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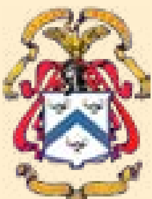
Jakarta Knows Best:

US Defense Policies and Security Cooperation in 1950s Indonesia

Richard W. B. Hutton, Major, United States Army



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Cover photo of President Sukarno and Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs Roeslan Abdulgani being greeted by President Dwight Eisenhower at the White House, 1956 Washington, D.C. On the West Portico of the White House are: (*left to right*) Richard M. Nixon, US Vice President; President Sukarno; Roeslan Abdulgani, Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs; President Eisenhower; and John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the US Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

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Program Description

The Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Art of War Scholar's program offers a small number of competitively select officers a chance to participate in intensive, graduate level seminars and in-depth personal research that focuses primarily on understanding strategy and operational art through modern military history. The purpose of the program is to produce officers with critical thinking skills and an advanced understanding of the art of warfighting. These abilities are honed by reading, researching, thinking, debating and writing about complex issues across the full spectrum of modern warfare, from the lessons of the Russo-Japanese war through continuing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, while looking ahead to the twenty-first century evolution of the art of war.

Abstract

This thesis explores US defense policies and security cooperation activities and agreements between the United States and Indonesia from 1950 to 1959, the first decade of Indonesia's independence. It assesses the implementation and value of US military assistance and training programs and the way defense policies influenced and contributed to both the development of the Indonesian military and broader US foreign policy goals. This thesis argues defense policymakers in Washington, as well as attachés and senior commanders in the region, correctly assessed the importance of the Indonesian military to US national objectives. This focus led to the successful implementation of defense policies throughout the decade and solidified the military to military relationship. This enabled the US to salvage the broader bilateral relationship nearly destroyed by ambiguous policies which supported both sides in a civil war inflamed by the CIA and State Department, who spearheaded a confrontational approach to Indonesia during the period. It concludes by arguing the very success of engagement-based defense policies made the US military the primary vehicle through which foreign policy in Indonesia was implemented by the end of the decade.

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Acronyms

CGSC	US Army Command and General Staff College
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MSA	Mutual Security Act
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
PKI	*Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party)
PRRI	*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SOBSI	*Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia* (Central All-Indonesian Workers Organization)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Military)

Chapter 1
Introduction

On the morning of 30 September 1965, soldiers affiliated with the September 30th Movement sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia murdered their erstwhile adversary, Lieutenant General Ahmad Yani, the commander of the Indonesian Army, and five other general officers.[1] The complex series of events that followed, which culminated in the killing of somewhere between 500,000 and 1,000,000 real and alleged communists and also the imposition of military rule under general Suharto, have been extensively examined by scholars and laypersons alike.[2] Less well known is that ten years prior to those events, in the summer of 1955 and as part of a large and enduring American defense program to train and educate foreign soldiers and officers, then Colonel Ahmad Yani arrived at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to attend the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC). While studying military operations with his US and international peers at Fort Leavenworth, Yani met US Army Major George Benson, who was bound for the army attaché office in Jakarta.[3] After graduating CGSC himself in 1956, Yani returned home. Two years later in the spring of 1958 and amidst the regional Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI) and Piagam Perjuangan Semesta (Permesta) rebellions in Indonesia's outer islands, he enlisted Benson's aid in planning the successful invasion of rebel-held territory on Sumatra.[4] Later, as commander of the Indonesian Army, Yani continued the tradition of schooling officers in the American military doctrine by sending them to the United States to where they would receive much of the same training and education that he had himself.[5] Indeed, from the five general officers murdered by the September 30th Movement, four had been trained in the United States.[6]

This study seeks to examine the US defense efforts in Indonesia—the provision of funding and materiel and the training and education programs that brought such officers to the United States—exploring how this evolved throughout the 1950s. Early in the decade they appear to have been relatively modest.[7] Defense policy focused mostly on funding a small constabulary style force and providing assistance to post-conflict observers which followed the end of the Indonesian National Revolution. The Dutch, present in large numbers despite Indonesia's successful drive for independence, remained the lead foreign military influence in numbers and importance.[8] Later, with more Indonesian officers conducting training in the United States and Soviet military aid beginning to flow into the country, US defense policies grew in stature and importance, a reflection

of both broader Cold War strategy and growing American concerns regarding Indonesia's development and direction.[9]

The increased prominence of the military to military relationship came at a time when the broader bilateral relationship politically related more to the Cold War and American displeasure with Indonesian President Sukarno which became increasingly difficult. This meant the US was increasingly disinclined to engage an active defense policy and security cooperation measures that both militaries, American and Indonesian, were calling for. Tensions flared within Indonesia as well and reached a tipping point in the spring of 1957 when regional commanders in Sumatra and Sulawesi declared themselves in open rebellion and launched the PRRI and Permesta movements. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spearheaded US policy at the time and began providing support to the rebels. At the same time the defense establishment in Washington urged caution. The ambassador in Jakarta, with the full support of his service attachés, recommended continued engagement with the central government and its anti-communist military just as US policies moved against the government.[10] This policy bifurcation led to the United States providing advice and support to both sides in the conflict, which ended in humiliation for the American-backed rebels and vindication for the Indonesian Army. Finally, heeding defense recommendations to increase military assistance in order to advance US interests in Indonesia from the summer of 1958 forward, the US ramped up engagement with Indonesia's military. As a result, by the end of the decade the respective militaries had developed, independent of civilian oversight, a meaningful military relationship based on mutual interests and outlook.[11]

Given that evolution and Indonesia's uneven development in the period, did defense policies advance American interests? American defense policies furthered US national interests in Indonesia during the 1950s by creating strong bonds and lines of communication between the US Indonesian militaries. Both were able to endure the crises of the 1950s and decisively secured US interests by the end of the decade. In so doing, the US military became the primary vehicle to advance US national interests in Indonesia. This set an example of how defense policies and interests become decisive to achieving US national objectives, for better or for worse. In this case it meant nurturing and supporting a force—though ostensibly a physical force. By 1960 the Indonesian Army was a national and political force that was amenable to US interests and capable of denying Indonesia to the communists.

Trusted lines of military communication, assiduously kept open by officers on both sides of the relationship, enabled the United States to be in such a position in 1958-1959. Years of relationship building, in both the United States and in Jakarta, across the broad tactical, operational, and strategic levels, created conditions where the US military was able to preserve its influence despite the United States government's conflicting attempt to overthrow the Indonesian government. Though distinguishing between the US "military" and the US "government" may seem inconsequential, this study will demonstrate that it was the removal of the US military from perceptions of national decision making which enabled it to continue tacitly supporting the central government during the rebellions. That trust, demonstrated time and time again by the willingness of the Indonesian officers who trained in the US to risk their careers by continuing to engage with the United States throughout the rebellions, secured the military to military relationship and strengthened the Indonesian Army in the long run. This further created conditions for the ascendency of the military modernization policies which the United States, in Indonesia and elsewhere, increasingly embraced from the late 1950s forward.

The rise of the military to military relationship by the end of the decade rested more, however, on the increased influence of the Indonesian military in the country's internal affairs than it did on any sort of prescient defense policy or assessment in Washington. By 1959, Major General Abdul Haris Nasution, the longtime commander of the Indonesian Army, was among the most powerful men in the country. He led an army that was an increasingly central part of the fabric of Indonesian politics, society, and daily life. By way of the rebellions, it had been cleansed of his rivals, was active in commerce and manufacturing, was expanding its presence into the Javanese countryside, and informally governed many of the outer islands. As a result, Nasution, himself well-disposed to the west, was second only to Sukarno in prestige and power. For him, quietly partnering with the US was the surest way to gain the material and ideological support that the Indonesian Army needed if it was to stave off communism and maintain its exalted place in society. For the United States, quietly backing him was the best option if it wanted to exert influence in Indonesia at a time when Sukarno's drift towards the left and his denunciations of America dominated headlines made overt political partnership unthinkable. These realities came together making the military to military relationship the critical lever of US foreign policy in Indonesia.

Exploring how and why these policies were crafted and created, how they were executed, and how they advanced US national interests in 1950s

Indonesia is a worthwhile examination for four reasons. First, defense policy (sometimes referred to as military or security policy) is merely a component of broader American foreign policy. This leads to cases, as with Indonesia in the 1950s, where broad literature exists on general US foreign policies but much less on the component parts of those policies, and how they affected both their host nation counterparts and the advancement of US national interests. This study intends to fill this research gap while illustrating how the value of component studies can broaden the aperture on our understanding of the military's role in peacetime foreign relations. Second, defense policies are often integral and, as they became in the case of Indonesia in the 1950s, decisive to the United States' ability to advance its interests overseas. Appreciating that role is necessary if one wants to understand how the military and defense establishment influences peacetime foreign policy and how central the military component of national power has been to US national security outside of periods of major conflict. Third, this study endeavors to understand the weight that defense policies carry in foreign nations, where acquisitions of US military equipment and training opportunities in the United States are highly sought after ends and can be the determining factors in an officer's career trajectory.[12] These policies often matter disproportionally more to the partner nation than to the United States, and can help form the cornerstone of a foreign security apparatus that includes arms, vehicles, and capabilities that assist regimes in maintaining security as they see it.

The last reason to examine US defense policies in 1950s Indonesia is that the military was a fundamentally important and powerful organization in Indonesia in the 1950s. As was the case in many developing and post-colonial states, the military was among the dominant forces shaping Indonesia as a state and Indonesians as people in the period. It ruled much of the outer (non-Java) archipelago with territorial units that had considerable autonomy in their operations. It also did not assent to civilian oversight and viewed itself as both the guarantor of Indonesian sovereignty and the rightful heir of the successful revolution, believing it had won.[13] As a result, the Indonesian military effectively co-ruled the country. Set against the backdrop of ideological and strategic competition between the United States and the Soviet Union during the early Cold War, the Indonesian military gained enormous money and materiel support and became an important lever through which an outside power could attempt to exert influence within Indonesia.[14] Given this prominence, examining US defense policy in 1950s Indonesia can illuminate the way such policies influenced the rise of the Indonesian Army. In view of its takeover of the government

in the wake of the September 30th Movement, such an examination is especially worthwhile.

This study will explore the military to military relationship over the period in a roughly chronological manner. Each chapter will demonstrate the way US defense policies were implemented, explore their rationale, and evaluate how they served to advance US national interests in the given period and beyond. Chapter 2 will explore the US-Indonesia relationship during the Indonesian National Revolution of 1945-49, examine the US military defense policies that were implemented during the conflict, and capture the complex feelings Indonesians had towards the United States upon their independence in late 1949. Additionally, in reviewing the American vision for postwar Asia, it will outline US national interests in Indonesia in the 1950s and describe the defense tools and mechanisms that the US had at its disposal to advance its broader objectives. It will, in sum, provide the setting and context from which the dynamic relationships and policies of the 1950s unfolded.

Chapter 3 will explore the defense and military assistance policies of the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations from 1950 to mid-1957. This will tell the story of the building of the bilateral and military to military relationships: what the policies were, why they were embraced, how they were implemented, and how they fit within broader conceptions of US strategy and security. Answering such questions requires understanding the way Indonesian audiences, military and civilian alike, received such policies, and, thus, chapter 3 will also explore Indonesia's government and military structures in the period and ask why certain groups in the country responded favorably to US overtures while others did not. To do this, it will examine aspects of Indonesian culture, both internal and external to the country's armed forces. In such analysis lies many of the obstacles US policymakers and implementers faced in Indonesia, a post-colonial, heterogeneous, archipelagic nation founded in blood and steeped in a mystic culture foreign to Americans. Understanding that character will help us understand why Indonesians responded in the ways they did and why the US position foundered at times yet remained able, throughout the decade, to establish a resilient and durable relationship with the Indonesian military that could survive the tumult that seemed likely, at times, to engulf it.

Chapter 4 will advance the narrative through the contentious period from the spring of 1957 to the end of the decade. From mid-1957 to mid-1958, when defense policies were often in conflict with stated national interests, the United States found itself, to some extent without intending to do so, backing both sides in a conflict that nearly engulfed the country.

Defense policies played a key role in mitigating what could have been a strategic disaster for the United States. Crucial here is the way strategic decision-makers in Washington understood defense policy and the recommendations of the military and then, for the most part, simply ignored them. The role both defense and military leaders in Washington and attachés and regional commanders played in a crisis not of their making is important. In particular the way they were able to maintain—despite hostilities—open lines of communication with their Indonesian counterparts and preserve the foundations of a relationship they seemed to most presciently realize needed to be preserved. Such a channel proved decisive when, with the collapse of the US-backed rebellions, the militaries emerged, on both sides of the Pacific, as the primary vehicle to advance mutual interests and strengthen bonds.

The conclusion will offer an assessment of that achievement and the broader magnitude of US defense policies in 1950s Indonesia. It will parse lessons from the successes and failures and contextualize these events within defense and military policy dialogues that are taking place today. This will be done by exploring how and why the United States, in some places, came to consider foreign militaries as the most trusted partners available. For policymakers, the question of whether or not, in some cases, the primacy of the military instrument of national power is actually as dangerous an outcome as many commentators claim it to be is as germane today as it was in the 1950s.

The significance of these policies to Indonesia and its military must also be weighed, especially considering the fact the military to military relationship continued to blossom into the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and provided the United States a means with which to exert influence over Indonesia during the contentious early 1960s. Not least of these were the actions of the Indonesian Army in response to the assassinations of Yani and the others. With tacit assistance from the United States, it purged the country of communists and established a western-oriented military dictatorship from 1965 through the end of the Cold War. Though the details of those events and periods are not within the purview of this study, one must understand the events of the 1960s if one is to properly assess the significance and meaning of US policies of the 1950s.

Through these lenses, Col. Yani's residence at Fort Leavenworth and his subsequent experiences in and around the US military, provide a worthwhile view from which one can explore both the personalities and realities that defined US defense policies in 1950s Indonesia. Those policies and programs brought him to the US which introduced him to its military

and its people. These experiences enabled him and others from his country to conceive Indonesia's transformation from a revolutionary country and army to a flourishing modern state. Their growth from being simply a component of broader policy in 1950 to becoming the defining attribute of that policy in 1960 influenced both the practice of US foreign relations and the country of Indonesia itself for the remainder of the Cold War.

Notes

1. Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and US-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 1. Yani's name is sometimes translated and written as Jani.

2. Bernd Schaefer, "Introduction: Indonesia and the World in 1965," in *1965: Indonesia and the World,* ed. Bernd Schaeffer and Baskara Wardaya (Jakarta: Goethe-Institut, 2013), 1; Baskara Wardaya, "The 1965 Tragedy in Indonesia and its Context," in *1965: Indonesia and the World,* Schaeffer and Wardaya, 9. Estimates of the number of people killed in Indonesia in 1965-1966 vary. Though the exact number is unlikely to ever be known, most historians consider the range of 500,000 to 1,000,000 as reasonable. See Chandra Siddharth, "New Findings on the Indonesian Killings of 1965-66," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 76 no. 4 (November 2017): 1059-1086, for the most recent academic exploration of the killings themselves and estimated casualty figures.

3. Brian Evans, "The Influence of the US Army on the Development of the Indonesian Army, 1954-1964," *Indonesia* 47 (April 1989): 28, 40.

4. Baskara T. Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow: United States Policy Toward Indonesia, 1953-1963* (Jakarta: Pusat Sejarah dan Etika Politik/Center for History and Political Ethics, in collaboration with Galang Press, 2007), 198. The names of the rebel movements translate into English as the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia, and the Universal Struggle Charter. PRRI and Permesta will be used here.

5. Rudolph Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military: 1945-1965* (Prague: Oriental Institute in Academia, 1978), 122-124.

6. H. W. Brands, "The Limits of Manipulation: How the United States Didn't Topple Sukarno," *Journal of American History* 76, no. 3 (December 1989): 804-805.

7. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 119.

8. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 980-981; Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1952-1954), 363-365.

9. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 44; Ragna Boden, "Cold War Economics: Soviet Aid to Indonesia," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 10, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 115-116.

10. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1955-1957), 475-480. The island of Sulawesi has also been referred to as Celebes, especially prior to Indonesian independence.

11. George McTurnan Kahin and Audrey Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 17, 207.

12. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1958-1960), 314-315.

13. Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics, 1945-1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 45; Daniel Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959* (Singapore: Equinox Publishing, 2009), 89; Howard P. Jones, *Indonesia: The Possible Dream* (New York: Hoover Institution, 1971), 137-138; Ruth McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," *Indonesia* 11 (April 1971): 136; Guy Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," in *The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries,* ed. John H. Johnson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 205-206.

14. Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-4.

Chapter 2
Indonesian Independence and the Cold War

The United States and Indonesia: 1945-1949

Indonesia's independent 1950s was born from the violence, occupation, and revolution of its 1940s. In order to understand the 1950s, one must understand both the tumult of the 1940s and the role, negligible at first but growing by the end of the decade, that the United States played in affecting Indonesia's trajectory, particularly with respect to its military. This chapter will chronicle the US role in Indonesia in the 1940s and then examine US foreign and defense policies in Indonesia and Asia writ large as of January 1950, Indonesia's first month as an independent nation, in order to place US military aspirations beside Indonesian realities as the Cold War began to heat up.

The 1940s were built atop the edifice of Dutch colonial rule. Indonesia, then known as the Dutch East Indies, was a Dutch colony and territory, parts of which had been under Dutch control from the early 17th century. These were the original Spice Islands. Oppressive and based on resource extraction, Dutch colonial rule had, by the time of the Japanese invasion in 1942, gained control of all significant capital in the colonies, marginalized the agriculturally-productive native Indonesian population, co-opted the budding middleclass into the Dutch administrative apparatus, and worked to destroy rising sentiments of Indonesian nationalism.[1]

The successful Japanese invasion of, and period of subsequent rule over, Indonesia utterly transformed the country and its politics, shattered Indonesians' presumptions of the world in which they lived, and gave credence, in an indirect way, to the theretofore shuttered aspirations of early nationalists.[2] As early as 1942, the Japanese set about eradicating the vestiges of white colonial rule. They established mass people movements in the name of Asian independence and co-prosperity, organized volunteer paramilitary organizations (in which many future Indonesian army officers served), and freed nationalist political leaders, among them Sukarno.[3] They consciously stoked Indonesian nationalist sentiment. In so doing, they laid the groundwork for Indonesia's unilateral declaration of independence in the days following the Japanese surrender.

The rise of Indonesian nationalism coincided with the victors'—US, U.K., France, and the Netherlands—efforts to reimpose colonial rule across Asia. In Indonesia, the Dutch attempted to reclaim control over their former colony. Their forceful return helped set off the Indonesian

national revolution, a political and military conflict that was fought from 1945 to 1949 and which ultimately produced an independent Indonesia. To appreciate the role that the United States played in that conflict, one must first understand how Indonesia fit within emerging US thoughts on the postwar structure of Asia.

Prior to the end of World War II, the United States began to establish an international system of free trade, open markets, and alliances. These alliances would secure the mainland of the United States, help counter the spread of communism in Asia and Europe, provide foreign markets for surplus domestic production, and enable the US to rebuild the key Eurasian centers of industrial power outside of the communist bloc: Western Europe (including West Germany) and Japan. In doing so, US policymakers could keep such areas free and independent thus advancing and securing US interests outside of the Western Hemisphere.[4] Faced with communists in the Russian Far East, North Korea, and, in 1949, mainland China, the United States' Asia policy centered on rebuilding Japan as an industrial and economic engine to power and lead the non-communist Far East. US planners saw Japan as the critical node of a "Great Crescent" that stretched from the Kuril Islands to the Iran/Pakistan border; this crescent needed to be developed and held in order to advance the nascent policies of containment which were being conceptualized. As one historian put it:

> By 1948 they envisioned Japan as an industrial hub, sustained by trade with less developed states along an Asian economic defense perimeter. A secure Japan would help support Southeast Asia against Chinese communism, and vice versa. Above all else, the relationship required that Japan have access to secure, affordable raw materials and markets in Southeast Asia.[5]

Central to Indonesia and other nations within the Asian "periphery" were American conceptions about the abundant resources of the region and its important role to play in the reindustrialization of the Asian "core," Japan.[6] In the early years after World War II, the United States looked initially to its European allies to reestablish stability over their former colonies in Southeast Asia, developing them into resource producers for Japan within the larger American free trade system.[7] Though officially neutral in the Dutch-Indonesian dispute, the US was ambivalent about Indonesia's ability to govern itself and, given its stated importance within the larger strategic context, supported and enabled the return of Dutch administration to Indonesia. In particular, the reimposition of colonial control would reopen the flow of capital from the Indies to the Netherlands and hugely aid American reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Western Europe,

its foremost strategic objective. That such a policy was in contravention of unstated US sympathies for the aspiring Republican nationalists of Indonesia was unfortunate but necessary.[8] As will be shown, US sympathies often counted for little when balanced against the realities of Cold War geopolitics in the equation.

That professed neutrality was tested as early as 1946. As the Indonesian revolution wore on, it became clear to policymakers that they had grossly underestimated the strength and potency of Indonesian nationalism. Grudgingly over several years, they arrived at the conclusion, that the Dutch would never be able to reassert any form of control that resembled their pre-war administration.[9] Focus now shifted to the possibility that, in fighting against "white," "imperial," and "capitalist," forces, Indonesian Republicans would, as was seen elsewhere, embrace an ideology, communist or otherwise, that was hostile to American interests.[10] While US defense policies were not clear or effectual upon the situation in any way and US soldiers were not involved in the fighting, the United States was somwhow viewed as party to the conflict. In an ironic twist, just when the US was beginning to understand the threat it actually faced, Dutch troops, by way of Marshall Plan funds that had been rerouted from Europe, were using US lend-lease military equipment to suppress Indonesian aspirations.[11]

An entire brigade of Dutch soldiers, trained, equipped, and transported by the United States, departed the eastern US in 1945 bound not for postwar Europe but for occupation service in Indonesia. The Indonesians professed a desire to remain independent of competing ideologies and wanted to adopt something of a middle path with respect to the United States and the Soviet Union.[12] However, they were fighting Dutch soldiers wearing US uniforms and driving US jeeps, as well as Dutch aircrews attacking them from American bombers. Thus, the Dutch brought international politics to the Indonesian doorstep in ways that were inimical to broader American interests. This hardened early Indonesian concerns regarding the United States and its military.[13]

In late 1948, to American and international outrage, the Dutch initiated a second police action against the Indonesian Republicans and expanded the conflict. It was then that American policymakers concluded that the importance of Indonesia to the American-led free world and postwar structure in Asia outweighed both Dutch colonial and economic interests and the role that the Netherlands itself played in the United States' Europe policy. To the United States, the continuation of the conflict only served to advance chaos and, with it, communism. George Kennan remarked that Indonesia was, "the most crucial issue at the moment in our struggle with

the Kremlin," and that it represented the, "anchor in the chain of islands... we should develop as a politico-economic counterforce to communism in the Asian landmass."[14]

As public opinion in the United States and in the Congress shifted against the Dutch, the United States learned that many of the gains being made by the Republican forces were in danger of being lost to the greater enemy. In September of 1948, prior to the Dutch second police action, Indonesian Republican forces crushed an attempted communist coup at Madiun. Despite not yet having coalesced into a single, unified force, the Republican army succeeded in capturing or killing nearly the entire leadership of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), broke the rebels' military strength, and won—to the amazement of US observers—what seemed to be a decisive victory against communism.[15] Just as the United States was beginning to believe in the anti-communist credentials of the Indonesian Republicans, however, the second Dutch police action broke into Republican territory and upset the fragile equilibrium of the period. This action, "led to the escape of about 40,000 communists taken prisoner by the Republic after the Madiun uprising," which threatened not only to increase resistance to the Dutch but also to the stability of any future independent Indonesia.[16]

In early 1949, the United States brought its full power to bear upon Dutch aspirations in Indonesia and forced them to abandon their efforts. Secretary of State Dean Acheson told the Dutch, themselves heavily reliant upon US Marshall Plan aid, that the United States, absent an agreement on Indonesia, would exclude the Netherlands from requests for Military Assistance Program funds. He also made clear that all economic assistance funds were, "gravely jeopardize[d] by continued Dutch intransigence." This left the Netherlands place in the soon to be formed North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and therefore within the US economic and security blanket, in doubt.[17] Worried that the Republican movement, which was dominated by moderates, might fall into the hands of radical communists, the United States imposed its will upon the Dutch and helped secure Indonesia's independence. In the immediate aftermath of the negotiations, the US attempted to arm the Indonesian forces so that they, "would enable the Indonesian Republicans to liquidate their Commies."[18] Colonialism was out and the Cold War was in.

Thus, in December 1949 the Republic of Indonesia officially gained its independence. The United States' role in this process was complex. Though it proved to be instrumental in favor of the Republic from late-1948, this reality was not widely known in Indonesia outside Republican

political circles. What had been more indelibly written onto the Indonesian psyche were perceptions of their own growing confidence, perseverance, strength, and sense of national accomplishment at defeating the Dutch, as they saw it, by themselves.[19] These factors helped strengthen their stridently independent and disassociated foreign policy that sought a middle way through the Cold War. If ordinary Indonesians thought anything about the US in December 1949, they were more likely to remember the long American support for Dutch neo-colonial efforts and Americans' belief in capitalism, a system many Indonesians, given their coterminous understandings of the terms, had a hard time differentiating from colonialism.[20] As Indonesia entered its first year of independence in 1950, the US would have to actively earn Indonesian support if it wanted to establish its desired system of American security, free trade, and the containment of communism in maritime Southeast Asia.

Defining US National Interests in Postwar Indonesia

Though the first full-fledged US national security policy towards Indonesia was not written and adopted until late 1953, the Truman Administration had outlined its policy goals in various ways since Indonesia's independence.[21] Each iteration reflected in slightly different ways the core anti-communist pillars of the strategy. On 28 December 1949, the day after the formal transfer of sovereignty, President Truman welcomed Indonesia into the community of free nations and offered American sympathy and support for realizing its aspirations. The Australian Ambassador to the United States somewhat presciently noted that the US attitude towards Indonesia was, "conditioned by its expectation that Indonesia would assist in the containment of communism in Southeast Asia."[22] The first official policy document, published on 31 December 1949, stressed the need to lend American backing to non-communist forces throughout the region, which included Indonesia.[23]

Truman's approval of National Security Council Report 68 (NSC 68) in April of 1950 codified Indonesia's position relative to the US. Seen as auguring the beginning of a more global Cold War, the document emphasized the benefits of military, rather than mere economic, containment of communism and served as notice that the United States would not countenance the loss of free territory to the Soviet bloc. It also indicated a US belief in geopolitics as a zero-sum game; there would be no room for neutrality or the sort of independent foreign policy that Indonesia was keen on embracing.[24] NSC 68 and the policies that came after it enshrined US offensive diplomacy in and aggressive anti-communist engagement with

the "Third World" as necessary and total, as a core national security interest of the United States.

As early as 1951 official policies and correspondence highlighted these trends in Indonesia, with an emphasis on strengthening non-communist forces, promoting economic development, and securing Indonesia's place in the free world. "The objective of US policy toward Indonesia is the maintenance and strengthening of a politically stable, economically healthy, non-communist state under a government friendly to the US."[25] As the decade continued, however, US policy objectives directly confronted the question of communism. In 1952, it sought to, "prevent the countries of Southeast Asia from passing into the communist orbit, and to assist them to develop the will and ability to resist communism from within and without and to contribute to the strengthening of the free world."[26] By 1953 and the writing of NSC 171/1, the United States' first national security policy towards Indonesia, the stated US objectives in Indonesia were clear—the preservation and maintenance of a non-communist Indonesia:

> To prevent Indonesia from passing into the Communist orbit; to persuade Indonesia that its best interests lie in greater cooperation and stronger affiliation with the rest of the free world; and to assist Indonesia to develop toward a stable, free government with the will and the ability to resist Communism from within and without and to contribute to the strengthening of the free world.[27]

This linked the postwar security objectives of NSC 68 to the US's broader postwar vision of Southeast Asia as a resource base to support US economic goals in Europe and Japan, two large and re-industrializing markets in great need of natural resources.[28]

That resource potential and post-colonial status tied Indonesia to much of the rest of the newly independent "Third World" in the early 1950s, a world in which American and Soviet competition would increasingly focus. To make sense of this, the US sought to imagine the Indonesian revolution (among others) as akin to its own and, thus, prevent it from implementing any of the radical social, economic, or cultural changes that revolutionary communism was imposing on other states. This was difficult as the Indonesian revolution was, in essence, anti-western and anti-capitalist.[29] The Soviets, correspondingly, worked to bring about just such change. Beginning soon after the end of World War II, they worked to discredit American neutrality during the revolution and firmly backed the Republicans, as they did other nationalist movements fighting against

"imperialism" in the late 1940s and 1950s. Their objectives were to prevent Indonesia's participation in the US alliance system, reduce western influence, get Indonesia to accept the Soviet industrialization and modernization model, and foster the long-term development of the PKI. As such, the Soviets demonstrated their own approach to the early Cold War that mirrored the aforementioned and opposing US policies.[30]

American national objectives in Indonesia in the 1950s were bound to the emerging Cold War strategy of containing and defeating communism in all forms and on all fronts for the preservation of American power and the maintenance of the American-led free world economic system. The US saw Indonesia as a key factor in this system, a resource provider and market for Japan and part of the defensive perimeter around which the United States hoped to block communist expansion. Within Indonesia itself, the US encouraged development, basic freedoms, and self-determination, but sought to limit the effects of revolutionary fervor on the wider populace. Given that US policies were inherently more conservative and less revolutionary than those embraced by the Communist Bloc, this created problems in the early bilateral relationship. The United States considered itself a willing partner and sympathetic friend of Indonesia as it entered its first decade of independence.[31]

US Defense and Military Objectives in 1950s Indonesia

Within the context of this wider policy, the US defense establishment developed its own goals and objectives for Indonesia. These more focused goals were nested within the larger national strategy and are worth introducing here as they represent not the way that policies were necessarily implemented but the way that they were conceptualized and understood by military practitioners in Washington and Jakarta. In understanding them, one can gain a valuable glimpse at both the US military's outlook on the world in the early 1950s and establish a basis of understanding, for contextual purposes, of the events which, once these policies were actually put into practice, were to come. However, the views from the Pentagon and the attaché office in Jakarta did not always align with those of the wider political, diplomatic, and policy apparatus in Washington.

Throughout the 1950s, US defense policies in Indonesia had three distinct objectives. The first was to prevent the archipelago and its inherent military and natural resources from falling to communist forces or those whose interests ran counter to the United States. This was crucial to overall US policies in Asia which was embraced from the earliest moments of Indonesian independence, directed by defense leadership, and continually

highlighted and updated by studies which demonstrated the potential military applicability of Indonesia's vast resources and mineral wealth to any who controlled it.[32] The second was to be the primary trainer and arms provider to the Indonesian National Military (TNI), particularly the Indonesian Army. Though the program would grow exponentially by the end of the decade, defense leaders realized as early as 1949 that Indonesia's military would need conditioning if it was to maintain its anti-communist sentiments.[33] The third was to foster and preserve strong relationships with TNI officers and to keep lines of communication between the national militaries open and dialogue robust. Though this took time to operationalize, by the mid-1950s, just as US frustrations with Indonesian domestic politics were on the rise, Indonesian officers were arriving at US service schools, particularly the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth. The simultaneous nature of those political and military trends reinforced, for policymakers in Washington and attachés in Jakarta, the important need to nurture such military to military relationships.[34]

As the 1950s dawned, this was the landscape of Indonesia and US foreign and defense policy. However, maintaining and making use of such an understanding while implementing these policies would prove difficult. Indonesia itself, its politics and its people, would become more mystifying than the wise men of Washington could have imagined.

Notes

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5. Michael Schaller, "Securing the Great Crescent: Occupied Japan and the Origins of Containment in Southeast Asia," *Journal of American History* 69, no. 2 (September 1982): 392-393.

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11. Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 65; Frances Gouda with Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia: US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920-1949* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 29. See also Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 20, and Simpson, *Economists with Guns,* 14.

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15. Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: The United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-1949* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 242-244; Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia,* 286-303.

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18. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power,* 302.

19. Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 45.

20. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 68; Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia,* 477-478.

21. Soo Chun Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, 1997), 55.

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32. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of Defense (Marshall) to the Secretary of State" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 1092-1093; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State and Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)," 371-383; "226th Meeting of the NSC, December 1, 1954," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, National Security Council (NSC) Series, Box 6, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

33. "Policies of the Government of the United States of America Relating to National Security, vol. 2, 31 December 1949: The Position of the United States with respect to Asia," Papers of Harry S. Truman, NSC File, Box 11, Policies of the United States of America Relating to the National Security File, 1947-1952, Harry S. Truman Library, 1; Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman," 964-966.

34. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 28, 44; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 115-116. *TNI stands for Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Military).

Chapter 3
Building the Military to Military Relationship

The US viewed the Indonesian military in the early 1950s as something akin to a constabulary force, rather than a fully-fledged national military.[1] That view was largely accurate, given the shortages in equipment, decentralized organization and structure, and civil responsibilities that continued to occupy the Indonesian military during the period.[2] With that reality, from the beginning American defense policy focused on military assistance (i.e., funding, arms, and equipment) and security cooperation (i.e., training, education, and personnel exchanges). They sought to enable the growth and professionalization of a small yet robust Indonesian army which could help stabilize and secure the country's internal territory. At the same time American conceptions developed regarding the political and ideological utility of the Indonesian Army which extended beyond simply serving as a tool to resist external forces of communism.

The story of US defense policies between 1950, the outbreak of regional rebellions in1957, and the authoritarian government can be viewed through two lenses: first, the implementation, challenges, and reception of the policies themselves; second, the realization that the United States was developing a lever in the Indonesian Army which might influence Indonesian domestic politics. At the time, this was not universally accepted. Examining US policy through these lenses laid the material and ideological groundwork that was necessary to understand the complex period which followed, when both US interests, and Indonesian military capabilities, were forced into the spotlight.

US Military Assistance to Indonesia: 1950-1957

US military assistance to Indonesia—funding through grants, loans, cash, arms, equipment or other technical capabilities—began almost as soon as the ink was dry on the Netherlands transfer of sovereignty in December 1949. In fact, by 1 June 1950, Indonesia had already received equipment from the United States: "50 walkie-talkies, 10 public address systems, several fingerprint cameras, 50 trucks, 50 jeeps, 50 motorcycles, 21,000 carbines, 1,000 submachine guns, 10,000 revolvers, 100 shotguns, 500 gas masks, and ammunition for all of the above." A legacy of the revolution, this program complemented the much larger Dutch military assistance program, which consisted mostly of grant materiel which the Dutch, upon the conclusion of Indonesian independence, used to support their own military training mission and program.[3] Small numbers of US

military personnel were also on the ground in Indonesia at this time as military members of the United Nations Commission for Indonesia helped broker Indonesia's transition to statehood. At the same time, US Army troop transports were ferrying roughly 10,000 Dutch soldiers a month back to the Netherlands.[4]

From January 1950, the United States looked to formalize this already existing structure of military cooperation and assistance, both to support the development of the Indonesian military and to counter what it saw as forces of instability. Though it lacked evidence demonstrating this, it believed communists were active in the Javanese countryside. Goals were set at providing arms and equipment for 20,000 constabulary troops and providing naval capabilities to counter smuggling and illicit trade in the archipelago.[5] Authorized by Truman in January 1950 and agreed upon by Indonesia in August of that year, it provided $5 million in grant-aid under the Mutual Defense Assistance Act. According to later US reports, this was effectively used "in the suppression of guerilla bands of fanatic Moslems and bandits which plagued Indonesia."[6] The agreement was important because it formalized and provided structure to the early military to military relationship. It also served as something of a precedent; a framework through which future military cooperation and engagement could take place.

This agreement was important for two other reasons. First, it was the last military agreement between the two countries prior to the 1951 passage of the Mutual Security Act (MSA), which grew out of a large need in Washington for countries such as Indonesia to choose between the Soviet Union and the "free world." MSA aid brought conditions and, for Indonesia, unwanted strings. Communist bloc countries interpreted any post-colonial state's signing of the MSA as an explicit choice of sides in the Cold War, a political non-starter in Indonesia. Given that, Indonesia rebuffed US efforts to send a mutual defense assistance program survey team to the country to begin negotiating MSA terms in late 1950. This meant the original, pre-MSA, 1950 agreement governed the military to military relationship for much of the decade.[7] Second, the military agreement constituted the bulk of the US foreign aid to Indonesia in the early 1950s.[8] Though the amount of aid was relatively small, it was appropriate given the inconsiderable scope of the overall bilateral relationship at the time, and should not be discounted. In fact, it served as the jumping-off point between US and Indonesian militaries as the two developed a broader and enduring relationship over time.

Despite the limitations from Indonesia's reluctance to submit to MSA terms of aid which imposed on the relationship, policymakers and practitioners on both sides continued to try and build the relationship. Efforts were made throughout 1951 to provide jeeps, armored personnel carriers, and even fire engines to the TNI using pre-MSA Marshall Plan funds administered by the Economic Cooperation Administration prior to the arrival of more stringent aid stipulations.[9] For their part, throughout 1951 and 1952 Indonesian Army officers repeatedly met with US military attachés in Jakarta both seeking non-MSA arrangements through which they could acquire arms and ammunition in their campaigns against, "insurrectionists...renegades and religious fanatics," in Java. The head of constabulary forces in Indonesia, a Sukarto, considered US military aid so consequential in his fight that he informed his superiors he would resign if it was stopped.[10] Thus, pre-MSA military aid, though limited by statute to chiefly technical and administrative assistance, did not require MSA ratification and continued along the lines of the 1950 agreement.[11]

Indeed, Indonesian officials felt strongly enough in the summer of 1953 about the need and potential for US military cooperation that—against the wishes of the outgoing US Ambassador in Jakarta—they requested that the US send a semi-permanent military training mission to Indonesia.[12] Their rationale was simple. The Dutch, who had—at the request and invitation of TNI commanders—kept roughly 1,000 soldiers in Indonesia after the war ended to train and educate the developing force, would be going home in 1954, and the TNI Chiefs of Staff asked the United States to take over the mission. Their request of a 200-person team was met eagerly by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The US Joint Chiefs, however, were unsure how many personnel would actually be needed. They agreed with the conclusions of an internal Department of Defense study which argued the potential mission was both feasible and, from a security cooperation perspective, worth doing. This was spelled out in a joint letter with the Department of State to the National Security Council:[13]

> The Department of Defense on 27 August 1953, has stated that it considers the dispatch of a military training mission to Indonesia to be militarily feasible. Furthermore, the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that the dispatch of such a mission would be in consonance with paragraph 17 of NSC 124/2 and would contribute materially to the organization and development of the armed forces of Indonesia and would facilitate the establishment of a more comprehensive military liaison between Indonesia and the United States. The United States would not consider sending a

> mission unless it could count on a favorable political reception and the support of the Indonesian Government, at present a remote possibility. A successful mission could be a decisive factor in aligning Indonesia with the free world.[14]

Important in this context is the qualification, "unless it could count on a favorable political reception and the support of the Indonesian Government, at present a remote possibility."[15] Though in the summer of 1953 US defense and military policymakers in the Pentagon were unwilling to send such a mission to a country which would not (at that time) overtly support its presence, by the end of the decade they had a very different perspective. It would take time, shared experience, and a greater degree of trust to appreciate the impact such cooperation could have on the Indonesian military and be willing to accept the risk that came with it, regardless of the political situation in Jakarta.

Owing to domestic political upheavals and a general movement to the left in Indonesian politics, the mission never took place. It represented an early coming together of military leaders on both sides of the relationship, each of who determined, independent of their civilian governments, the inherent value of cooperation. The US remained keen on the concept behind the mission well into 1954, and kept contingency plans in place to launch in the event that the political climate in Jakarta shifted.[16] The JCS in fact, as an early recognition of the potential divergence between the interests of the Indonesian civilian government and the Indonesian military, proposed sending a smaller survey team to Indonesia to study the question of whether, "such a mission to support the military would be worthwhile."[17]

Domestic politics and Cold War geopolitics on both sides of the Pacific scuttled any further chance of significant military assistance from 1954 until the outbreak of the regional rebellions in 1957. Just as Indonesia was politically drifting to the left, the US—fresh from the Korean War, the collapse of the French in Vietnam, and the era of McCarthyism—was drifting to the right. Despite significant back and forth—and continued willingness from each country's military—political and civilian leaders were unable to come together at any one point to expand on the 1950 agreement.[18] For the Republicans governing in Washington, who linked foreign aid to Franklin Roosevelt's hated New Deal, all aid was to be linked to pro-US military and economic policies. Thus, countries such as Indonesia, which had not agreed to MSA stipulations, were ineligible for further military assistance.[19] This was ironic, given the fact that the Indonesian Army was the only one in the world to have demonstrated its anti-communist bona-

fides on the battlefield, having crushed the communist uprising at Madiun in 1948.

So in 1953, when the US launched a regional military training mission to the region, they pointedly excluded Indonesia.[20] Washington's desire to link military aid to political pliability in Southeast Asia was most outwardly symbolized by the November 1954 formation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). This collective defense organization meant to deter communism which consisted of US allies and, ironically, their former colonial masters in Europe. Indonesia, unsurprisingly, never joined SEATO nor appreciated its intrusion into a region that Sukarno increasingly wanted to influence and lead.[21] For their part, successive Indonesian governments in the mid-1950s, despite needing military assistance, aware of TNI calls for greater partnership with the United States, and a general warming of relations by way of President Sukarno's official visit to the United States in 1956—refused to sign any agreement that infringed upon their independent foreign policy or, as they saw it, sovereignty. Indonesian officers, despite visiting Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and seeing potentially useful parachute and artillery demonstrations with Sukarno, simply could not compel the civilian governments to change their policies.[22]

Nonetheless, as the mid-1950s came to a close, the hope that some sort of expanded military assistance agreement might be reached endured. In late 1956, after productive negotiations with the embassy in Jakarta and, "trust in the US motive," the TNI Joint Chiefs of Staff put together wish lists of arms and equipment which were forwarded to US officials.[23] By that time, however, the wheels of domestic confrontation were already in motion, and any Indonesian willingness to engage in substantive talks was met by a more retrenched US which was not only less willing to consider aid and more outwardly critical of Indonesia's perceived drift towards the left, but one that was increasingly considering inserting itself into the Indonesian political situation.

US-Indonesian Security Cooperation, 1950-1957

As with military assistance efforts, US security cooperation activites—combined exercises and training events; formalized military education and, in this case, tutelage; as well as personnel visits, exchanges, and survey missions—began almost immediately upon Indonesia's independence. In the long run, these efforts proved more important than the military assistance to bind the militaries and defense establishments together. In particular, the officer corps of the two countries were central in building and then maintaining the lines of communication between the two mili-

taries. After the collapse of the regional rebellions in the last years of the decade, the lines of communication were imperative to the success of US efforts to recover its position and influence in Indonesia.

Upon Indonesia's independence in 1949, Sukarno recognized the perilous state of the TNI and the need for external assistance and training. Indeed, in January 1950, days after the formal transfer of sovereignty, he made inquiries about sending a senior TNI officer to the US to research possibilities for such an arrangement.[24] The first military exchanges and training and education programs between the two militaries were initiated with the signing of the 1950 agreement. This permitted and finalized plans for 40 Indonesian Army constabulary officers in the United States to receive training in infantry and military police tactics, supply operations, staff functions, and unit administration, among much else.[25] When their training was finished, these officers returned to Indonesia where they became instructors at Indonesian military schools, which spread American knowledge into the broader force through a "train-the-trainer" model. After training the initial group, the US military was eager to continue the program and indicated as much to their Indonesian counterparts. The US investigated, from a legal perspective, the option of sending active duty US Army officers to Indonesia on individual, private contracts to continue the training.[26]

From 1951, the Indonesian Navy sent informal requests through the US embassy in Jakarta requesting potential US training missions, while the Indonesian Air Force employed 20 American flying instructors at their school in Bandung—teaching new Indonesian pilots flight and air tactic basics.[27] Though the instructors were private flyers and not officially part of the US Air Force, they served to imbue the Indonesian Air Force with aspects of American flying culture. Indonesian air cadets were also learning to fly under private contract in the United States; some 60 had completed training by the end of 1951. The size of the program-relative to the small size of the Indonesian Air Force-was such that the service provided was almost entirely dependent upon American instructors and their Indonesian trainees to maintain any sort of readiness or operational ability.[28] Again, that may seem a matter of little consequence given the inability of the Indonesian Air Force to sustain air operations or even durably project air power throughout the country at the time. Still, to the Indonesians it represented commitment to their military development and, to the Americans, a partnership building investment with a strategically important country. This provided a combined opportunity for the US to continue transferring ideas and influence upon Indonesian officers and cadets.

Building upon these early exchanges, the US Army succeeded in establishing the largest combined training program within Indonesia during that period. It did so not by attempting to subvert Indonesian politics and push upon the country its politicized military training missions or survey teams, but by depoliticizing the issue and bringing Indonesian officers to the United States to train.[29] The technical aspects of the training were best accomplished through extensive education and immersion into the US military system. Interpreting this as "technical-training," despite its purely military character, this perhaps bent the congressionally mandated rules to a breaking point. In doing so, the training was successfully implemented under the MSA's 511b program, which focused on economic and technical assistance, rather than the politically fraught 511a program, which focused purely on military assistance.[30] This carved out a space where the US Army—contrary, perhaps, to national policy—could continue to train and educate Indonesian Army officers, something both militaries were interested in, despite the fact that Indonesia never actually signed or agreed to meet the stringent political requirements of the MSA's 511a program.[31] So it was that the most effective component of the military-to-military relationship in the 1950s took form and grew despite the antipathy of civilian governments on both sides of the Pacific.

The US chose the Indonesian Army, rather than the Indonesian Navy or Air Force, to be the primary vehicle for military training and the medium through which US influence could best be cultivated because, more than anything else, the US was afraid of popular revolutionary movements within Indonesia as having the ability to move the country towards communism. Successfully combating that meant partnering with an organization that had the size, scale, and geographical reach to replicate and respond to the mass appeal of the PKI which was, at that time, growing in popularity and particularly active in the Javanese countryside. Amongst TNI forces, only the army provided all of those things and so was, from the US perspective, the most important and favored of the services.[32]

Following the first group of 40 officers in 1950, and with the full support of the State Department and the National Security Council, the US Army expanded the program to meet Indonesian demand, which opened avenues for relationship building between the respective armies, and extended American ideas and influence as far into the Indonesian military as it could. By 1954, Indonesia was sending 45 officers a year to the US to study, free of charge, at US Army schools, a number that grew to over 130 by 1955, a 325% increase.[33] To facilitate the program, the US Military Air Transport Service provided free travel for Indonesian officers from US

airbases in the Philippines to the United States. By 1956, the program had expanded such that the US was not only flying Indonesian Army officers to the US from the Philippines, but also training them at specially designed courses in the Philippines as well.[34]

A year tour at CGSC, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, was the most coveted of all such opportunities. Long the mid-career school house for aspiring senior leaders in the US Army, by the mid-1950s CGSC was accepting and graduating Indonesian Army officers for the first time. It was under these auspices that (then) Col. Ahmad Yani came to the United States in 1955 as part of the mid-decade wave of the first 40 officers from Indonesia to study at the prestigious college. They were among hundreds of Indonesian Army officers who came under the 511b program to study and train at various US Army schools, which were seen as not only modern but, importantly for a post-colonial military still searching for an identity, also not Dutch.[35] The American belief was that exposure to the United States and training within the US military system alongside US officers would consolidate the anti-communist position of the TNI, something that the US wanted to nurture, especially given the organizational and popular gains the PKI was making across Indonesia in the mid-1950s. This was not only an army goal but an objective of national policy fully supported by the NSC.[36]

The direct impact of the training on the Indonesian Army officer corps was precisely what the United States had hoped for. Most officers did, after completing a US military school, return to Indonesia and serve for at least a year as a military instructor at the equivalent TNI school; thus the train-the-trainer model lived on. Col. Yani worked to just such ends. After returning from CGSC in 1956, he helped to establish the Indonesian Military Academy in 1957 using US texts and manuals. The school was built in the image of the US Military Academy at West Point, New York. Concurrently, Maj. George Benson, his former CGSC colleague and West Point graduate himself, happened to be assigned as an army attaché in the US Army Attaché Office in Jakarta. The United States Army provided the bulk of materials and US trained instructors which were utilized at both the new military academy and other Indonesian Army courses, including the Indonesian Army staff college at Bandung. Benson, himself, had established meaningful relationships with numerous Indonesian officers during his time at CGSC in Fort Leavenworth. He worked assiduously to build those relationships and deepen the institutional and educational connections between the two armies once he was on the ground in Jakarta.[37]

As Yani and other graduates of US courses returned to Indonesia and assumed positions of greater responsibility, their influence grew, based in

no small part upon their performance. Only the best officers were selected to attend training in the US in the first place—and they fully appreciated the US Army model which the Indonesian Army was being built upon. It was, thus, that US influence began to spread over the entire establishment of the Indonesian Army. In 1956, the US Ambassador to Indonesia Hugh Cumming, reported all lines of command in the TNI flowed through officers that had been trained in the United States.[38]

Important to that training was also an ideal, imbued in Indonesian officers by their counterparts in the United States and in many ways equally important to each military. That was the sense—particularly strong in Indonesia, given its relative sovereign youthfulness—that the military was something more than simply the physical manifestation of the country's outward strength. This ideal represented something of a guarantor of the independence that Indonesian officers had fought so hard for and considered themselves so central in achieving. It provided the Indonesian Army with an identity as a guardian of the revolution and, therefore, of the state itself. This concept compelled these officers to become increasingly involved in politics in the 1950s and to respond with force to anything that they perceived as threatening the current order, or the army's predominant position within that order. It was fostered and strengthened in many ways by the United States who was increasingly eager throughout the decade to foster TNI brawn to further its own interests. It would also be decisive in perceiving the fundamental freedoms of the country from the internal communist threat, as was seen in the 1960s.

The Indonesian Army in the 1950s

What, then, was the nature of the army that those officers returned to in Indonesia? By the middle of the decade, the Indonesian Army had many of the same misgivings about the role and importance of democracy in Indonesia which the US was developing, and for the same reason: fear of the PKI and revolutionary communism. The post-independent Indonesian Army that was formed in 1950 grew out of the heterogeneous militias and security forces that fought in the Indonesian National Revolution. Numbering roughly 200,000 men and with 5,000 officers at the start of the decade, this army was populated by veterans from all sides of the independence conflict: officers who had attended formal Dutch military training, guerrillas who had fought against the Japanese, volunteers who heeded Japan's message of independence and were trained to fight the Dutch, and various militias and distinctive regional forces that were scattered across the archipelago.[39] It was a polyglot and variegated force

in 1950, one which faced significant challenges as Indonesia's first independent decade evolved.

The first question the Indonesian force faced was one of scale, and this necessarily became a question of how to balance army personnel, requirements, pay, and anything else between Java and the outer islands. Proponents of a smaller army, among them Army Chief of Staff Nasution, preferred a modern, professionalized, and "rational" force that was well trained and educated along foreign lines. A veteran of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army from the colonial-era, Nasution was something of a conservative. A smaller force meant greater centralization and control from Jakarta, as well as fewer billets in the first place. However, he led a bloated force full of veterans, many eager to benefit themselves and less willing to engage in the sort of soldiering that Nasution believed was needed, both to pacify the country and help develop and secure it.

Foremost, Nasution epitomized the belief among the officer corps that having vanquished the Dutch, the army had a sacred role in protecting the Republic above and beyond its responsibilities as determined by the Indonesian government. To modern eyes, it seems to undermine civilian control of the military. It did. It is important to remember, however, that officers like Nasution did not view themselves as subordinate to the government but rather, to some extent, as co-equals in running the country. Given the wide writ that military commanders enjoyed in many of the outer islands and provinces, this was true.[40]

The alternative view argued that the army, rather than being a small, professional, and educated force, should be more akin to a mass movement that consisted of, and was embodied by, the larger populace. This position, espoused by Sukarno and numerous officers throughout the decade, believed that in order to "protect the revolution" the army had to be "part of the revolution." This position opposed efforts to "rationalize" the army and decrease its size, instead, it was for keeping a large and less-well trained force that spoke for, but lacked the power to challenge the government. This position was, to some extent, adopted by many of the non-Javanese regional commanders. Outside of Java, these commanders recruited co-ethnics, co-religionists, and co-linguists to their units and created, in a sense, a series of very different regional armies around the archipelago. They fought against rotational assignments that took them away from their home regions and resented the efforts of Nasution and others to control their operations, licit and illicit, from Jakarta. The ability to defend the nation against its external threats or project power were simply not priori-

ties for them, which they considered less important than their commercial activities or efforts to provide employment to veterans.[41]

Though this divide existed to some extent until 1965, it was particularly important in the 1950s as the army grew and searched for meaning and purpose amidst political turmoil and economic stagnation as the country lurched, it seemed, from one crisis to the next.[42] Those crises produced, in the views of Nasution and others, a profound distrust of democratic politics and, as they saw it, the corrosive role that political parties played in tearing at the fabric of the country. To make matters worse, the PKI continued to grow and, by the middle of the decade, had become something of an existential threat in the eyes of army leadership. The PKI was the mass organization that represented much of what Sukarno seemed to want and was developing the capability to reach deep into the countryside and influence villagers in pursuit of its political and ideological goals. Given the PKI's performance in the elections of 1955 and their growing popularity at the time, the army had to contend with the realistic possibility the PKI could come to power through democratic means.

That possibility, coupled with the poor performance of the civilian cabinets and their inability to provide stability and funding which the army desired, left it in a considerably influential position. From time to time the army decided how much authority it would allow the civilian government to have over it, or how much it even wanted to work with the civilian government in the first place.[43] Constant rumors of potential military coups were not unjustified, given the botched army attempt to force the resignation of the parliament in 1952 which led to Nasution's first ouster as Army Chief of Staff (he returned in 1955). This served as a preamble to the frustrations that army leaders had with their civilian overseers as the decade progressed.[44] By 1957, just as the United States was doubting the efficacy of electoral politics in Indonesia, so was the Indonesian Army.

American attempts to reach and influence the Indonesian Army were also complicated by the fact that, since the time of Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet Union had been aggressively reaching out to developing countries and their militaries.[45] This coincided with the popular Indonesian backlash against the United States and a new leftist cabinet. By the end of 1954, and in pursuit of the goal of a balanced and independent foreign policy, Indonesia refused to ratify the San Francisco Treaty which ended the American occupation of Japan, announced its opposition to SEATO, sent its first ambassador to the People's Republic of China, and opened formal trade relations with the Soviet Union.[46] In 1956, the Soviets provided $100 million in low interest loans, which Indonesia used to purchase

half-ton trucks and other military vehicles. Transport ships and tankers for the Indonesian Navy were included in the transaction, and by 1957 Russian crews, captains, navigators, engineers, and radio operators were in Indonesia operating and training their counterparts.[47] Though Soviet aid in the 1950s paled in comparison to what it became in the 1960s, the single 1956 agreement still represented, from a purely monetary perspective, the largest foreign investment in the Indonesian military since independence. This came at a time when the United States, in terms of its military assistance program, had only ever passed the single, $5 million grant in 1950.

Nasution and the Indonesian Army accepted these Soviet gifts for practical reasons. For Nasution himself, much of his political capital and currency derived from his ability to bring in foreign military assistance.[48] This was important given Indonesia's lack of a domestic military-industrial base and its unwillingness to invest in the sorts of technologies and capabilities he felt necessary for developing a modern army. The army needed equipment and funding. More than that, despite its growing affinity for the US Army and the western military model, political realities and Sukarno's unassailable position atop Indonesian society meant the Indonesian Army had to be able to accept aid and assistance from countries on both sides of the Cold War divide. Not to do so would threaten the position of the top officers within the chain of command, run counter to Sukarno's policies and, to a large extent, the will of the Indonesian people who supported him. By 1957 the Indonesian Army understood that its interests, both material and ideological, would be better met by the United States which coincidentally was the dynamic schoolhouse of its officer corps and shared its fear and antipathy towards the PKI.

Throughout this period, American conceptions of the political and ideological usefulness of the Indonesian Army, beyond simply serving as a tool to resist external forces of communism, developed alongside the Indonesian Army's concept of its own place, role, and responsibilities within Indonesian society. In Indonesia, US trained officers and those with stronger connections to central army headquarters intuited the importance of the connection more quickly than their brethren outside of Java or those in competing cliques, and certainly more quickly than their navy and air force counterparts, who represented rival institutions as much as joint partners. This was imperfectly understood in Washington at the time which helped produce confusion amongst American policymakers during the critical years of 1957 and 1958, when the army-to-army relationship was beginning to come into its own and would be tested by political realities on both sides of the Pacific.

Notes

1. Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman" (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 964-966.

2. McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 142.

3. "Memorandum, Djakarta, Indonesia, 22 September 1950," Student Research File, Pacific Rim: Indochina, Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, and the Philippines, #31B, Box 2 of 2, B File, 12 of 15, Harry S. Truman Library; Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 30.

4. Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 980-981; Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific*, "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Acting Secretary of State," 1020-1022

5. Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman," 964-966; Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 983-985; Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State," 1000-1005.

6. Department of State, *FRUS, 1950,* vol. 6, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State," 1051-1053; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 84; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)," 371-383.

7. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire,* 50; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 85-86.

8. Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 71. The US did, however, offer Indonesia 100 million dollars in repayable loans through the Export/Import Bank in the period, though this was non-military in nature and took a number of years to negotiate and came to fruition on a project-by-project level throughout the decade. See, Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part 1, *Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 586-587.

9. Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part 1, *Asia and the Pacific,* "The Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk) to Mr. John D. Small, Chairman, Munitions Board, Department of Defense," 607-609; Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part I, *Asia and the Pacific,* "Mr. John D. Small, Chairman, Munitions Board, Department of Defense to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk)," 623.

10. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State," 259-261; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East*

Asia and the Pacific, "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State," 269-270.

11. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum of Conversation, by David McK. Key, Advisor to the United States Delegation at the United Nations General Assembly," 338-340; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 120. Most Indonesians go by a single name. Thus, Sukarto is no relation to either Sukarno or Suharto.

12. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State," 356-360.

13. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)," 363-365; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Nash) to the Under Secretary of State," 370-371.

14. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)," 371-383.

15. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State," 371-383.

16. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum of Discussion at the 161st Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, 9 September 1953," 384-386; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)," 415-416; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 423-424.

17. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of Defense (Wilson) to the Secretary of State," 464-466; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Paper Prepared for the Operations Coordinating Board," 466-469.

18. The sole caveat to this was a 1953 agreement for the United States to provide the remaining $12,500 of military/constabulary equipment from the 1950 agreement that was still in the production pipeline at that time. See, Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)," 371-383, and Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 119, for details.

19. Simpson, *Economists with Guns,* 17.

20. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 116-119.

21. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire,* 66-67. The founding members of SEATO were United States, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan.

22. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Secretary of State," 219-220; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum of a Conversation, Between Foreign Minister Abdulgani and the Ambassador to Indonesia (Cumming), Salt Lake City, Utah, 3 June 1956," 276-277.

23. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 302-303.

24. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears,* 99.

25. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)," 371-383; Simpson, *Economists with Guns,* 32; Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 94.

26. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 94; Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part I, *Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Director, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Lacy)," 703-705; Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part I, *Asia and the Pacific,* "The Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Chief of Police, Republic of Indonesia (Sukanto)," 756-757; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)," 460-461.

27. Department of State, *FRUS, 1951,* vol. 6, part I, *Asia and the Pacific,* "The Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Allison) to Mr. Robert Blum, Special Assistant to the Assistant Administrator for Program, Economic Cooperation Administration (Cleveland)," 771-776; Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 30.

28. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)," 363-365; Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 92-93.

29. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 30-31.

30. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 248.

31. Indonesia did, briefly and after significant pressure from the United States, agree to the 511a program in January 1952. Once word of the agreement, and its potential impact on Indonesia's independent foreign policy, became known, however, public and political opposition was so swift that the government fell. Only later in 1952 did a succeeding government, under new leadership, agree to the MSA's 511b program.

32. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 93. As will be demonstrated later, the Soviet Union, already confident in the mass appeal and wide geographic scope of the PKI, chose to invest its money and resources in the smaller Indonesian Navy and Indonesian Air Force. Though this did not appreciably affect their combat capabilities, it did make them, and their senior leaders

in particular, targets of the Indonesian Army when it began its purge of communists, leftists, and their sympathizers in the mid-1960s.

33. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)," 460-461; Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Paper Prepared for the Operations Coordinating Board," 466-469; Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 73; Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 30.

34. Department of State, *FRUS, 1952-1954,* vol. 12, part 2, *East Asia and the Pacific,* "Paper Prepared for the Operations Coordinating Board," 466-469; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Young) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 222-225.

35. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 39-41; Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 121-122.

36. Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 74-75; Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 30.

37. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 38-40; Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 120-122; Simpson, *Economists with Guns,* 33.

38. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Young) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 222-225; Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 74.

39. Herbert Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-1953: A Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Modern Indonesia Project, 1958), 107-108; Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 53-54, 61.

40. Kenneth J. Conboy and James Morrison, *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999), 3-4; Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet,* 111-112; McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 145-146; Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," 205-206; Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 61.

41. Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 132-133; McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 152; Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 65, 101.

42. Daniel Lev, "Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," *Pacific Affairs* 36 (Winter 1963-1964): 349.

43. McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 146; Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 88; Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 132-133; Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," 222-223.

44. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Southeast Asian Affairs (Mein) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 101-106; Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power,* 65-72.

45. Boden, “Cold War Economics,” 112; Singh, *Bear and Garuda,* 148.

46. Mahajani, *Soviet and American Aid to Indonesia,* 1949-1968, 7.

47. Uri Ra’anan, *The USSR Arms the Third World: Case Studies in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 187-196.

48. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” 314-315.

Chapter 4
Living to Fight Another Day

The regional rebellions of 1957 and 1958 served to clarify the United States' position towards the Indonesian Army and its role in Indonesian national development. That it did so by initially subverting the army and attempting to topple the central government of Sukarno should not cloud our understanding of how the rebellions served as catalysts themselves. These events caused US policymakers to conclude that the army represented the best vehicle to advance US interests in Indonesia. Thus, the Indonesian army needed to be embraced, supported, and funded. Such realization existed within US policymaking circles in efforts to advance US interests. This nurtured a renewed military to military relationship affording an overt policy-making emphasis on the primacy of the Indonesian Army and Chief of Staff Abdul Haris Nasution.

In the spring and summer of 1957, none of this was clear to policymakers in Washington. At that time, officials who were outside of Jakarta did not grasp the closeness of the bilateral military relationship, harbored doubts about the ability of the army to stand up to communism, and were driven by real fears of Sukarno and the PKI. This situation created conditions for the National Security Council, spurred on by the CIA and with the support of the State Department, to launch its ill-fated effort to support civil war in Indonesia and topple Sukarno. Ironically, the Indonesian Army, which was ideologically and doctrinally supportive of the United States, became the target of these rebellions. Further, US assistance to the rebels and the conflict itself actually produced an even greater irony: war against the Indonesian Army enabled it to accomplish things it had long sought, especially its relationship with the United States and its place as the ultimate arbiter of domestic life within Indonesia.

The US Decision to Support the Rebels

The shift away from engagement and towards confrontation in Indonesia was sudden in Washington, but the foundations for such a policy had been in place since the Eisenhower Administration in 1953. Having seen the west "lose" all of China in 1949, the Eisenhower Administration sought to mitigate the spread of communism in Indonesia by exploring ways to split-up the country while preserving anti-communist forces and populations outside of Java—which it rightly saw as the wellspring of the PKI—in Indonesia's outer islands. It considered ways that geographic blocs, particularly the islands of Sumatra and Sulawesi, could serve as ful-

crums which prevented any source of Javanese communism from taking over the entire country. In the era of the domino theory and the French defeat in Indochina, the "loss" of Indonesia to communism had to be avoided.[1] In furtherance of this idea, the National Security Council, in NSC 5518, its 1955 policy statement on Indonesia, agreed, "to employ all feasible covert and all feasible overt means, including the use of armed force if necessary and appropriate, to prevent Indonesia or vital parts thereof from falling to Communism."[2] US policy, then, was not to break-up Indonesia, but prepare to intervene and cause the breakup if doing so meant that vital parts of the country—i.e., Sumatra and Sulawesi—remained free of communism.

The rebellions in the winter and spring of 1956-1957 provided the first opportunity for the US to substantively engage on the matter. The PRRI came together throughout 1957 to challenge Indonesian control over Sumatra—just as the Permesta rebel movement in Sulawesi was advancing its cause. Though initially distinct from one another, the rebellions came together ideologically—though not in any meaningful material way— throughout 1957 and 1958. Each was led by disgruntled local army officers unhappy with national politics, the centralization of power by the national government, and the predominant role of Javanese people in government. Additionally, each argued that national politics frustrated efforts to economically develop the outer islands, thus producing stagnation. These regional commanders led units composed of co-ethnics, co-religionists, and co-linguists, and, additionally, had their own financial interests at heart—given that those in the outer islands took active interests in commerce and smuggling.[3]

The PRRI and Permesta rebels, therefore, sought to redress local grievances and institutional wrongs. They were not fighting for anti-communism, nor did they espouse revolutionary or counterrevolutionary ideologies. This was understood by Sukarno, to whom the rebels still pledged loyalty.[4] As an example, despite an open rebellion and evicting the legitimate civil administrations in the areas under their control, for the duration of the conflicts many of the dissidents' family members continued to live and study openly in Java. The Indonesian national airline even continued to make its routine flights to and from the "occupied" cities on Sumatra and Sulawesi.[5] Within Indonesia, this was an effort to negotiate change within the system.

To US policymakers in Washington, these rebellions were seen through the lens of the Cold War and interpreted as challenging the sys-

tem. US policymakers had to face several critical realities which shaped the situation on the ground:

- The strong performance of the PKI in the 1955 general elections.
- Sukarno's successful visit to Moscow.
- Sukarno's movement away from the west and vigorous leadership of the non-aligned movement.
- US inability to accept Indonesia as existing anywhere outside the communist-noncommunist dichotomy.

Indonesia, as a state, was embracing communism and threatening US interests in Asia. This was compounded by the collapse of the Indonesian cabinet in March 1957 and Sukarno's open desire for a gotong-rojong (mutual-help) cabinet and unity government comprised of the four major political parties, which would have brought the PKI into government for the first time.[6] Additionally, Sukarno's declaration of martial law throughout the country was interpreted as a bold power grab and also as a sign of the inherent chaos engulfing Indonesia that could only lead to instability and communist gain.[7]

The rebels, therefore, became convenient props; vehicles which presented themselves at just the right time the US was seeking instruments to gain influence in Indonesia and safeguard its interests. Allen Dulles, then Director of the CIA, was the chief proponent—along with his brother John Foster, the Secretary of State—of the early plan to support the rebels and topple Sukarno. In a February 1957 meeting of the National Security Council, they insisted—incorrectly and in contravention to military reports—that the Indonesian Army in Java had been infiltrated by communists, whereas the rebel groups, particularly in Sumatra, were anti-communist.[8] As late as the summer of 1957, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, argued that the best way to counter a potentially communist Java was through the predominately non-communist military itself, not through rebels far from seats of power.[9] In March 1957, for the first time subsequent meetings saw Dulles enjoin his NSC colleagues to conceptualize what the breakup of Indonesia might look like and how the US might go about using the overt and covert means of NSC 5518 to prevent vital parts of the country from falling to communism.[10] Asia experts in the State Department argued that the breakup of Indonesia would not serve US interests, could only be made viable with financial investments of a size that the US would never make, and would further destabilize the region and expand the ability of communists to operate. By August 1957, however, the NSC considered Sukarno

as having crossed the point of no return.[11] Indeed, as early as 1956, CIA operations officers had been arguing that it was time to hold Sukarno's "feet to the fire."[12]

On 1 August 1957, then, the NSC formed the Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia, to study the issue and make policy recommendations on how to proceed. Headed by Hugh Cumming, who had been ambassador to Indonesia until March 1957, the committee issued its first report in September—one that echoed the fears of Allen Dulles and brought the US closer to supporting civil war.[13] Cumming's committee argued Indonesia was on the verge of going communist, the army was not as politically reliable as suspected, and a dramatic policy change was needed. This policy shift required providing huge amounts of covert support to the rebel groups and strengthening their determination, will, and cohesion. Though this was couched in terms of keeping US options open, the committee also recommended continued engagement, militarily and otherwise, with the government of Indonesia. While the US did not confer the rebels belligerency status, in reality the rebellions provided an opening for the interventionists who sought to change the status quo in Indonesia.[14] This two-pronged approach became official US government policy in September 1957.

The CIA and NSC attached themselves to the rebel groups because they were the perfect counterbalance to Sukarno. Though simply aggrieved local actors, they became willing since they sought US support but also unwilling since they never intended for the rebellions to take the form of pawns of the United States, which incorrectly perceived them as a vanguard for anticommunism. As local agents that could potentially advance US interests in particular areas, they could achieve a greater effect. Ironically, NSC decision-makers seemed to dismiss reports from the military that the Indonesian Army, modeled after and largely trained by the US, might itself have been a much better vehicle to advance US interests.

The NSC ignored or misinterpreted several things in reaching the conclusions that it did. First, it believed communist sympathizers within the Indonesian Army were purging pro-western officers from the ranks. This lacked context. Attachés reported from late 1956 that many Indonesian Army officers were being relieved of their duties. However, despite the fact that several US trained officers were among the large number of those relieved, there was no distinct connection between western sympathies and reassignment or relief. Rather, the factional nature of the Indonesian Army and the divisions between Jakarta and the outer islands had caused the force to split, which created, from time to time, the need to reassign

and relieve officers. This factionalism was not ideological, but focused on the promotions, personal grievances, and different opinions on the role and nature of the army itself within the officer corps. The CIA's misinterpretation of this, along with the misperception that the rebel leaders were anti-communist, led the NSC to conclude that a communist/anti-communist dichotomy lay at the heart of the rebellions, which was incorrect.[15]

Second, US policymakers failed to see the Indonesian Army thwarting Sukarno's attempt to create his gotong-royong cabinet in the spring of 1957. The army's unwillingness to countenance a PKI place in government single-handedly forced Sukarno to abandon his plans and bring in a nominally non-partisan government.[16] This understanding should have shown Washington the dominant place that anti-communists held in the army's upper echelons. Anti-communist bonafides were further burnished in the fall of 1957 when the embassy reported that Nasution had begun to purge PKI sympathizers from the army. It concluded that, "The army, despite its factionalism and internal conflicts, will probably continue to be a better potential force for providing national unification and a stable non-Communist government." In fact, by the time the rebellions were effectively ending in the spring of 1958, this view had come full circle and been accepted by the Dulles brothers and the NSC. US policymakers should not fear that Sukarno would replace Nasution with a more pliable officer, because two realities should have tempered their fears. The first was US trained and pro-US officers already dominated the top ranks of the army; thus replacing Nasution would have simply elevated another western-oriented officer into command.[17]

The second reality was the final critical factor US policymakers failed to grasp: by the spring of 1957, the army was effectively running the country. Sukarno lacked both the ability and the desire to replace Nasution. The growth of the army's capability came, in fact, at the outset of the rebellions themselves. In response to the rebellions in March 1957, Sukarno declared martial law. Counter to his intentions, this strengthened Nasution and the army, as they were the only institution capable of imposing direct rule across the archipelago. Martial law was the army's political charter, and it used its immense powers to intervene in village life and greatly expand its commercial and economic activities, though now under the auspices of, rather than in contravention to, the state itself.[18] This increased Nasution's ability to intervene in domestic life as he saw fit and opened the door for his future efforts to undermine the PKI, as martial law easily allowed the army to install officers in the countryside to monitor the peace, even down to village level.[19]

In December 1957, Sukarno further incensed Washington when he nationalized Dutch businesses and assets within Indonesia. This was in response to what he saw as Dutch intransigence and obstinacy over the sovereignty of Netherlands New Guinea. If the declaration of martial law was the army's political charter, then the expropriation of Dutch businesses was its economic charter. The army, "with glee," seized Dutch assets across the country and began to operate them itself.[20] This action, however, was imperfectly understood in Washington. US policymakers believed that Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia (SOBSI), a leftist union affiliated with the PKI, was responsible for the nationalizations.[21] While SOBSI and other labor unions were a part of the nationalization process, only the army had the scale, reach, and capability to take control over and run such industries. Over time, the army even took control of the SOBSI-nationalized industries and succeeded in placing officers on the boards of numerous others, further entrenching its place in the economy.[22] The process, then, greatly expanded the army's operational reach and access to capital. Washington's inability to understand that process, led it to believe the opposite: that nationalization was leading not to the growth of the army, but of the PKI. That, compounded with its misinterpretation of army politics helps explain why the United States placed its faith in inchoate rebel groups in 1957 rather than in the largest and most competent national organization in Indonesia at the time, the one that it had spent years cultivating and developing, and the only one with the ability to actually influence Indonesia towards US ends: the army itself.

The Department of Defense and the PRRI/Permesta Rebellions

The story of US support to the rebels, chiefly through the CIA, but with support from other actors within the national security establishment, including the Department of Defense, has been told elsewhere. The current study attempts to explain not the day-to-day unfolding of the rebellions, but the way that US defense policymakers and those charged with implementing defense policy on the ground interpreted and took part in events during the crisis. It also outlines the ways the military to military relationship evolved from mid-1957 to mid-1958.

Department of Defense and military involvement in the effort to support the rebels began early in 1957. Retired Marine Corps General Graves Erskine, then head of the Department of Defense's Special Operations Office, was briefed on CIA plans to assist the PRRI/Permesta rebels. Hugh Cumming's Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia articulated the policy that enabled covert support to the rebels to proceed. This committee included Department of Defense officials and representatives

from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.[23] The defense establishment was, if nothing else, aware and not opposed to the early plans. When the committee produced its report in early September 1957, however, the NSC adopted its policy recommendations with the following caveat, at the behest of defense officials: “Because of the adverse repercussions within the UN and SEATO and in Asia generally, the employment of US armed forces is neither feasible nor appropriate while the Indonesian situation remains one of political fluidity.”[24] While this did not materially affect US policy in any way at the time, it should be seen as the Pentagon’s first attempt to circumscribe and place boundaries upon the policy itself, and reflected an early reticence, in comparison to the CIA, State Department, and the Ad Hoc Committee, of the value of expansive operations against the Indonesian state. As will be seen, many more attempts were made in the months that followed.

Aware that officials in Washington—including Cumming, his predecessor in Jakarta—were moving towards implementing a policy of confrontation, the US Ambassador to Indonesia, John Allison, in consultation and with the backing of his team of service attachés, issued the clearest counter-proposal that a field mission, charged with implementing but not developing policy, could. In their cable from 11 October 1957, Allison and his attachés argued strenuously, and with evidence, that moderate, pro-western officers still dominated the senior ranks of the Indonesian Army and Navy and that the best way to enforce anti-communism was to provide them, the US’s natural and already longstanding partners, with military assistance and training opportunities. They outlined the work they had done with their Indonesian military counterparts in ensuring Indonesia’s legal ability to purchase equipment.

They also discussed the robust efforts by military leaders, in spite of significant political opposition, to continue efforts to purchase American materiel, the prominent role played by US trained officers in working to establish a more modern Indonesian Army, and their likely role as the primary trainers and instructors of future generations of soldiers and officers. They highlighted the creation of the new Indonesian military academy on the West Point model. This included the purchase of US Army and West Point materials for use in the curriculum, the recent purging of all officers and commanders with pro-PKI sympathies—by Nasution himself—and, finally, the need to provide at the very least, token amounts of arms and equipment. This demonstrated the value of the relationship and the truth of America’s stated commitment to Indonesia’s defense and security to both the Indonesian army and its critics in Indonesian political life.

They also reiterated their view that the army, not the rebels or any other political party or movement, represented the surest bet to advance US interests and containing communism. "The army, despite its factionalism and internal conflicts, will probably continue to be a better potential force for providing national unification and a stable non-Communist government."[25] They interpreted—correctly, in hindsight—the important optics that could be gained or lost in any such transaction, and the very important effect such a seemingly small transaction could have on the larger relationship. Their recommendations represented the first military argument against backing the rebels and deepening the national confrontation with Indonesia.

In early November 1957, representatives of the State Department, CIA, Department of Defense, Army, Navy, and Air Force met to discuss the embassy's recommendations and agreed with nearly everything Allison and his service attachés put forward. They recommended to NSC principals the United States agree to provide military assistance to the army and move forward with the planning of, at least, a token shipment of arms and materiel. While acknowledging the risks inherent in such a strategy at a time that the US was already materially aiding the PRRI/Permesta rebels, the group argued that, after years of temporizing over further military assistance, the time had come for the United States to firmly support a pro-western, US trained armed forces eager to deepen their reliance on the United States.

Failure to do so, they argued, would "only serve to confirm the fear that many of them now have that we are not prepared to assist them." The American representatives stated clearly that, "There is general agreement that the Indonesian armed forces, particularly the army, represent the most important single force for providing a stable, non-communist government in Indonesia. The Service Attachés and the Embassy regard the army officer corps as predominantly Western-oriented and anti-communist." As a testament to this, the hundreds of Indonesian officers who had trained in the United States in preceding years had become an investment in the US, affording itself an opportunity to exert influence.[26]

Secretary of State Dulles, however, as one of the creators of the confrontational strategy, continued with his plan, believing that, "the central government would use our arms to destroy the only element in the country in which we can put any hope."[27] The service attachés boldly responded with further cables of their own and set off a furious campaign to counter the confrontational approach. Initiated in Jakarta at the service desks but eventually coming as well from regional commanders in Hawaii and the

policymakers, up to and including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the Pentagon, they sought to bring defense and military perspectives to the situation and move the NSC away from the Dulles' approach of subversion, confrontation, and war.

In their cable from 28 November 1957, Allison and his attachés implored policymakers to approve the token military assistance package and make good faith efforts, at the national level, to maintain the strong ties that they had developed at the army-army level. Their argument, that the biggest winner of any impasse or US recalcitrance would be the PKI, was bolstered by their assessment that the dominant clique of pro-US officers would be in danger of losing their preeminence within their system if such agreements were not soon reached. Sukarno himself noted to Nasution that, "Americans are just playing with us, we will get nothing." This demonstrated not just his growing antipathy towards US policies, but Nasution's faith in his American counterparts and his willingness to risk political capital on them. The embassy's cable was in response to a telegram from Washington on 25 November, which stated that a formal decision on the token military aid had been postponed but, given Sukarno's fiery anti-American rhetoric, approval was unlikely. Appreciation that Nasution represented not Sukarno so much as an alternative center of power needing cultivation seemed, for whatever reason and despite much military reporting on the subject, either to not penetrate the policymaking circles of Washington or to have been assessed as a less viable means of achieving American objectives.[28]

When, on 7 December, the NSC decided against proffering the military assistance, its rationale was that the US had reached the point of no return with Sukarno, and would only consider such assistance if or when he, "be relegated to a less dominant position in [the] political scene." Absent was any understanding of the possibility the military assistance package could help bring about such a desired reality.[29] As December wore on, movements within the Department of Defense reflected the national commitment to a policy of confrontation. Despite their reservations with the policy, regional commanders at US Pacific Command, under direction from the NSC, began to prepare and position forces in the area of Indonesia in the event there was a breakdown in order. Though such forces were prepared to respond to contingencies, they lacked any sort of durable offensive capability that could have been construed as decisive. An invasion or US military overthrow of Sukarno was never considered nor resourced. They were, rather, in the area as an insurance policy in the event of turmoil

and, ironically, helped create turmoil through their assistance to CIA operations with the rebels in Sumatra and Sulawesi.[30]

It was not until 20 December 1957, that the attachés' messages began to influence civilian policymakers in Washington. On that day, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Mansfield Sprague told Under Secretary of State Christian Herter the Pentagon was interested in providing military assistance to Nasution and the Indonesian Army and would begin planning for doing so, in the event the policy abandoning such assistance were to change. Herter agreed to the idea.[31] It was, then, military pressure that brought, if not a change in policy, then at least an acknowledgment at the higher levels of the defense establishment that a future reappraisal would very likely be necessary. New energy from Jakarta came immediately on the heels on that conversation. On 21 December, the Army Attaché, Colonel Robert Collier, cabled that he and his deputy, the aforementioned George Benson, had met with Colonel Yani, then Deputy Chief of Staff, to discuss military assistance. Yani imparted on them the army's continued earnest and immediate desire for US equipment and assistance. Efforts to secure a deal elsewhere would be prepared only in the event the US remained unwilling to cooperate.[32] The attachés, again, strongly recommended moving forward. Similar messages followed on 23 December.[33]

On 26 December, evidence of defense and military officials' changing position on the Indonesia situation and their support for military assistance was communicated to Secretary of State Dulles by John Irwin, then Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Irwin told Dulles the military had concluded the Indonesian Army had not, contrary to the opinion of the CIA, been compromised or infiltrated by communists. That, as an anti-communist organization, it would be decisive to any future struggle over or within the country. Given those assertions, the Joint Chiefs of Staff drafted a $7 million military assistance program and recommended its immediate approval under emergency measures, even arguing that if the aid needed to be given in grant, rather than loan, form, the US should still move ahead.

Given that this recommendation was posited barely a month after Dulles had denied almost identical requests for military assistance, and on the same day that Dulles reiterated the confrontational policy in a joint State Department-CIA meeting on Indonesia, it appears the reports out of Jakarta seriously influenced thinking within the Pentagon.[34] At the same time in Hawaii, Admiral Felix Stump, Commander-in-Chief of US Pacific Command, aware of the importance of the Indonesian Army and its an-

ti-communist bonafides, sought other ways to seek accommodation with Nasution, chiefly by extolling the US to exert pressure on the Netherlands to compromise over issues concerning Netherlands New Guinea and to strike up a dialogue on the issue with Indonesia.

Taken together, these actions reflect a military and defense bureaucracy that had woken up both to the importance of the Indonesian Army and the need to preserve and strengthen bilateral military relations and lines of communication in a time of crisis.[35] Though that crisis was, to some extent, of American making, it was not of US military making. The CIA and the Dulles brothers, not the military, had pushed the NSC towards supporting the rebels and fomenting war. The Pentagon, then, at the recommendation of their personnel on the ground, was not subverting US policy, but rather trying to change it for the better, or at least working to ensure that alternative policy options remained viable and Nasution and the Indonesian Army not be cast aside.

This was further codified on 10 February 1958, when the JCS made their thoughts and recommendations on the matter official to the NSC itself. In their letter, the JCS argued against the fantasy that the US could build a rump state out of Indonesia's outer islands, assessing both Java's dominance of political, economic, military, and social life in the archipelago, as well as its historical role as the center as precluding the emergence of any viable outer island state. Explicit in such an understanding was an important realization: Java was, in a sense, Indonesia. To influence Indonesia, one had to influence Java or those within it. They continued by arguing, adroitly, that nationalism, not communism, was the dominant factor driving Indonesian politics, and any contest for power in Indonesia could only be won by a group with an ironclad sense of, and duty towards, that nationalist spirit. The conclusion, that of the trusted national institutions amenable to working with the United States only the army had the breadth, strength, and nationalist credentials, was natural and, in retrospect, obvious. To wit, if the NSC was not going to change US policy as the JCS recommended it should, then at the very least a token package of military aid and assistance needed to be proffered to the Indonesian Army to maintain the relationships that the US had built and provide succor to its advocates within the army itself. "An immediate token military aid program, with particular reference to the Indonesian Army, is necessary to forestall direct Communist Bloc influence in Indonesian military affairs."[36]

As February turned into March 1958 and the conflict dragged on, defense reporting on the conflict became more sanguine. After Dulles' refusal to reconsider the policy, and as it had told its US partners it would, the

Indonesian military was forced to seek support elsewhere. Soviet equipment, in particular aircraft, was purchased and trained crews were expected to arrive that spring, further lengthening the odds that the rebels would achieve any sort of tactical gains on the battlefield.[37] The Soviets, then, seemed to be at the cusp of enabling Indonesian victory. It was this fear, not of rebel collapse but of the contribution to success that communism would be perceived as having made, that drove the JCS to draft a notable memorandum to Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy on 8 April. This memo seemed to call, and has been argued as calling for, overt military support to the rebels, as "Defeat of the dissidents would almost certainly lead to Communist domination of Indonesia."

In fact, a close reading of defense policies and memoranda in the run-up to this demonstrates the very opposite: the Joint Chiefs were arguing for, "a relaxation of restrictions on United States policy toward Indonesia and accelerated efforts to prevent the fall of this nation to Communism," but not to militarily assist the rebels so much as to ensure the, "suppression of the pro-Communist elements of the Sukarno government." The wording of the memorandum, while ambiguous, clearly opens the door to a flexible US policy. "Overt measures as required," in this case, did not necessarily mean sending soldiers and marines onto the beaches of Sumatra and Sulawesi, something the JCS never seriously considered, so much as the public proffering of military aid to the Indonesian Army the JCS had been advocating for months.[38]

By April 1958, the JCS had fully come to realize several things. First, military victory for the rebels was impossible without overt US military support. Second, overt US support would not create any sort of viable and durable state that could support US interests out of Indonesia's disparate, divided, and dispersed outer islands, but would instead sow the seeds for regional chaos and the advancement of Soviet goals. They made clear in their memorandum from 10 February: Java was Indonesia and no viable solution for the breakup of the country existed. Third and last, only in backing the large, pro-American, Java-based Indonesian Army could the United States hope to decisively influence the situation or achieve any of its objectives. These were the conclusions that (the since relieved, owing to his disagreement over the direction of US policy) Ambassador Allison and his team of military attachés had reached and relayed to Washington in the summer and fall of 1957.

The shift in defense policy from the latter half of April 1958 from confrontation to a policy of engagement was fictional; the JCS had supported engaging with Nasution and the army all along.[39] This is supported by

preceding communiques and also by subsequent events. On 12 April, attaché cables attested to the detrimental ways US policy was affecting their most trusted asset—the US-trained Indonesian officer corps. Yani reported that US, "assistance to rebels has placed pro-American officers in [the] Indonesian Army in [an] untenable position and unless something is done to support them their influence in [the] picture will seriously deteriorate." Anti-communist commanders and units, in action and taking casualties against rebels armed by the United States, were becoming anti-American and discovering newfound sympathy for socialism. The pressure building on these officers was exhibited in Indonesian cabinet meetings where, in the presence of Sukarno, the results of US efforts to build a reliable officer corps were exposed:

> Last week after Cabinet meeting at which Colonel Sukendro briefed the Cabinet on current situation Minister Hanafi asked Sukendro in the presence of Sukarno, "What are these good friends of yours, the Americans, in which you have put so much faith, doing to you? Dropping weapons they are helping to kill our brothers. Don't you think you have trusted them too much?"
>
> Sukarno said, "What the Americans are doing is not Sukendro's fault." Sukendro said, "The Americans who brought the weapons to Sumatra are not my friends. My friends are the official Americans and they have had nothing to do with this." Hanafi said, "Prove it," and walked away.[40]

Assistant Army Attaché George Benson, in what can only be described as auspicious timing, had just provided such proof. In advance of the Indonesian Army's 17 April assault upon Padang, a large coastal city in West Sumatra and one of the centers of rebel activity, Colonel Yani—fresh from Fort Leavenworth, imbued with American tactics, and selected to command the assault—asked Benson, who was unaware of the CIA's rebel support, to assist him in planning the operation. Benson provided maps and counsel to Yani over several evenings just prior to Yani launching the offensive. "The irony in all this was bemusing. Here was an openly pro-American officer in an anti-communist army ready to carry out a major offensive—with the help of a US Army major—against a rebel force supported by a different branch of the American government."[41] On 17 April, Padang fell and the retreat of the rebels in Sumatra began in full force. Yani was not the only US-trained officer to distinguish himself on the battlefield. As Andi Jusuf, a pro-American officer, later told Benson, "in Army Headquarters, they refer to the operational commanders as

"the sons of Eisenhower," Yani, Rukmito, Huhnholz, and myself, all US trained."[42]

As the pro-American Indonesian officer corps attempted to hold its own, key US officers, above and beyond the attachés, began to move forcefully to evince a change in policy. On 15 April, further attaché cables reiterated a plan for aiding pro-US officers and providing military assistance to the army, further expounded on their understanding of the conflict as anything but an anti-communist and communist showdown for the future of the country, and reiterated the central role that the army would play in determining Indonesia's path forward. These were concrete recommendations—from inviting Nasution to the United States to increasing Indonesian attendance at the Command and General Staff College—things that they believed could help the situation.[43] This spurred action at higher levels. On 18 April, General Maxwell Taylor, Chief of Staff of the Army, told Secretary of Defense McElroy the JCS felt that the US should ally with Nasution rather than sending US troops to support the rebels, whose "defeat and ultimate liquidation" was close at hand. Taylor had long believed that Benson's reporting of the situation in Indonesia was more accurate than the CIA's. So fom then on he worked to ensure that Indonesian officers could continue to train at Fort Leavenworth and elsewhere in the United States, and further that more slots be apportioned for doing so.[44] Also on 18 April, Admiral Arleigh Burke, the Chief of Naval Operations, reached out to Under Secretary of State Christian Herter with a confidential message from Nasution, sent by way of their mutual friend Colonel Jack Berlin, representative of the Standard Vacuum Oil Company in Indonesia. At great risk, Nasution had Berlin pass on to Burke specific requests for military assistance. Included, importantly, was that any such offer would be most valuable if it arrived before the anticipated Soviet equipment, since it would blunt the positive effects and perception the Soviets were sure to enjoy once their equipment arrived.[45]

In the face of both continued recommendations from defense and military officials and also the reality of the battlefield on which the US trained Indonesian Army routed rebel garrison after rebel garrison, policymakers in Washington were becoming disillusioned with the rebel cause and began to slowly understand that perhaps they had been backing the wrong side in the conflict.[46] This point was hammered home when it became clear that the officers who had led the operations against the rebels, the aforementioned "sons of Eisenhower," were all US trained.[47] In early May, at the same time that Admiral Stump in Hawaii was reporting back to Washington about the need to work with Nasution and foster anti-commu-

nist sentiment in Java, Under Secretary Herter simultaneously authorized Stump to invite the Indonesian military to attend SEATO naval exercises in the area as well as weapons testing and demonstrations in Hawaii.[48] Secretary Dulles himself, the chief confrontationist in Washington, at the 8 May NSC meeting noted about the anti-communist nature of Nasution and the Indonesian Army and that he hoped that conversation between the two militaries might "amount to something."[49]

On 9 May, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, aware of the slow changes that were taking place in policy (due in small part to their own urging), again wrote to Secretary of Defense McElroy imploring him to press the NSC to grant the military aid program as quickly as possible.[50] Just one day later the Chief of Naval Intelligence, Admiral Laurence Frost, further bolstered the case for military engagement when, during a visit to Indonesia, he concluded that the attachés' reporting had been accurate and stressed to his superiors the need to support Nasution, who he assessed as solidly anti-communist. Taking his cue from his intelligence chief, Admiral Burke as Chief of Naval Operations wrote to Dulles on 13 May, urging him to demonstrate support for Nasution, whom he saw as the linchpin of the country and the one person indispensable to US interests.[51]

The movement toward a new policy gained irreversible momentum on 18 May when a CIA pilot, Allen Pope, was shot down and captured over eastern Indonesia. With documentation that confirmed the United States' role in aiding the rebels, his capture upended the US calculus for good and put to lie token Eisenhower Administration efforts to cast those aiding the rebels as mere soldiers of fortune. Two days later, on 20 May, Dulles ended the policy of confrontation at his normally scheduled press conference when he stated that the US considered the rebellions to be an internal matter to Indonesia.[52] After more than five months of continuous warnings and recommendations to change course and instead engage with the Indonesian Army, it was the shortcomings and dangers of the confrontational policy that helped military and defense communities realize their true goal of engagement with Indonesia.

This series of events is important within the broader scope of US-Indonesian relations not because it shows the prescience of the US military or the wisdom of the service attachés. It is important because it demonstrates the overarching US defense policies towards Indonesia in the 1950s—engagement over restraint, collaboration over confrontation, influence through training and shared experience—were embraced and implemented at all levels of the establishment from Jakarta to Hawaii to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to the Pentagon. Those policies succeeded in

overcoming the failures of broader US foreign policy and created conditions for the US to substantively advance its national interests alongside a credible partner—the Indonesian Army.

The foundations for that transformative shift, however, were not lain in 1957 or 1958 around the Joint Chiefs of Staff conference room. These foundations were put down earlier in the decade, by events within both countries. In the US, the welcoming and embracing of Indonesian officers to American military schools, the development of enduring personal relationships, and the continuous transparency and professionalism exhibited by American officers built an enduring trust evident in Jakarta. In Indonesia, the army's rise to a position of prominence in society and government and the ascension of officers trained in the American system to run that army solidified the ability of the Nasution and others to both shield their institution from domestic partisan politics and exhibited to the United States their willingness to engage. Furthermore, their success in the field validated the earlier US investment and demonstrated how valuable a tool they might be to US policy makers.

In the end, success was manifested and made clear by acts great and small. In the heat of the crisis in the spring of 1958, Nasution and Yani understood that Benson and his colleagues at the US Embassy were unaware of their own government's role in aiding the rebels. The faith they had in the US was built on actions they saw their partners exhibit during the crisis. The lines of communication and trust did not break. That certainty allowed Yani to trust Benson when asking for his support, and exemplified the durability of the military to military channel throughout the crisis.[53] It allowed Colonel Sukendro to stand up to his own cabinet ministers and defend his American friends in front of Sukarno himself.[54]

Nasution's entreaty to Burke, at great personal risk, by way of Standard Vacuum Oil Company's man in Indonesia was a demonstration of faith and trust in the American military and officer corps. He signaled he had not yet given up hope in the United States and it should not yet give up hope in him.[55] US faith was demonstrated by the—aforementioned and well-documented—continuous support that the service attachés, regional commanders, and military and civilian leaders in the Pentagon gave to Nasution and the Indonesian Army, in the face of sustained doubt and disparagement from their superiors and policymakers in the CIA, State Department, and NSC. There was no great change in defense policy or recommendations in April 1958 because they had made their belief and trust in Nasution evident before the crisis even began.

The defense policy recommendations forwarded from Benson and his colleagues up the chain of command, and later endorsed and advocated for by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others in Washington, eventually ensured the proper policies were implemented. If nothing else, they represented a sort of early dissent channel in which respectful non-concurrence with policy could be put forward and elaborated.[56] Over time, and as they developed their own structure, such recommendations became a viable, and, to many, an increasingly preferable, alternative to the confrontational stance of Secretary Dulles and the CIA. If not formally put into writing until the fall of 1957 by the service attachés at the direction of Ambassador Allison or put into practice until Secretary Dulles' decision to move forward with military assistance after the collapse of the rebel movements in late April and early May of 1958, their roots lay deeper, and earlier, in the relationship.[57] Founded upon the trust defense and military officials placed in their former Indonesian partners and colleagues who had trained the United States in the pre-crisis years, the policies of engagement and support to Nasution and the Indonesian Army survived the crises of 1957 and 1958 and emerged ready to lead US policies to the end of the decade. And not only because they survived, but because the represented the surest path forward for the achievement of national objectives. These defense policies came to dominate US diplomatic efforts in Indonesia and, uniquely, took on a primacy not often favored in the practice of US foreign relations at that time.

Another Day: US-Indonesian Military Relations, 1958-1959

In the summer of 1958, after Dulles' belated recognition that the military assistance program should proceed and the US should seek partnership with the Indonesian Army, Nasution became the US's primary interlocutor in Indonesia. This reflected Washington's continued reticence towards the populist Sukarno, Nasution's ability to positively affect Indonesian policy and decision-making, and American recognition that he was the chosen official to advance mutual interests. More than anything else, however, it reflected the tremendous rise in both stature and importance that the Indonesian Army had achieved. Nasution and the army became the primary interlocutors for the US because the situation demanded it.

As has been discussed, Sukarno's declaration of martial law in March 1957 and the nationalization and expropriation of Dutch assets in Indonesia in December 1957 increased the power and influence of the Indonesian Army tremendously. Martial law and its "political charter," enabled the army to insert itself into village life throughout the archipelago and the wherewithal to meddle in politics at the local level. This upended the

PKI's grip on the peasantry and weakened them institutionally. Nationalization of Dutch assets, the army's "economic charter," provided control over business and commercial ventures that, in order to maintain employment and economic stability, it continued to operate and profit from. Only the Indonesian Army was large enough and strong enough to do these things at the national level. Finally, Nasution and the army's exemplary performance against the rebels in the regional crises of 1957 and 1958—chiefly their ability to project power, demonstrate effective combined arms operations, and secure decisive victories—greatly enhanced the prestige, legitimacy, and national credentials of the institution and its pro-American leaders.

In short, by the summer of 1958 the Indonesian Army wielded as much power within Indonesia as Sukarno and could no longer be hobbled by the partisanship or attacks from the left that had weakened it in the middle of the decade. This power was demonstrated early in the summer of 1958 when the army successfully pressured Sukarno to further postpone the long-delayed elections of 1959. Nasution would not countenance the gains that the PKI was forecast to make and so had them pushed back.[58] Guided Democracy, the brainchild of Sukarno and the means to bring stability to the fractious country, served the interests of the army more than any group, as summarized by historian Daniel Lev:

> [Army] officers were contemptuous of the old political system and most of its civilian leaders. They were angry at the confusion of political parties, the corruption, the ideological strife, the political instability, all of which they believed, in simplistic fashion, was to blame for the lack of progress in the country and for the divisions within the army and the nation. Nasution and many others sought a highly disciplined social order, a government undisturbed by parliamentary politics, and a reorganization of political activity down to a minimum of nationally unified and consolidated groups under the control and direction of a powerful government executive. These at least were a few elements in the thinking of politically conscious army leaders.[59]

Guided Democracy brought those elements into being and served the interests of the army while suppressing the capabilities of the PKI. Its ability to do those two things explained, somewhat counterintuitively, why Guided Democracy, an inherently unaccountable and undemocratic system built on rent control and the stifling of basic freedoms, successfully advanced the interests of the United States that it, albeit tacitly, supported the system. By supporting a system that kept the army close to the central

levers of power and denied the PKI the opportunity to gain through democratic elections, the United States found itself well on its way to embracing a path of military modernization and rule that came about in the 1960s.[60]

This support for military modernization in Indonesia occurred while the US was supporting military government and development in many other parts of the world. This included Thailand, South Vietnam, South Korea, and the Philippines in Asia alone, to say nothing of numerous other states and regimes in Africa and Latin America.[61] Why was such a broad policy supporting foreign militaries adopted by the United States? Certainly the post-war march of communism and leftist politics into parts of Latin America, Africa, and Asia and the ensuing capitalist crisis of confidence played a part. The black and white imagining of the world into opposing camps, as best stated in NSC-68, also created incentives for the United States to contest communism, and seek partners in doing so, everywhere. One could argue this was the case with Indonesia. The fact that foreign militaries, particularly their officer corps, were often politically conservative—owing to their already earned social status and privilege—likely played a part. Too many other reasons exist for a full vetting here, but it is important to state that in the case of Indonesia, the US belief in military modernization, even if it did begin in the early 1950s, was still far from being realized when the decade ended.

Recognizing this growth in military power and its centrality, US policymakers shifted their resources and attentions from Sukarno to Nasution. That focus was evident from Dulles' initial approval of assistance in late April 1958, which specifically mentioned the need to work with "trusted Army leaders, rather than Sukarno."[62] By the end of the summer, each side had communicated to the other, through cables, invitations, meetings, and exchanges at the working level in Jakarta, their commitment to the bilateral, and increasingly personal, military relationship. Plans and engagements moved forward at a brisk pace from nearly the cessation of hostilities forward.[63] In a telegram from the US Embassy in Jakarta to the State Department at this time, it was clear that the US understood this post-conflict transformation:

> There is much evidence that General Nasution taking on greatly increased share of responsibility for management Indonesian affairs, and it not beyond realm of possibility this trend will continue to point where his influence will be decisive in all questions. Therefore it is vital to our interest that we reinforce, especially at this time, his confidence in US willingness to see him through.[64]

As 1958 became 1959, such recognition was codified in NSC policy documents and implemented at the embassy where, increasingly, the army attachés became the primary agents for all aspects of US foreign policy in Indonesia. They did so for two reasons. First, they had the relationships and the history with Nasution and his staff, who were themselves running more and more of the country. Benson and his colleagues now drew from the bank of trust that they had built during the crisis and did so with Indonesian partners who ruled much of the country without interference from Sukarno or Jakarta, who controlled farms, businesses, and industries, and who staffed bureaucratic positions throughout the Indonesian government far beyond the traditional purview of the military. Second, they were charged with implementing the military assistance policies that had become, for better or for worse, the cornerstones of US foreign policy in Indonesia since the collapse of the rebellions. The American strategic objective remained the integration of Indonesia into the world as a stable, economically viable, and pro-western state with the ability to resist communism from within and without. Bolstering Nasution and the army were seen as the key way of doing that, and the military assistance program would be the primary vehicle to achieve it.[65]

The military assistance program that was tentatively approved by Dulles in late April 1958 was the token aid program the JCS had been advocating for since 1957. With the rebels effectively defeated and the recognition of Nasution's importance understood, US policy moved with a haste unseen by its Indonesian recipients. In May, mere weeks after the change in policy, Indonesian Army Chief of Intelligence Lieutenant Colonel Sukendro visited Hawaii to attend Admiral Stump's aforementioned weapons demonstrations. There he delivered Indonesia's aid requests which included training and equipment for up to six infantry battalions with amphibious and airborne capabilities. Sukendro developed a rapport with Stump and the implicit quid pro quo, American aid in exchange for moves against the PKI and communist sympathizers, was never questioned.[66]

Negotiations continued during the summer and on 13 August, with the Army's deputy commander for operations in the Pacific present, Army Major General Russell Vittrup, the token military aid package was approved. Though small, this program represented the commitment of the United States to moving the Indonesian Army forward and carried much weight in Jakarta. A serious sign that distinguished this from the tortuously long and never completed pre-conflict discussions concerning military aid, this package was approved in weeks. In order to demonstrate solidar-

ity with Indonesia before the 17 August Independence Day celebrations, equipment began arriving only two days later. The military hardware was spread around the services so as not to highlight the prominence of Nasution or embarrass Sukarno; four helicopters for the Indonesian Air Force, six Higgins boats for the Army, and one 173-foot, PC-461 class submarine chaser for the Indonesian Navy.[67]

In addition to increased slots in stateside US military schools, further hardware was approved in the autumn of 1958, which included military bridges, tank landing ships, minesweepers, and marine forces equipment which arrived in Indonesia.[68] Though the US had similar relationships and aid programs with countries all over the world, what made the Indonesia program unique was its centrality to overall US policy. Bolstering and strengthening the military became the cornerstone of the bilateral relationship, made clear by the primacy of the Pentagon and uniformed personnel who carryied out the policy. The new deference civilian policymakers, Dulles included, paid heed to the JCS and defense recommendations, and the way that Nasution himself was kept abreast of events and forthcoming aid as the processes unfolded speak to the centrality of the security cooperation work to broaden US foreign policy objectives.[69]

For instance, Admiral Harry Felt, the new commander of US Pacific Command, successfully pressed the Pentagon to avoid selling any military equipment to the Netherlands, a NATO ally, which might be used in any potential defense of Netherlands New Guinea, should conflict erupt, as that would adversely affect Nasution and the pro-US clique of officers.[70] In the fall of 1958, and in the face of increased Soviet military assistance, the US agreed to equip 20 infantry battalions, conscious of the fact it needed to support Nasution by regularly approving and delivering new aid.[71] Later, the Pentagon sped Export/Import Bank approval for the Lockheed Electra aircraft loan and the purchase of early Lockheed C-130 B's to Indonesia, knowing that Sukarno loved the aircraft and saw their arrival as something of a litmus test of US support. The military, in fact, arranged a special flight for the delighted president on a C-124 Globemaster transport aircraft which had delivered much of the equipment to Indonesia in the first place.[72]

Indonesia still was not a party to the Mutual Security Act which governed military assistance. Later in 1959, Eisenhower, provided Indonesia with a presidential exemption that allowed military aid to bust congressionally mandated caps, a ritual that continued into the 1960s until a stable, longer-term agreement could be reached. In late 1959, Allen Dulles, Director of the CIA, spoke of the relationship, "Indonesia [is] more friendly

to us at present than it [has] ever been."[73] Throughout this period, the US granted the Indonesian Army excess stock that would not have been used, while also increasing the opportunities for Indonesian officers to train in the United States. More Indonesian Army officers, for instance, attended US military schools in 1959 than in all other years of the decade combined.[74]

These actions formed the backbone of US policy and the military was the unquestioned leader of that policy. This was made clear by the telegrams and cables between Jakarta and Washington and the way that policymakers seemed to understand the situation. Dulles acknowledged the military's special role in assisting Nasution and firming up his place atop the hierarchy of Indonesian national actors. Nasution himself, through the attaché office in Jakarta, was kept abreast of developments internal to the US government as if he himself were a part of the US military bureaucracy.[75] At no time did the United States attempt to tie such military assistance to its imprisoned pilot, World War II veteran Allen Pope. Secretary of State Christian Herter explicitly discussed the need to not make this any sort of quid pro quo relationship in his meetings with Eisenhower, given the importance of Nasution and the bilateral military relationship writ at large. Given that the Soviet Union was expanding its own military assistance to Indonesia at the same time that the US was initiating all of this activity, one can understand why these programs were maintained at the levels that they were.[76]

What, then, was the state of the military relationship between the United States and Indonesia at the end of the 1950s? Strong, to say the least. Perhaps even increasingly united, within the confines that political realities allowed. A more appropriate question, perhaps, is had US defense policy accomplished what it sought out to do at the beginning of the decade? Looking back to chapter 2 and the defense and security goals that the US laid out, one can see that US defense policies were broadly successful in accomplishing their goals.

First, Indonesia, despite the growth and increased prominence of the PKI throughout the decade, had not fallen to communism or others whose interests ran counter to the United States. While Sukarno's interests could hardly be described as aligning with those of the US and the PKI was openly hostile, the steadying presence of Nasution and the army at the decade's end demonstrated that, whether or not the contribution of US defense policies was decisive or even significant to the achievement, Indonesia was not a communist state or communist proxy in 1959. Given

the uncertain situation that policymakers were presented with in 1950, it counts as a US success.

Second, defense policies succeeded in making US the primary trainer, as well as arms provider and equipper, of the Indonesian Army, though not of the Indonesian Navy or Air Force. This study has well and fully documented the important role that US training provided to Indonesian military, especially Army, officers. By decade's end, the US had established itself as the arms and equipment provider of the Army. The Indonesian Navy and Air Force, however, consistently sought and received training and equipment from the Soviet bloc rather than the US. This reflected, perhaps, US attention and focus on the Army at the expense of other Indonesian forces, but is also likely attributed to the Soviets' willingness to make large, capital intensive commitments that better met the needs of the more resource intensive services such as the Navy and Air Force, as opposed to the Indonesian Army, which was manpower heavy and resource light throughout the decade.

Third, defense policies succeeded in fostering and preserving strong relationships with army officers and senior leaders while keeping lines of communication between the national militaries open and dialogue robust. As this chapter discussed in detail, this was most evident during and immediately after the crisis of the regional rebellions and the emergence of Nasution as a strengthened figure on the Indonesian national stage. This, perhaps, marks the greatest success that US defense policies had in the decade. It could be argued such relationships and lines of communication were at their strongest as the decade itself ended.

There was, additionally, a fourth and final goal of US defense policies that was not elucidated at the start of the decade but achieved nonetheless. US defense policies sought to support and bolster—when needed and in ad hoc and not always defined ways—those Indonesian military leaders who might prove most useful or influential for the advancement of US national interests. As US military, diplomatic, and national security reporting made clear, this was consciously done from December 1957 forward, and always with the goal of strengthening Nasution and the pro-US officers around him in army central headquarters. The success in that latter period makes up for the US failure, earlier in the decade and at the strategic level, to recognize the value of Nasution and his likeminded officers to US national interests. It is this last point best brought home by two final pieces of evidence which symbolize the trust between the militaries and the tightness of the relationship as the 1960s dawned.

In June 1958, Dulles and the Department of State, in conjunction with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, directed the Army Attaché in Jakarta to advise and provide counsel to Nasution, with the disclaimer, "the Indonesian Government is not to know. Sukarno remains the dominant personality and it is a calculated risk to attempt to strengthen Nasution's position [vis-a-vis Sukarno]."[77] Such commitment from the US side, demonstrated the stakes involved and the risks policymakers, to say nothing of those on the ground, were willing to take to achieve their desired ends so soon after the collapse of the rebellions. It reflected an even greater commitment from Nasution and the Indonesian Army. Here was a sitting Army Chief of Staff agreeing to take counsel and receive support from a foreign government without even informing his own superiors, a willful deception at best and much more than that at worst. That he would do so says something about the security that Nasution felt with respect to his position in the country and the role that the US played in securing that for him.

The codification of the support relationship and the intertwining of defense objectives and destinies was finalized just after this period when, in 1960 and for the first time, the US put in writing—and delivered, by way of Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, in person to Nasution himself—its explicit policy of supporting Nasution and the Indonesian Army in the event of any sort of crisis with Sukarno and the PKI. The below text demonstrates that US defense policymakers considered, in the end, some sort of confrontation between the army and the PKI or Sukarno likely, and that US interests would best be served by clarifying its position in advance of any contingency. It also reflects, in hindsight, a confidence borne out of the trials of the 1950s; a belief that if the military-to-military relationship had endured all that it had, and not only prospered but thrived, that continued trust and partnership would bring stability, mutual gain, and confidence to face the trials and confrontations to come. When those trials and confrontations came in the 1960s, then, the partners were ready:

> In such circumstances if there is a crisis and those who oppose the Communists and who work for the true independence of the country want to know where the United States stands, they can be sure that the United States stands with them.
>
> I would further tell General Nasution that we are not asking for any comment from him but merely wish to assure him that in the event of such a contingency we will back him up; but that if he does have any suggestions, we will take them into consideration in our planning for such a contingency.[78]

Notes

1. Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire,* 12, 16.

2. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "National Security Council Report: US Policy Statement on Indonesia," 153-157; Roland Challis, *Shadow of a Revolution: Indonesia and the Generals* (Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton, 2001), 42.

3. Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 143-144; McMahon, *The Limits of Empire,* 86.

4. Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 65-66.

5. Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire,* 22.

6. John M. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie or Allison in Wonderland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), 299.

7. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire,* 87.

8. "314th Meeting of the NSC, 28 February 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 8, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 475-480.

9. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum of Discussion at the 333rd Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, 1 August 1957," 400-402.

10. "315th Meeting of the NSC, 6 March 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 8, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; "316th Meeting of the NSC, 14 March 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 8, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

11. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum from the Deputy Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Mein) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 381-385; "333rd Meeting of the NSC, 1 August 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 9, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

12. Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 85.

13. Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire,* 16-17.

14. "Special Report on Indonesia: The Implication of US Security of Recent Developments in Indonesia, Especially Communists Political Gains in Java," Disaster File Series, Box 58, Indonesia (3), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Report Prepared by the Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia for the National Security Council," 436-440; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 151-152.

15. "Special Report on Indonesia: The Implication of US Security of Recent Developments in Indonesia, Especially Communists Political Gains in Java," Disaster Files Series, Box 58, Indonesia (3), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 329-331; Department

of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Report Prepared by the Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia for the National Security Council," 436-440.

16. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie,* 299.

17. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 475-480; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Southeast Asian Affairs (Mein) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 101-106; "365th Meeting of the NSC, 8 May 1958," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 10, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

18. Lev, "Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," 350, 351; McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 147.

19. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 34-37.

20. Lev, "Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," 350, 351; McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 147-148.

21. "348th Meeting of the NSC, 12 December 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 9, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. SOBSI (*Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia*) was the Central All-Indonesian Workers Organization.

22. David Bourchier and Vedi R. Hadiz, "Introduction," in *Indonesian Politics and Society: A Reader,* eds. David Bourchier and Vedi R. Hadiz (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 5; Vedi R. Hadiz, "Mirroring the Past or Reflecting the Future? Class and Religious Pluralism in Indonesian Labor," in *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia,* ed. Robert W. Hefner (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 272.

23. Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961," 205, 207.

24. "337th Meeting of the NSC, 22 September 1957," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 9, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. That the NSC accepted the committee's policy recommendations should not itself be a surprise; it chartered the committee to research the issue in the first place and put Cumming, one of the architects of the confrontational approach, at its head. The committee can, thus, best be described as producing the policy recommendations that the NSC, under the direction of Allen and John Foster Dulles, wanted it to produce. Realistically speaking, it was never going to recommend anything else.

25. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 475-480.

26. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Mein) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 496-500.

27. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 475-480 (citation 13).

28. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 521-522;

Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 515-516.

29. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Message from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison)," 534-535.

30. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Commander in Chief, Pacific (Stump), 533; Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 192-193; Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961," 209-210; Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Commander in Chief, Pacific (Stump), to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke)," 548.

31. "Memorandum, 20 December 1957," Papers of Christian A. Herter, 1957-1961, Box 3, Chronological File–December 1957 (2), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

32. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Army Attaché in Indonesia (Collier) to the Department of Army," 558-559. As evidence of their desire for US equipment, Yani and his Indonesian counterparts explained that Soviet equipment, in particular innocuous items such as windshield wipers, could not hold up to the tropical conditions in Indonesia, and did not provide the support systems needed to ensure maintenance and capability. Only American equipment, they stated, was reliable, durable, and effective enough.

33. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Telegram from the Army Attaché in Indonesia (Collier) to the Department of the Army," 561-562.

34. Department of State, *FRUS, 1955-1957,* vol. 22, *Southeast Asia,* "Letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to the Secretary of State," 566-567.

35. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum of Conversation," 4.

36. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Special Assistant to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for National Security Affairs (Triebel) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Cutler)," 30-34.

37. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 80-81.

38. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McElroy," 94-95.

39. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McElroy," 94-95; Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 174-175; Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 192-193; Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 264.

40. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 98.

41. Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire,* 93-95; Wardaya, *A Cold War Shadow,* 198.

42. Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 163-165, 176.

43. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 111-113.

44. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McElroy," 120; Kahin and Kahin, Subversion as Foreign Policy, 174; Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 29, 31.

45. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Under Secretary of State (Herter)," 117-119.

46. Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 158, 159; Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 268; Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 175.

47. Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military,* 173.

48. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Commander in Chief, Pacific (Stump) to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke)," 145; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 141-143.

49. "365th Meeting of the NSC, 8 May 1958," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 10, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

50. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McElroy," 155-156.

51. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 157-159; Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 177; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to Secretary of State Dulles," 167-168.

52. Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy,* 179-182.

53. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears,* 197; Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire,* 93-95.

54. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 98.

55. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Under Secretary of State (Herter)," 117-119.

56. The State Department defines the dissent channel as, "a serious policy channel reserved only for consideration of responsible dissenting and alternative views on substantive foreign policy issues that cannot be communicated in a full and timely manner through regular operating channels or procedures." It was formally established in 1971, at the height of the Vietnam War (State Department Foreign Affairs Manual, 2 FAM 070, Dissent Channel).

57. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 125.

58. 380th Meeting of the NSC, 25 September 1958," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 10, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. The elections were postponed to 1960 but, owing to army pressure, never ended up taking place.

59. Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy,* 76-77.

60. Lu, "United States Relations with Indonesia," 305; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Parsons) to Acting Secretary of State Dillon," 413; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 457-459.

61. Numerous works chronicle US support to military regimes and modernization theory and ideology in the Cold War. With respect to Indonesia itself, see Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns* for one such notable work. Among much else discussing other parts of the world or the world itself from the lens of US foreign policy, see Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), and Latham's *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and US Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), as well as Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

62. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 125.

63. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 235; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum of Conversation," 255-256; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 257-258.

64. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 310-312.

65. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "National Security Council Report," 334-344; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 435-438; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, Indonesia, "National Security Council Report," 571-583; Brian Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 31-32.

66. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 214-216.

67. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to Secretary of State Dulles," 252-254; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 260-261; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Dillon)," 292-294; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17,

Indonesia, “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Netherlands,” 264-265; Lu, “United States Relations with Indonesia,” 296-297.

68. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia,” 303-304.

69. Lu, “United States Relations with Indonesia,” 298; Challis, *Shadow of a Revolution,* 47.

70. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific (Felt) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” 351-352; “395th Meeting of the NSC, 26 January 1959” Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 11, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

71. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” 314-315; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) the Secretary of State Dulles,” 316-318; Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears,* 163.

72. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” 320-322; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Dillon),” 355-358; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to Acting Secretary of State Herter,” 361-362; Jones, *Indonesia,* 154.

73. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia,” 454-455; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum from Secretary of State Herter to President Eisenhower,” 584-586; Lu, “United States Relations with Indonesia,” 299; “429th Meeting of the NSC, 15 December 1959,” Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 12, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

74. Lu, “United States Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961,” 299; Evans, “The Influence of the US Army,” 41, 44.

75. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) the Secretary of State Dulles,” 316-318; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Memorandum of Discussion at the 395th Meeting of the National Security Council,” 326-330; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia,” 454-455.

76. “436th Meeting of the NSC, 10 March 1960,” Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 12, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. Though the amount of Soviet military aid to Indonesia was greater than that of the United States, it was not as great as it might first appear. When the Soviets announced a $250 million aid package, for instance, that money was spread out over a number of years and was closer in number to US aid than a superficial comparison might at

first demonstrate. Its value, however, lay not only in the aid itself but the perception that such a large number created, despite the middling value, in the end, of much of the equipment that the Soviets gave or sold to Indonesia.

77. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum of the Substance of Discussion at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting," 230-231.

78. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Parsons) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Merchant)," 545-546; Challis, *Shadow of a Revolution,* 48; Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia,* 177.

Chapter 5
Conclusions

Given the fractious nature of the overall bilateral relationship between Indonesia and the United States at the beginning of the 1960s, it may seem incongruous to say the military-to-military relationship was strong and US defense policymakers had been successful, in spite of the fact the US helped prosecute a war against Indonesia, in achieving much of what they sought out to do in the 1950s. The evidence, however, clearly demonstrates that to be the case. What that success really meant and looked like in the longer run for each country was quite different, however. The significance of those successes in the 1950s lay less in where things stood in January 1960, itself not any sort of end, than in where they contributed to taking each country throughout the decade that followed.

With respect to the United States, the significance and meaning of its defense policy successes arrive at several conclusions. First, the bonds of trust and lines of communication with the Indonesian Army were kept open before and during the crisis years. This deliberate effort, by US officers and their US-trained Indonesian counterparts, made success late in the decade possible. Built on the plains of Kansas and in the heat of Jakarta, those connections weathered the storms of war and rebellion and kept alive the United States' ability to influence events in Indonesia. It was upon the hard work of those officers that strong military to military gains were made in the last years of the decade.

Second, US effort in Indonesia, in particular its support for Nasution's policy of getting the army out of the barracks and into the countryside to challenge the PKI was part of a broader alignment of US foreign policy. This coupled US policies with modernization theory ideas and concepts that militaries had productive roles to play in developing post-conflict, post-colonial, and Third World states.[1] While this policy was not completely realized until 1961 when the Kennedy Administration came into office, one can see its seeds in the 1950s. Defense policies and support for Nasution in Indonesia, in particular the Pentagon's emphasis on protecting his position within Indonesian hierarchy and his role in running the country, as well as its support for the expansion of the army's role in Indonesia's civilian government, were being elucidated before the regional rebellions even began. However, concluding that US support for the Indonesian Army enabled its success is problematic. It puts the cart before the horse. Popular and significant institutional support did not begin until after the Indonesian Army had already experienced success on the battlefield.

Nasution, additionally, was never trained in the United States and was certainly not a product of its military tradition. His ideas and inclinations were his own. Finally, one might argue that Yani and the other officers who were sent to Fort Leavenworth had attended not be exposed and attracted to western ideologies, but rather to reinforce the ideological leanings they already possessed. It is difficult, therefore, to say that US support for the Indonesian Army made its growth and success possible..

The evidence presented here demonstrates the reverse: US support for the Indonesian Army did not metastasize in the late 1950s to enable success, but rather came because it was already successful. By the time the truly large amounts of American military aid, officer exchanges, and security cooperation activities began, the Indonesian Army had already defeated the rebels and entrenched itself in the social and economic life of the country. Given that success and its conservative nature, the Indonesian Army became the best, in fact perhaps the only, vehicle to advance US policy objectives and modernization efforts. By 1958, it was the only institution in Indonesia with the nationalist credentials, size, resources, and operational reach to challenge Sukarno and the PKI. Perhaps the US choice to back military government and its modernization approaches was not, in the case of Indonesia, much of a choice at all.

The final conclusion is the fact that by the end of the 1950s the US military, not the State Department or other civilian agencies, was the primary vehicle for the implementation of broader US foreign policy in Indonesia. This occurred for several reasons. First, attachés, senior regional commanders, and defense policymakers grasped much earlier than their counterparts at the CIA, State Department, and National Security Council, the importance of Nasution and the Indonesian Army to advance US interests in Indonesia. That prescience put them in a position of great influence to control the policy swing from confrontation to engagement which took place in the spring and summer of 1958. Second, the military, chiefly the US Army, was the organ of government that had trained and developed relationships and trust with Indonesian counterparts through deliberate effort and investment for the greater part of the decade. The Indonesian Army's knowledge that its US counterpart did not broadly support or participate in the regional rebellions, despite the confrontational US national policy, reinforced trust in the US Army. Finally, it should not be surprising that Indonesian officers such as Yani chose to continue to work closely with their US Army counterparts as they rose to power and prominence throughout the decade.

While US prospects and the ability to influence in Indonesia rose with them. In positing connections to modern day, one must consider, in this case, the strong likelihood that the rise of the US military to a preponderant position in the exercise of foreign relations in Indonesia by the end of the 1950s resulted in positive outcomes for the United States. The broader question to ask is whether such dominance, together with its associated outcomes and gains, was a positive development for the US as a whole. While military considerations, particularly in times of war, have often dominated the exercise of US foreign policy, the idea that the US military should be the primary agent of policy, and military, rather than civilian leadership can be a positive outcome runs counter to both the tradition and spirit of American government and much literature on the subject.[2]

While a more complete examination of this phenomenon is not the subject of this historical case study and awaits the attention of another scholar, the fact that US experiences in 1950s Indonesia can raise such a question demonstrates the important way examining past policies can inform those still grappling with such questions today. Much has been written on the expansion of concepts of hard power and coercion in traditional diplomacy, the militarization of foreign affairs, and the increased prominence of military "proconsuls" in the execution of foreign policy. Generally speaking, contemporary scholars and commentators are skeptical of the efficacy of this prominence, of the new reality of "endless" war, and of the corrosive effects this has on both the military and the civilian leadership and bureaucracy. In the post-Cold War era, the military has taken on many missions that can only loosely be defined as war. At the same time, the civilian foreign affairs establishment, particularly the State Department, have seen their budgets reduced and their ability to influence decision makers in both Washington and overseas diminished by the prominence of those in uniform.[3]

Does an example of successful military primacy in policy execution present a counter-narrative? Is this a case study, perhaps, arguing for military leadership in the exercise of foreign affairs? In a word, no. The case of US defense policy in the 1950s has shown, if nothing else, that it was situation and time unique to Indonesia. It should not serve as any sort of precedent or example to be emulated. This study does demonstrate, however, that by maintaining policies of defense engagement and keeping the door to communicate and collaborate open, the US military was in position to take advantage of any change that arose within Indonesia to advance broader American interests. Thus, when the situation changed and Indonesian Army emerged from the rebellions victorious and capable, the

United States was ready. Given that, the case of the dominant US military role in broader policy execution at the end of the 1950s in Indonesia does show that, in a particular place and at a particular time, and when certain conditions exist, the military can be the most effective vehicle to advance US national interests overseas.

It is, however, in Indonesia where this story must end, for that is where US designs, for all of their merit or lack thereof, were actually put into practice. That is where the costs and benefits were measured not on maps or charts but in lives and treasure. The significance of US defense policies in the 1950s only grew as the 1960s dawned and saw them continue and, to a large extent, expand significantly while transitioning from an ad hoc series of military agreements to a codified and entrenched military assistance program.

The US desire to transform their token aid programs, which despite coming with fewer strings attached than Mutual Security Act assistance, still had to be annually approved and appropriated, started as soon as the token programs themselves started. In early October 1958, less than two months after the first official US military assistance began arriving in Jakarta, officials in the Pentagon were keen on exploring the option to establish a more permanent military assistance program.[4] General Maxwell Taylor, the US Army Chief of Staff, visited Indonesia in November 1958 and reiterated the official desire to explore and work towards such a program, a sentiment echoed by the embassy in its communications with Washington later that year.[5] The Department of Defense's official support for a longer-term program began in the spring of 1960 when it requested official approval to begin, in conjunction with Nasution and through the attachés, developing one.[6] The embassy in Jakarta later gave the plan its full support, and US commanders in the Pacific had already created a detailed plan concerning what equipment to provide, who to provide it to, what ancillary and personnel requirements would come with it, and how to manage the potential fallout within Indonesia.[7] Though State Department deliberations over the idea continued through much of 1960, delay was not based on substantive policy disagreements over the program so much as over how to structure it to avoid the MSA issues that so roiled the bilateral relationship in 1952.[8]

The solution to this problem—how to bind Indonesia to the United States in a way that did not infringe upon its conceptions of its own independence—was to make the military assistance program a direct US Army-Indonesian Army agreement rather than a national bilateral one.[9] This created a more enduring structure within the annual funding appro-

priations Congress approved and the President signed. It satisfied US defense policymakers as it worked towards the same ends but allowed them to specifically direct the programs to which funds and equipment would go. Nasution, who pushed for the army-army agreement, liked it because it allowed him to keep the program within his own institutional walls and away from Sukarno and the civilian government.

These programs in the early 1960s built upon and codified much of what began in the late 1950s in the heads of US attachés and policy makers, to say nothing of Indonesian officers themselves. These were the realized efforts of the early programs during the years of the PRRI and Permesta rebellions, which, owing to Sukarno's declaration of martial law and the nationalization of Dutch economic capital, began bringing the army out into the countryside where it could more effectively challenge the PKI. They did this through the doctrine of territorial warfare, in which, "every area of the country is organized and equipped independently to defend itself against foreign attack with a minimum of central tactical direction and logistical support." In some places, the army replaced village heads, trained administrative officials, and put whole village administrations through indoctrination sessions to further their ends and attempt to affect rural ideologies.[10]

The US Army was the partner actor in this, with efforts being led by the seemingly omnipresent George Benson. He returned to Indonesia as a lieutenant colonel to run the civic action program from 1962 onwards at the special request of generals Nasution and Yani. The Fort Leavenworth connection continued to run deep and pay dividends for the United States.[11] The US defined the civic action as, "the use of a military on projects useful to local population at all levels in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, communication, health, sanitation and others contributing to economic and social development, which would also serve to improve the standing of the military forces with the population."[12]

In reality it was a combined US Army-Indonesian Army operation to canvass the country with soldiers, collect information on peasant sympathies and sensitivities, provide cover for covert operations against the PKI, establish a rural support structure and chain of loyalties to undermine the PKI's strength in the countryside while maintaining conventional military dominance, and a *modus operandi* to bring about the penetration of army officers into all fields of government activities and responsibilities.[13] To that end, the US Army supported efforts by the Indonesian Army to establish itself as a "social-political" force that participated in the ideologi-

cal, political, social, economic, cultural, and religious aspects of rural life; namely, life itself.

To support these and other efforts, in particular the building of roads and infrastructure projects, the US also provided funds as well as equipment, including heavy engineering equipment and farm tools, to the Indonesian Army. It also trained their officers in the use of equipment at different sites throughout Indonesia and the United States.[14] In short, by the mid-1960s the US Army had helped establish the Indonesian Army as the operational force it had always sought in a partner in Indonesia. This army would have the wherewithal and capabilities to defeat the PKI if and when the requirement arose.

To ensure the ideological underpinnings of the officer corps, the US brought more and more Indonesian Army officers to the US to train, on a scale that far eclipsed anything accomplished in the 1950s. Between 1960 and 1965, 2,600 Indonesian Army officers trained in the United States, more than 1,000 in 1962 alone. No other country sent as many officers to US military schools in the period. The example, then, that Yani and other forerunners in the 1950s, those who were now Nasution's lieutenants running the day-to-day operations of the army, had set become imbued throughout the service.

Assignment to the US, in particular CGSC, was the most plum of all, and marked those selected for future promotion and command. This came despite the fact that the Soviet Union also sought to train Indonesian officers and remained a major arms contributor to the Indonesian military.[15] In short, the 1950s investment in educating Indonesian officers in the hopes of creating a cadre of pro-American officers and future leaders paid off in spades and reflects, to some extent, the great success post-independence military planners and policymakers in the early 1950s hoped to achieve.

Where, then, did all of this lead Indonesia in the 1960s? As the army worked more closely with the United States, the PKI successfully prodded Sukarno into adopting a more confrontational approach to the west. Though this approach did see the return of Netherlands New Guinea to Indonesia, it also brought about Sukarno's policy of confrontation with Malaysia. This undeclared war of small engagements on the island of Borneo was brought about by Sukarno's push for renewed revolution across Southeast Asia. His anger at the formation of Malaysia, and his desire, over time, to achieve the political unification of all Malay peoples fueled him. The army, which opposed all-out war with Britain over Malaysia, publicly backed Sukarno and the policy but worked to undermine it and

helped, over time, to reduce the efficacy of the operation and scuttle attempts to expand it.[16] As the 1960s wore on, its contest with the PKI for power within the country, despite each being under the auspices of Sukarno, grew heated and culminated in late 1965 with the September 30th Movement, the assassination of Yani and the army's extermination of the PKI that was to follow.

Like Yani, the September 30th Movement also targeted Nasution that night, though he narrowly escaped. Sukarno, who did not seem to have been involved in the power grab but muddled his response to it, over time lost the initiative to senior, pro-American, army officers, setting the stage for the well documented purges and killings that took place through 1966 and 1967, the destruction of the PKI as a political organization, and the seizure of power by the army in the person of General Suharto.

While the role of the United States government and military in those events has been discussed elsewhere, it should be noted here that US defense policies in the 1950s helped to create the conditions in which the Indonesian Army was able to respond to them in the way that it did. US military assistance and security cooperation throughout the decade built a relationship able to endure political upheaval and war and emerge stronger for it. The trust US officers such as George Benson and Indonesian officers such as Ahmad Yani had in one another was built during that period and represented the signal success of US defense policies of the 1950s: the growth of the relationship and continued pro-western orientation of the Indonesian Army itself. That growth enabled the Indonesian Army to become what it needed to be if it was ever going to overcome the challenge of the PKI. So, ironically enough, did the then-counterproductive policies of confrontation and support for the PRRI and Permesta rebels.

In a way, then, it could be argued that US government support for confrontation and rebellion helped produce the battlefields that the Indonesian Army needed in order to prove itself, justify its leadership, and demonstrate its commitment to Sukarno and the nationalist cause. At the same time, it could be argued that US military support for the army itself helped them not only win the war but bring the two institutions together. Both militaries emerged from the conflict more operationally and ideologically united than they had been before. A stronger and more pro-western Indonesian Army then; just the sort of tool that the United States might have thought useful to have in the Cold War.

Notes

1. Modernization theory posited that with outside assistance, "traditional" countries could be developed along the lines of first-world, ostensibly western, countries. It was based on the idea that successful western development could be universalized and successfully applied to post-colonial and Third World states in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. See Walt Rostow, *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960), one of the formative works on the subject in the period, as an example.

2. See Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of US Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), and Robert Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts: On the Ground with the American Military, from Mongolia to the Philippines to Iraq and Beyond* (New York: Random House, 2005), among much else.

3. See Priest, *The Mission: Waging War,* Bacevich, *American Empire,* and Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts,* among many other works.

4. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Assistant Secretary of for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Dillon)," 292-294.

5. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Editorial Note," 300; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," 310-312.

6. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)," 362-363.

7. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to the Assistant of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Parsons)," 452-454.

8. Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Letter from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin)," 367-368; Department of State, *FRUS, 1958-1960,* vol. 17, *Indonesia,* "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," 424-427; "National Security Council: US Policy on Indonesia, 19 December 1960," Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers, Disaster Files Series, Box 58, Indonesia (1), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

9. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 35.

10. Lev, "Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," 362.

11. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 36; Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears, 1*98.

12. John Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto's Coup D'Etat in Indonesia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 183.

13. Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder,* 186-187.

14. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 37, 42.

15. Evans, "The Influence of the US Army," 39, 44; McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army," 166-171.

16. Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder,* 187-188.

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