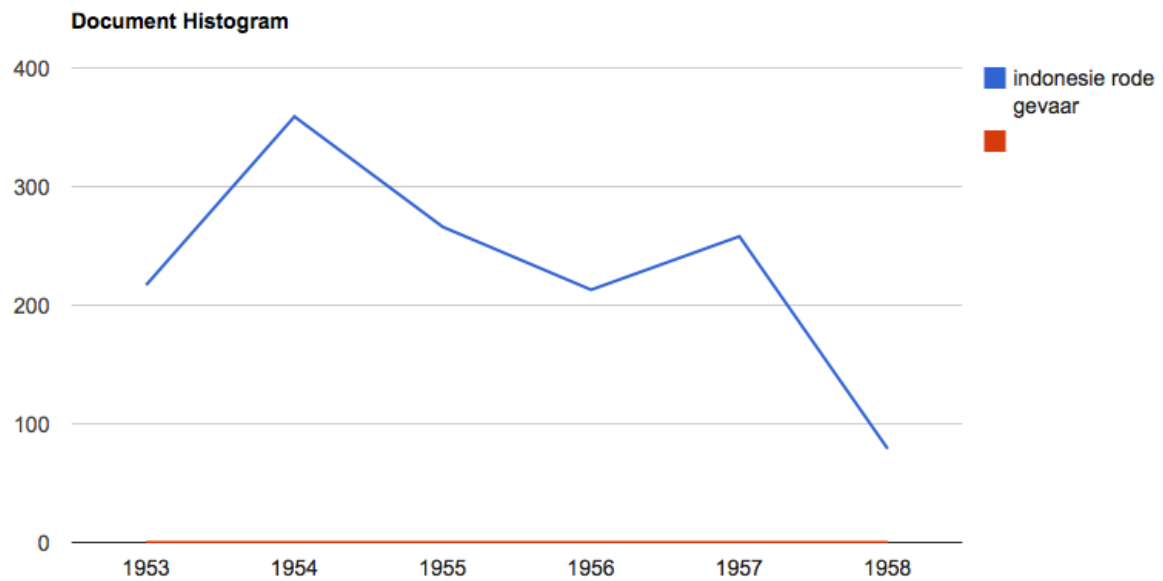
Histogram: 9.

PKI 1953-1958.



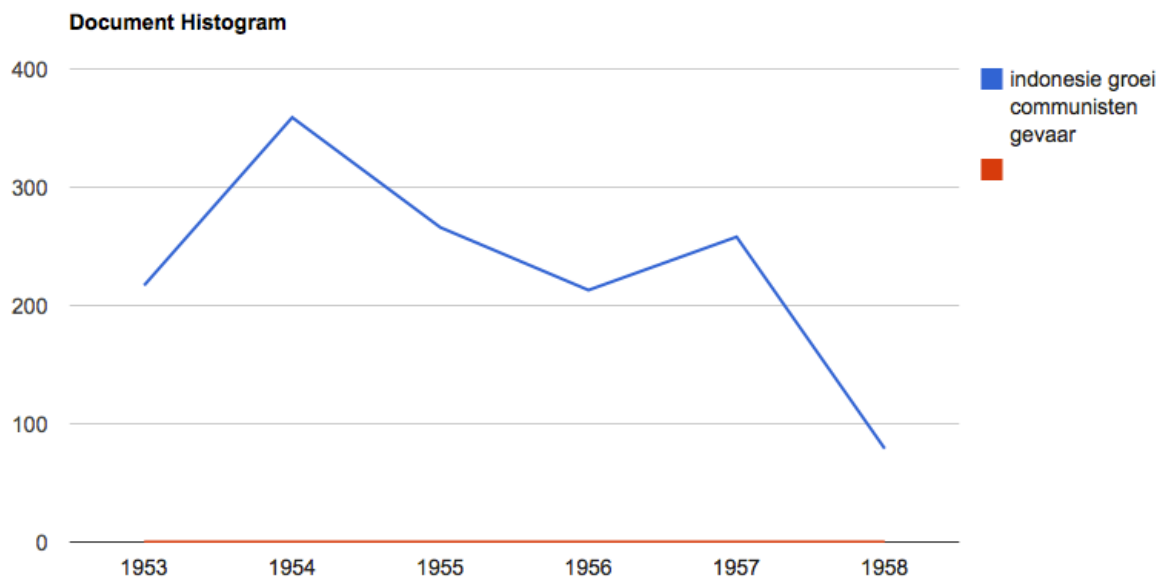
Histogram: 10.

Indonesia and the Red Danger 1953-1958.



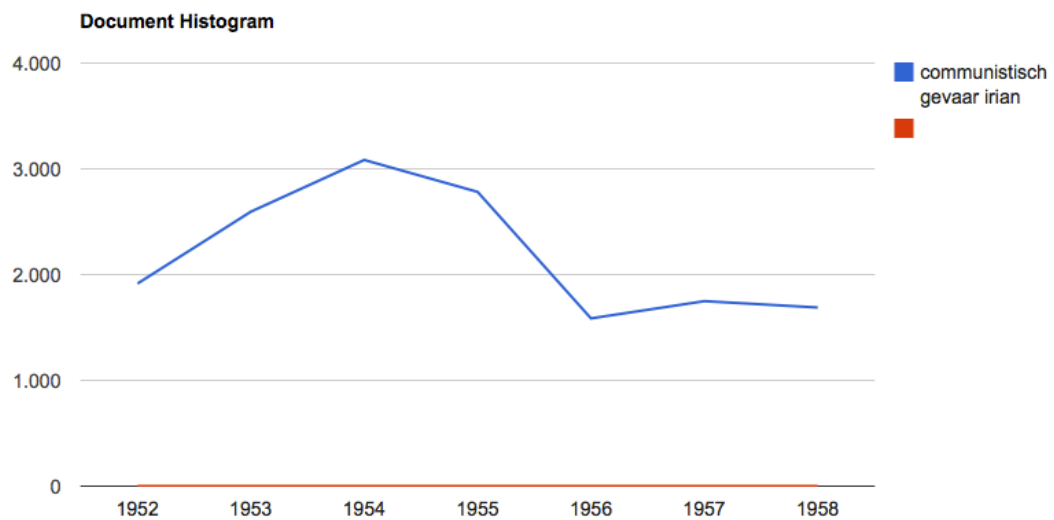
Histogram: 11.

Indonesia, Growth, Communists and Danger, 1953-1958.



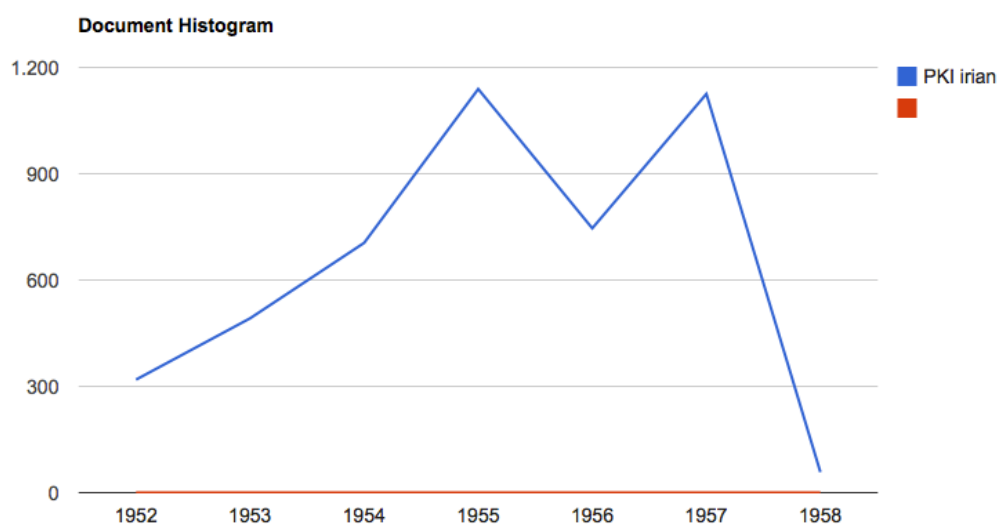
Histogram: 12.

Communist danger, and Irian, 1952-1958.



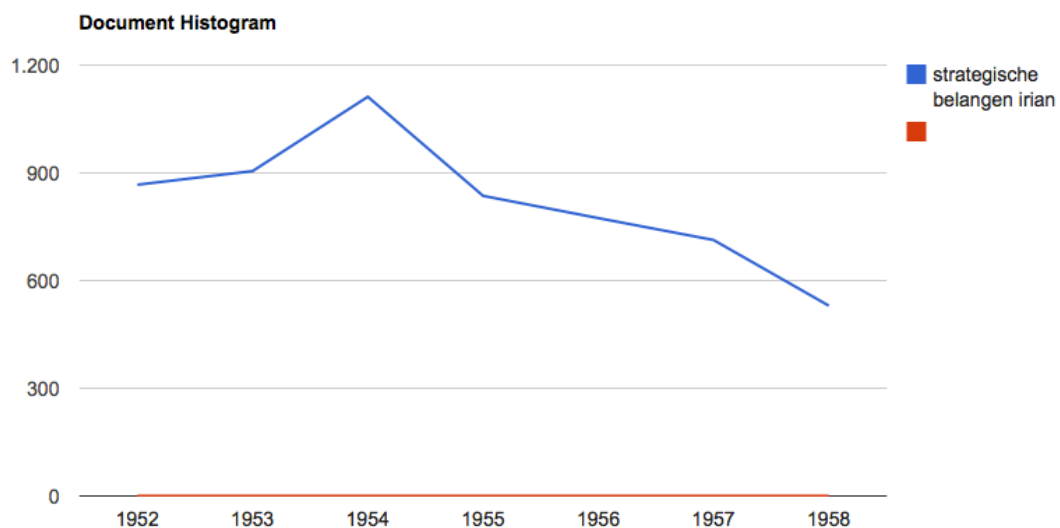
Histogram: 14.

The PKI and Irian, 1952-1958.



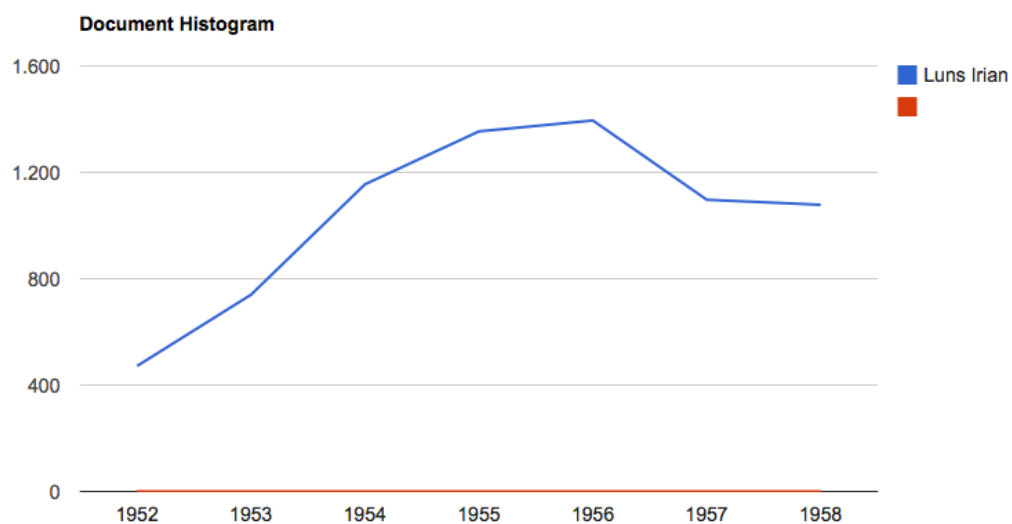
Histogram: 15.

Strategical Interests and Irian, 1952-1958.



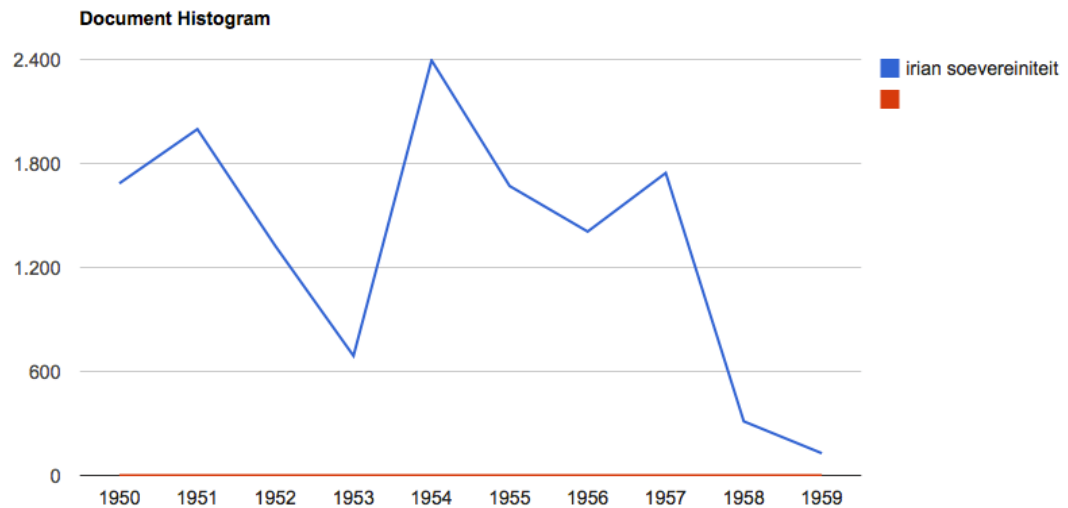
Histogram: 16.

Luns and Irian, 1952-1958.



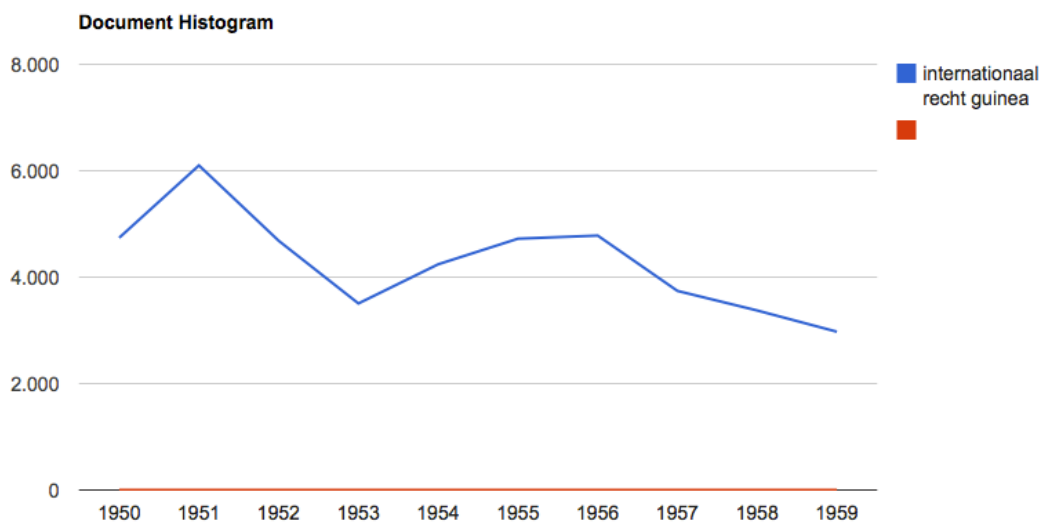
Histogram: 17.

Irian and Sovereignty, 1950-1959.



Histogram: 19.

International Law and Guinea, 1950-1959.



List of Abbreviations

ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States
AUREV	Angkatan Udara Revolusioner - Revolutionary Air Force
CPN	Communistische Partij Nederland - Dutch Communist Party
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
KNIL	Royal Dutch East Indies Army - Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama
Permesta	Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam - Charter of Inclusive Struggle
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia Indonesian - Communist Party
PNI	Partai Nasionalis Indonesia - Indonesian Nationalist Party
PRRI	Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia - Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia
PSI	Partai Socialis Indonesia - Indonesian Socialist Party
RTC	Round Table Conference
RMS	Republic of the South Moluccas
SEATO	Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation
SOBSI	Sentral Organisasi Seluruh Indonesia – All-Indonesia Workers Organisation
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia - Indonesian National Armed Forces
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WNG	West New Guinea

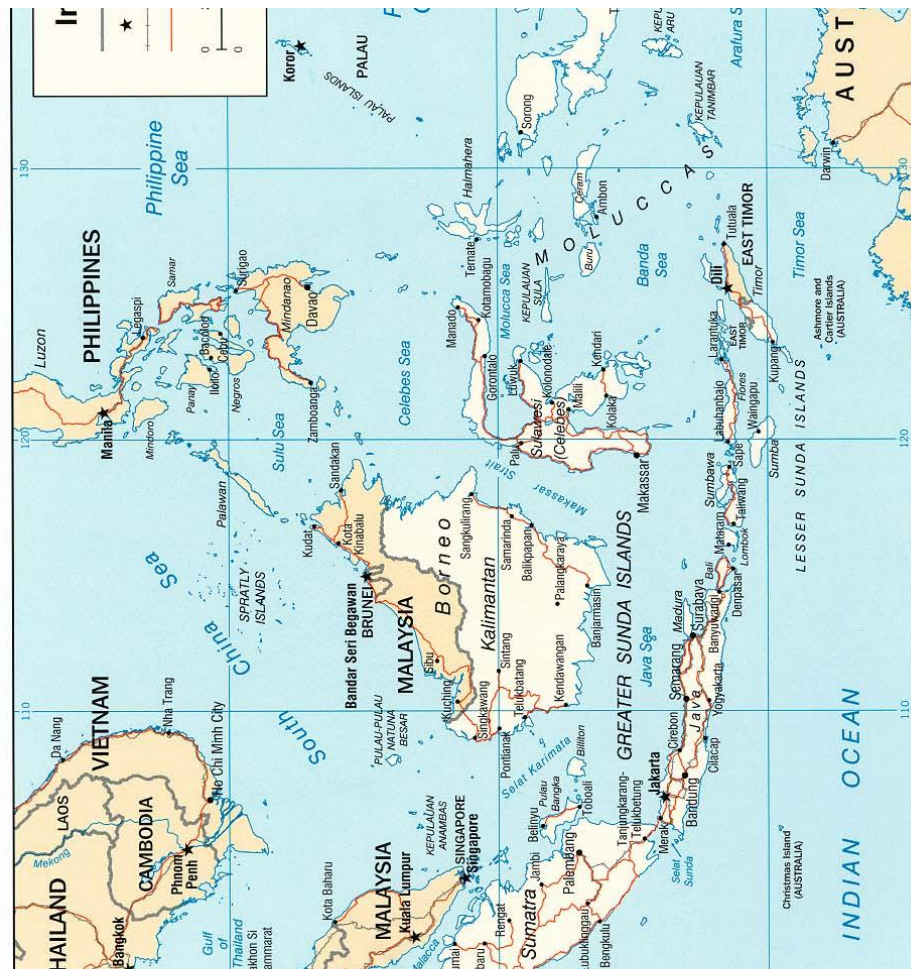
Map of Southeast Asia



Political, 2012.

Source: Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin.

Map of Indonesia.



Political, 2002.

Source: Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin.

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