CMIP #12

DECENTRALIZATION IN INDONESIA AS A POLITICAL PROBLEM

GERALD S. MARYANOV

INTERIM REPORT SERIES

Modern Indonesia Project
Southeast Asia Program
Department of Far Eastern Studies
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Price—$1.50

CMIP #12
SEAP Publications
File Copy
Do not remove from Room 213
640 Stewart Avenue

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

DECENTRALIZATION IN INDONESIA

AS A POLITICAL PROBLEM

Gerald S. Maryanov

INTERIM REPORTS SERIES

Modern Indonesia Project
Southeast Asia Program
Department of Far Eastern Studies
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York
1958

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

© 1958 by Gerald S. Maryanov

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

PREFACE

A major concern of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project has been with the problems of decentralization and regionalism in contemporary Indonesia. Research which it has sponsored resulted in two previous Interim Reports: Mr. Gerald S. Maryanov's first study, Decentralization in Indonesia: Legislative Aspects (April, 1957) and Professor John D. Legge's, Problems of Regional Autonomy in Contemporary Indonesia (August, 1957). The present report of Mr. Maryanov is based primarily upon research undertaken during his most recent stay in Indonesia, February - August, 1958, and consequently incorporates considerable important new material. It is expected that more substantial and definitive monographs by both Mr. Maryanov and Professor Legge will be published in 1960.

Mr. Maryanov spent the period 1953-1955 in Indonesia as an instructor in the Ford Foundation's Indonesian-English Language Training Program. During 1955-56 he undertook research on Indonesia in the Netherlands; the following year he was at Cornell University as a Research Assistant in its Modern Indonesia Project, and during 1957-58 carried on research at Cornell and in Indonesia under a fellowship from the Ford Foundation. At present he is a Teaching Associate in the Department of Government at Indiana University.

Ithaca, New York
October 20, 1958

George McT. Kahin
Director

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		Page
I.	INTRODUCTORY	1
II.	DECENTRALIZATION IN INDONESIA	9
III.	WHY DECENTRALIZE?	17
IV.	THE UNITARY STATE	28
V.	"PROVINCIALISM"	36
VI.	CENTRAL-REGIONAL RELATIONS	48
VII.	THE DECENTRALIZATION LAWS	63
VIII.	THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL	70
IX.	THE KEPALA DAERAH	78
X.	REGIONS	97

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

FOREWORD

The research leading to this Interim Report was started with the support of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, and continued under a fellowship granted by the Ford Foundation. All statements and opinions in this report are my own, of course, and are not necessarily those of the Ford Foundation or of Cornell.

Many people contributed to the ideas and opinions which I am presenting here by donating generously of their time in discussions about problems of studying Indonesian society; the form these ideas take in this report is my own responsibility. I would specifically like to express my gratitude to Professor George McT. Kahin, Director of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, for his encouragement in this work. Dr. Barbara Dohrenwend proved a rich source of ideas on problems of research. Mr. Herbert Feith gave generously from his profound knowledge of Indonesian affairs. Mr. John Smail, Mr. Daniel Lev, and Miss Ruth McVey read parts of this manuscript and made many helpful suggestions. Mr. Idrus Djajadiningrat and Mr. Selosoemardjan deserve my special gratitude for their frank discussions of problems their country is facing, and for their help and advice in matters of translation of Indonesian sources.

Djakarta, Indonesia
July, 1958

Gerald S. Maryanov

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Original from
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The decentralization program in Indonesia is an approach to two significant problems: it is a method for spreading government to all parts of the country; it is a method for accommodating regional differences, regional aspirations, and regional demands within the confines of the unitary state. Thus it might be better interpreted as an approach to two aspects of the same problem--how to achieve a stable, functioning, democratic state fulfilling the Indonesian expectations of what a government is to do. Decentralization is the focus of the conflict between those who argue from the "top down" in terms of government organization and the needs for leadership, and those who argue from the "bottom up" in terms of popular demands and regional agitation. From the former point of view, the problem is "decentralization"; from the latter, it is "regional autonomy." Decentralization in Indonesia is the context of the "regional problem" which has existed since the country attained its freedom in 1945, but which reached crisis proportions in 1956, with the establishment of regional "councils" operating semi-independently of the central government in Djakarta.

Since 1956, the crisis has been getting steadily worse; the conflicts, starting, at least outwardly, as purely manifestations of regional discontent, became confused with wider, even international issues. In 1958 it reached the stage of open rebellion and armed conflict. Quick action by the armed forces of the central government seems to have put to an end the formal military phase, but there remain the original basic questions of government organization and operation, political relationships, and the whole position of local government. As of this writing, the situation is still one of crisis.

The decentralization program was intended to obviate just such a crisis. That it hasn't done so thus far is the measure of the failure of the policy thus far. But it would be unjust to accuse it of complete failure yet. The difficulties of putting it into successful operation have been enormous, and the obstacles to its implementation are of far wider scope than this one problem. They are generic to the whole political process, the whole development of the country

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

up to the present. Indonesian political ideals are often expressed as promises for the future, with the recognition of difficult times to be lived through first. The problem of regional autonomy is to be met with the ideal of decentralization. Progress in that direction has been made; but there have been setbacks also. It is too early to talk of failure; there is still hope that the crisis of 1958 can be passed without serious damage to the unity of the country.

In 1950 Indonesia was in the process of transforming itself from a "federal" state to a "unitary" state. Many outside observers questioned the wisdom of this move, pointing to the obvious facts of thousands of islands, dozens of ethnic groups, and a multiplicity of languages. Nevertheless, in keeping with Indonesian feelings, the federation of component states was changed into a unitary state which promised to decentralize. While these two types of state organization possess mutually exclusive names, the ideal end result each is intended to achieve need not be much different.

Ideals, unfortunately, are rarely attained in their pure form, and the ideals of the decentralization program remain a long way from fulfillment. The regional problem remains one of the most crucial being faced by independent Indonesia. There is no telling what would have happened if the "federal" state, as it was originally constituted, had been continued. Surely we cannot conclude that it would have met with more success in reaching its ideals. The problem is not one of the institutional structures formally created. These structures by themselves are generally neutral. They take direction only by way of what people do to them; they respond according to the way they are used.

The "regional problem" is only one of many political and social difficulties that have beset the Republic of Indonesia from its inception. As a problem in the organization of government and society it is perhaps the most basic one, and a satisfactory solution to it is prerequisite to the stable performance of governmental operations. A political problem never arises independent of the personal and social forces interacting within the community, and to consider it independently of the context within which it is found does violence to objective analysis, and distorts comprehension. This warning is less appropriate when both researcher and reader are familiar with the social context of the problem under study--as when as American audience is confronted with an American problem. The great number of studies of American society, culture, and politics have provided a common frame of

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

reference within which any particular problem is consciously or unconsciously placed. Within this common experience, concepts such as "politics," "party," or "democracy" can be discussed without too much fear of misunderstanding, for they have more or less common connotations.

But, even in societies that have been profoundly studied difficulties arise in the definitions of terms, and the assumed community of understanding turns out to be less than perfect. So much more is the danger present in examining "new" societies such as post-revolutionary Southeast Asia; this is especially true concerning politics and government. While "cultures" in Southeast Asia have been subjected to relatively extensive investigation both before and after those revolutions, "political cultures" have not. Nor have the cultural determinants of political action always been made clear. Where attempts in this direction have been made, concerning Indonesia, they have been in the sphere of the village. We are considering the regional problem, however, as a "national" one, involving a rather different set of actors.

We more or less know the formal characteristics of the "regional problem" in Indonesia, and its proposed solution, decentralization, through legal description. We more or less know the outward course of events concerning this problem as it is reflected in national political developments. But we are in a much weaker position for interpreting these events in terms of the determinants of Indonesian political behavior. We are not entirely clear as to the Indonesian "pattern of orientation to political action"; (1) nor do we know the effect of the Indonesian "way of life" on that pattern.

The dangers inherent in this situation could be grave for the results of any investigation of political affairs. Language being the imperfect means of communication that it is, we must use the symbols, the words, available to us. When we use English to describe Indonesian behavior, we are utilizing terms developed in one society to denote events in another; we use the same term for referents which are not necessarily congruent. And, having used a symbol that is familiar to us, we may forget that the referent is not necessarily as familiar. We refer to the Indonesian "government," and surely government is a concept familiar to us all. But is the role that "government" is expected to play in Indonesian lives the same as its counterpart's role in America?

(1) We are utilizing the definition of "political culture" given by Gabriel Almond.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

This point of "cultural differences" need not be belabored here; the dangers are generally recognized, and warnings have often been given. But being aware of the danger in theory does not always result in it being avoided in practice. In hopes of escaping some of these pitfalls, throughout this report we raise questions that do not deal specifically with the decentralization program, but are more widely concerned with politics in Indonesia in general. We raise questions without attempting to answer them; we hedge on our conclusions, and we grasp at the opportunity given by the nature of this Interim Report Series to be highly tentative. We do this in hopes of stimulating criticism, and thus helping define future areas of research. But we would also hope that by raising these questions we help to pinpoint some of the particularly Indonesian manifestations of political behavior.

This Report is part of a study of the program of decentralization in Indonesia. In an earlier part (2) we described the formal structures of the institutions involved--swatantra, or autonomous region, with its legislature, its executive, and its Kepala Daerah (regional head)--by reference to the laws establishing and implementing the program. Such an approach, as a beginning to the larger study, was necessary in order to define the legal framework of the problem. The growth of the regional problem to the critical point it has now reached took place within that framework; the legal description provided the vocabulary for the charges and countercharges of political maneuvering; it held out the promises that were to stabilize the political relationships; it held out the picture of what everybody professed to want for Indonesia.

Obviously the bare bones of legal description are not a sufficient basis for political analysis. But, once understanding the framework described by the laws, we can go further. The second step that would seem to indicate itself is an investigation of how Indonesians view the program established by the laws (and described in our earlier Interim Report). This implies not just the framers of the law and the official language they used, but the people who must interpret the program and give it reality, the people who debate its implementation, the articulate minority who provide the climate of opinion within which interpretation takes place, the political leaders who give voice to those opinions.

(2) Gerald S. Maryanov, Decentralization in Indonesia: Legislative Apsects, Interim Report Series, Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1957.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

This report then is a preliminary study in political attitudes related to the decentralization program within the context of Indonesian political behavior. It is preliminary because there are too many questions left unanswered, too many areas in which we cannot even be sure we formulated the significant question, too many problems on which we have not been able to collect sufficient data. But a beginning must be made, so certain assumptions have been utilized as a basis.

The major source of expression of attitudes for this study has been the debates in the national Parliament. The specific subjects of the debates have been the program each cabinet submits when it enters office. (3) In each set of debates we have searched out those expressions dealing specifically with regions, regional government, and decentralization, both in the government statements and in the parliamentary response. In addition we have consulted the debates on bills submitted in implementation of the decentralization program--the bill to provide a basic law on regional government, which ultimately resulted in Law No. 1, 1957, the bill to provide transitional regional legislatures, and the bill on election of regional legislatures, both of 1956, the bills establishing a separate province for Atjeh and dividing Kalimantan into three provinces, of 1956, and the bills providing for lower level autonomous units in Central Sumatra. Time and resources did not permit the methodological demands of content analysis, thus depriving the study of the benefits of controls. But the problem is so large and complex, and the materials on it so scanty that it is perhaps justifiable to present this gross analysis in its present form.

Our purpose is to identify the various attitudes expressed in statements of demands, expectations, and identifications, in order to determine the implied role of the region, and the central government in relation to the region, and of the various parts of regional government. We start with the logical first question of why there is a decentralization

(3) Since the establishment of the unitary state in 1950, there have been seven cabinets, identified by their Prime Ministers as follows: Mohammad Natsir cabinet, Sept. 6, 1950-March 20, 1951; Sukiman Wirjosandjojo cabinet, April 26, 1951-Feb. 23, 1952; Wilopo cabinet, April 1, 1952-June 2, 1953; Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, July 30, 1953-July 24, 1955; Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet, August 12, 1955-March 3, 1956; the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, March 20, 1956-March 14, 1957; Djuanda cabinet, April 9, 1957, still in office at present writing.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

program, and what it is expected to achieve. We want to know how the very term "region" is used. In this way we hope to approach an understanding of central-regional relationships.

Our major source has been the parliamentary debates; this immediately poses a methodological question which cannot satisfactorily be answered at this time. The role of Parliament in the Indonesian political process has not been investigated systematically as yet. We assume that the membership of Parliament is representative of the major part of Indonesian political leadership. It is fairly certain that the opinions expressed in Parliament are representative of the political communication that does take place in Indonesia on a national level, which would make it sufficient for our purposes. Probably the parliamentary debates are the best single source of such opinion. Most communication seems to be party-influenced, and there seems to be a high degree of homogeneity of opinion within a party. Further, expression of opinion in the legislature has been frank and protracted. The membership of Parliament seems to be a fairly good cross-section of the articulate minority that forms opinion.

From 1950 to 1956, Parliament was "provisional," being a combination of both houses of the bicameral legislature of the defunct United States of Indonesia plus the Executive Committee of the unicameral legislature and High Advisory Council of the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja). (4) The first general elections were held in 1955, and the new parliament was installed in March, 1956. While the balance of parties was somewhat altered, the changes, for our purposes, do not seem significant. Essentially the same parties were represented, and in some cases by the same people. Certainly the tenor of the debates on the point under study did not seem to change.

To these sources, we have added a few "outside" expressions of opinion. Most of these are writings frankly under the aegis of a political party, or by a government official. What is notably missing is the viewpoint of people actually participating in regional government. This lack is mitigated by the presence in Parliament of people with past experience

(4) The Republic of Indonesia which declared independence in 1945 was included, much reduced in size, as one of sixteen federated states of the United States of Indonesia which was recognized by the Dutch in 1949. When the unitary form was adopted in 1950, the name "Republic of Indonesia" was given to the whole country. We use the term "(Jogja)" to differentiate the earlier form, which had its capital in Jogjakarta, from the post-1950 form.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

in regional government. It would be presumptuous at this point to correlate speeches in Parliament with past experiences of an undefined sort. Also bearing on this point is the aforementioned assumption of a high degree of party discipline and uniformity of party opinion. Thus it is implied that regional political figures express the same ideas as the national figures of the same party. We have been able to include some "regional" opinion as reported in the minutes of conferences of regional officials.

Rather than attempt to paraphrase opinions too much, we have attempted to let Indonesians speak for themselves. Thus we have utilized quotations which we feel typify the various points under discussion. This, of course, opens the possibility of a charge of arbitrariness in selection, to which we confess beforehand. But we feel that the added value of the more precise statement of the original idea overweighs the drawback which to some extent would be inevitable in any case.

The debates of the programs of the Natsir and Sukiman cabinets can be found in Risalah Perundingan, which is published by Parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat Republik Indonesia) as its official transcript of debates. Citations to this source will be as follows: RP/1950/III/p. 1001, which should be read as Risalah Perundingan for the year 1950, volume III, page 1001. This transcript is not available for the later debates. For these we used Ichtisar Parlemen published by the Ministry of Information. These are not official. They are summary accounts of the debates, but they use as far as possible the words of the speakers themselves. A possibility of error does exist, mainly because of what may have been omitted. We have tried to minimize this possibility by choosing only those passages which are clearly in the language of the speaker, and in which the viewpoint is unmistakable. Citations to this source will be as follows: IP/1956/VII/99/p. 811, which should be read as Ichtisar Parlemen, 1956, volume VII, number 99, page 811. The party to which the speaker belongs is not always indicated in the source. Where this occurred, we referred to Kepartaian dan Parlementaria Indonesia published by the Ministry of Information, which lists all the parties and members of the provisional parliament.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

All quotations are taken from sources in the Indonesian language unless specifically indicated otherwise. The translations are the writer's own; they have been checked for accuracy with Indonesians, but the writer takes full responsibility for both form and content.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER II

DECENTRALIZATION IN INDONESIA

1

Many of the institutions and practices adopted or utilized by independent Indonesia have been reflections of those established by the Netherlands East Indies. The government taken over on August 17, 1945, was the Dutch creation as modified during three years of Japanese occupation. What was changed in the course of development was first of all the highest political authority, containing the central decision-making powers (which had been the focus of nationalist aspirations and ambitions). This was accomplished by the establishment of a central cabinet and parliament. For the rest, while there were some truly revolutionary changes in political attitudes and behavior, and social roles, alterations in governmental structure turned out to be minor. Perhaps more important, patterns of administrative behavior remained rooted in the Dutch traditional procedures. Further, prewar laws remain in large measure still valid, and unless there is major intensification of efforts to overcome this, they are likely to continue in force for some time to come. Indonesianization meant more the replacement of Dutch officials with Indonesian citizens rather than any major break with bureaucratic form or practice.

Such a development is not surprising, but rather to be expected. The leaders of the revolution, the people who had to take over positions of authority and ensure the performance of operations, had experienced, for the major parts of their lives, only Dutch government. Their familiarity with a governmental process was acquired then. Their education was either Dutch or Dutch sponsored; in large measure they were officials under the Dutch. This latter is perhaps less true for the revolutionary youth, but the ones occupying the higher levels of the Indonesian administration were not these youths. There was no large turnover of Indonesian personnel, but rather an upward movement into positions of more responsibility. Experience had been gained under Dutch administration, and there was little basis for developing criticisms of such government, and no cohesive program for its replacement. The Dutch forms could not bodily be removed for no substitutes were available, and there was no time for experimentation even if such had been desired.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Included in the picture of prewar Dutch government was the institution, still inchoate, of units of local government with the right to run their own affairs. (1) Three provinces were established in Java, in 1926, 1929, and 1930. These were divided into 67 regencies, and included 18 municipalities. Each of these units was endowed with organs of government, including a legislative council. The organizational arrangements in the Outer Islands--the term includes all of the Netherlands Indies outside the island of Java and its small sister island of Madura--were much more complex. Provinces had not yet been formed, but steps were taken leading to promotion to that status; these steps were interrupted by the war. There were units with self government, including municipalities and ethnic communities. There were also a great number of principalities which were governed under the authority of "contracts" between the rulers and the Dutch.

Some changes were instituted by the Japanese after they occupied the country in 1942. (2) Provinces were eliminated, and the regional administration was based on the Residency--a prewar unit smaller than the province but larger than the regency. All thought of local autonomy was subordinated to the needs of military administration, and representative institutions were abolished. After the Declaration of Independence in 1945, Indonesian activities soon returned to the old Dutch lines, and provinces were restored.

(1) Dutch efforts in this direction started in 1903 with a Decentralization Law. Real advances were not made, however, until after the Administrative Reforms of 1922, and the new "Constitution" of 1925. There is an extensive literature on these developments in Dutch. A complete account of the steps involved and the legal changes can be found in S. de Graaf, Parlementaire Geschiedenis van de Wet tot hervorming der grondslagen van het gewestelijk en plaatselijk bestuur in Nederlandsch-Indie, 1922, 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1939, and in Ph. Kleintjes, Staatsinstellingen van Nederlandsch-Indie, Vol. II, 5th edition, Amsterdam, J. H. de Bussy, 1929. For an account in English, see A. D. A. de Kat Angelino, Colonial Policy, Vol. II, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1931, or Amry Vandenbosch, The Dutch East Indies, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1944.

(2) On the Japanese period, see M. A. Aziz, Japan's Colonialism and Indonesia, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1955; Mr. A. A. Zorab, De Japanse Bezetting van Indonesie, Leiden, Universitaire Pers, 1954; Willard H. Elsbree, Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements, 1940-1945, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1953.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The Indonesia that declared independence in 1945 was dedicated to the principle of democracy and popular sovereignty. (3) Activities were started to put it into effect as best as could be done under the circumstances. In addition to the moves taking place in Djakarta, and later in Jogjakarta (where the capital of the Republic was soon moved) to provide an appropriate central government structure, parallel attempts were being made throughout Indonesia to give substance to the revolutionary ideals. In addition to the officials appointed by the central government to head the territorial subdivisions, local KNIs (4) were established to carry out the tasks of channeling the desires of the people and to help in organizing them. The precedent was thus early established in the Republic of Indonesia of local functioning units subordinate (5) in a hierarchy to a central authority.

The principles, as applied to these units, growing out of the general principles of popular sovereignty, implied

(3) Constitution of August 1945, Article 1, paragraph 2, "Sovereignty is in the hands of the people...." The role of the constitution in Indonesian political practice would make an interesting subject of study.

(4) Komite Nasional Indonesia - Indonesian National Committee. These were representative bodies formed to exercise advisory functions. There was also a KNI Pusat (pusat - center) which was later given legislative functions. The KNIs were usually formed at Residency and lower levels. See Law No. 1 of November 1945.

(5) The degree of this "subordination" can be questioned for various places at various times; we might just as well have said that the precedent of insubordination was set here. One of the new republic's tasks was to establish and maintain authority over areas not occupied by the British or Dutch as well as attempting to recover the occupied areas. This latter phrasing would be supported by observations such as: "The revolution...did not start as a centrally led uprising, but was largely a spontaneous outburst taking place almost simultaneously all over the country. It was only gradually that central leadership became effective." Soedjatmoko, "The Role of Political Parties in Indonesia" in Philip W. Thayer, Ed., Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia, Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 135. See also, George McT. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1952, pp. 178-183.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

local self-government within the framework of the state as a larger unity. It meant that groups facing local problems should have the right of local determination of solutions. In the words of Mohammad Hatta, co-signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Vice President until December 1956, while the sovereignty of the larger unity must be inviolate,

> there are still many fields of endeavor which can be governed (by a local area) according to its own desires.... All matters which exclusively concern the affairs of a region can be decided with full authority by the people of that region. (6)

And much later he reminisced:

> We were aware from the very beginning that democracy, as government by those who are governed, must be realized through decentralization. (7)

The conflict that developed between the Republic of Indonesia and the Dutch was a fight to see which side would establish the status and structure of the territory of the Dutch East Indies. The Dutch succeeded in creating a federal state made up of components with a great variety of bases. (8) The Republic of Indonesia, with its center on Java, opposed these moves, emphasizing the unity of the whole Indonesian people. The principle of popular sovereignty referred to a population that was made up of people from all the islands of the Indies. The Dutch argument was based on a claim of protection for smaller groups, local settlement of local problems, and, stressing the diversity of cultures and peoples in Indonesia, local determination of local government through federated states. On its side, the Republic made provisions for institutions of local government.

(6) Mohammad Hatta, Kedaulatan Rakjat (Pokok pidato jang diutjapkan pada permusjawaratan Pamong Pradja di Solo tanggal 7 Feb. 1946), Kementerian Penerangan, Serie Poleksos 4. This is the text of a speech given by Dr. Hatta at a civil service conference, February 7, 1946.

(7) Keng Po, April 27, 1957, p. 1.

(8) For a complete legal description of these units, see A. Arthur Schiller, The Formation of Federal Indonesia, 1945-1949, The Hague, Bandung, W. van Hoeve Ltd, 1955. A comprehensive picture in Indonesian is given by Prof. Mr. R. Soenarko, Susunan Negara Kita, Vol. III, Djakarta, Djambatan, 1955.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Law No. 22 of 1948, the basic law on regional government, was promulgated by the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja) on July 10, 1948, shortly before the second Dutch police action. Any attempt at implementing the law was made impossible by the attack and capture of the republican capital. One year later sovereignty over Indonesia was formally transferred to the federal Republic of the United States of Indonesia (R.U.S.I., according to the English initials, R.I.S., according to the Indonesian initials), which included the Republic (Jogja) as one of the member states. The federal structure lasted less than a year, a period which saw many of the federal "states" join themselves to the Jogja republic, which meant subjecting themselves to Jogja republican law. Finally, the federal state was changed into a unitary state, and it was emphasized that this was the realization of the Republic of Indonesia which had proclaimed independence in 1945. In terms of the symbols, this was the "Proclamation-Republic" (Republik Proklamasi).

3

The result of all these developments, relating to the expectations as to forms of local government, was inevitable. It was accepted with no apparent dissent that there would be a "decentralization" program aimed at establishing "autonomous" units of government below the national level. The struggle during the revolutionary period had never challenged this notion; it was directed against the Dutch tactic of creating separate "states" that would then be federated, where in Indonesian eyes there was only one state. And after the establishment of the United States of Indonesia, the movement for unification which culminated in the unitary Republic of Indonesia was facilitated by the existence "on the books" of decentralization legislation which was to become applicable after the reorganization. (9)

The unitary state was brought about, technically, by a series of amendments to the federal constitution, which was in effect a complete redraft of the document. Included as article 131 was the provision that:

> The division of Indonesia into large and small regions with the right to govern their own affairs,

(9) Mohammad Hatta, who had been Prime Minister of the one and only R.U.S.I. cabinet has said that "In the discussion of the charter of agreement (between R.U.S.I. and R.I. (Jogja) leading to the establishment of the unitary state) it was affirmed that the democratic unitary state would implement the decentralization system." Keng Po, April 27, 1957.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> together with the form of government for these regions, shall be established by law, keeping in mind the basis of consultation and representation as in the system of government of the State.
>
> These divisions shall be given the largest possible measure of autonomy to manage their own affairs.

This went further than its predecessor, article 18 of the 1945 constitution which merely provided for the division of territory with forms based on the system of "consultation," but without specifically mentioning "autonomy." (10)

The reformed unitary state inherited the laws applicable in its earlier federated form (according to article 142 of the constitution), with the understanding that

> Wherever possible, efforts shall be made to apply the legislation of the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja). (11)

This meant that Law No. 22 of 1948 was to guide the development of the decentralization program until such time as it was replaced, at least for the territory included under the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja) as of August 1950, when the revised constitution went into effect. The State of East Indonesia (N.I.T. - Negara Indonesia Timur) passed its own law, number 44 of 1950 in preparation for unification. This law also continued in force under the unitary state for the area previously included in N.I.T. Further, the country was divided into ten administrative divisions, of which the three on Java, plus the Special Region of Jogjakarta, and the three on Sumatra were made "autonomous." The four provincial-level regions on Java were further divided into "autonomous"

(10) Evidently the specific provision for "the largest possible measure of autonomy" in the new constitution was intended at least in part to allay fears of possible neglect of the interests of the regions. Such a suggestion can be found in a speech in Parliament by Zainal Baharuddin, non-party, (IP/1952/III/97/p. 446), who was a member of the joint RIS-RI committee.

(11) Charter of Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. The text of the agreement can be found as an appendix in Prof. Dr. R. Supomo, Undang-undang Dasar Sementara Republik Indonesia, Djakarta, Noordhoff-Kolff (nd).

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

kabupatens (regencies) and several cities and towns. Further, the thirteen daerah s (regions) composing the State of East Indonesia had the autonomy given them by N.I.T. Law No. 44 of 1950. (12) Thus the reunified Republic of Indonesia came to life complete with a decentralization program based on the constitution and outlined in law.

Many problems, ideological as well as practical, have plagued Indonesia from its birth. But regarding this one aspect of state organization, there was a general consensus--there would be some form of autonomous regional government throughout Indonesia. (13) Statements of identification and demand are clear in this respect:

> Autonomy for the people of a region is like independence for the whole nation. (14)
>
> From the beginning of the revolution we have all equally desired Decentralization. (Laws Nos. 22/1948 and 44/1950) are proofs that decentralization is an absolute requirement for the organization of the Indonesian democratic state and community. (15)

Almost all the political parties have explicitly included a demand for decentralization in their programs. (16) And as

(12) On the formation of these autonomous regions, see my "Decentralization in Indonesia," op. cit.

(13) This principle, to my knowledge, has never been disputed. The recent difficulties caused by some regions openly defying the central government do not negate the point. The central government in its response to these events has not denied the need for regions autonomous within the Indonesian definition.

(14) Subadio Sastrosatomo, Chairman of the Socialist Party (PSI) fraction in the provisional parliament, in the introduction to Sukarma, Otonomi Daerah, Djakarta, Sikap, (nd).

(15) D. S. Diapari, SKI party, IP/1955/68/p. 502.

(16) Party programs have been collected in Kepartaian dan Parlementaria Indonesia, Kementerian Penerangan, 1954. In addition, each party, especially the larger ones, issues a great number of its own publications. On parties in Indonesia, see Soedjatmoko, op. cit., and also Herbert Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955, Ithaca, Interim Report Series, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1957.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

might be expected, statements of intention to proceed with decentralization have been included in the programs of each of the cabinets that have been formed in the unitary state.

One looks in vain for any statement containing suggestions of opposition to the principle of a decentralized organization for the unitary state. Debates take place over methods, means, and pace of development; one might raise the question of whether or not there is genuine consensus on the goals sought, or if there has always been agreement on how serious the problem was. But whatever the differences, the general principle of "autonomy for the regions" has been accepted as axiomatic.

The first cabinet of the unitary state, the Natsir cabinet, perhaps did not need to be specific in stating its intentions regarding regional government. It had the decentralization laws inherited at the inception of the unitary state, and there was no reason at the time to doubt their efficacy. Thus Prime Minister Natsir stated in his answer to the parliamentary debates on his program that the R. I. Law No. 22 of 1948 would guide his government's activities, and

> The Government will begin by implementing what has already been agreed between the United States of Indonesia and the Republic of Indonesia. (17)

Subsequent cabinets appeared somewhat less optimistic regarding the framework of laws available to them, and promised appropriate investigation and revision. None, however, ever raised any question as to the wisdom or desirability of the basic constitutional prescription. Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo, in presenting the program of his second cabinet in 1956 could say:

> The perfection of autonomy by the continuous endeavor to realize the ideals contained in article 131 of our Provisional Constitution, and the perfection of the organization of the State by emphasizing the division of the fields of work (between central and regional government) and the rational and efficient implementation of tasks, are certain to improve the level of our State as a decentralized unitary state. (18)

(17) RP/1950/V/p. 1797.

(18) IP/1956/34/p. 283.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER III

WHY DECENTRALIZE?

Given the universality of the postulate that there would be autonomous regional government, it is not surprising that no extended debates took place directly relating to doctrinal questions. No one really asked the question of why Indonesia should decentralize; there was never a proposal that Indonesia should not do so. But there were many claims and long debates as to how the process should be carried out, as to the timing involved, as to the specific institutions to be established. Governments have made proposals; politicians have criticized. In this mass of communications on regions, regional governments, and regional problems, there have been a good many statements concerning doctrinal issues. From these we can extrapolate a picture of the ideological expectations, in order to answer the question, why decentralize.

1

The major premise involved is that the Indonesian revolution was fought for democratic principles, and the state emerging from the revolution must be a democratic one, with popular will as the paramount consideration. This has been embodied in the preamble to the provisional constitution, and in article 1, where it is declared that:

> Independent and sovereign Indonesia is a democratic constitutional state.....The sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia is vested in the people...

Further, in article 35:

> The will of the people is the basis of public authority.

The position of the democracy symbol is assured by its prominence in the constitution. In political debate, however, there are evidently two separate but related symbols involved--democracy and democratization. The first relates to identifications of situations: either this or that situation is or is not democratic. The second characterizes a process of change the purpose of which is to bring about more democracy. In use, the two symbols are often not differentiated; it could be summed up by the formulation that it is democratic to democratize.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Democracy is one of the least precise terms in the world's political vocabulary. Any theory of democracy must in some way imply a relationship among individuals, and between individuals and political authority. The symbol "democracy" will evoke images, however vague, of these relationships in the minds of the user, usually in the hopes of eliciting a similar image in the mind of the receiver. We can be sure that these images will not be the same for Indonesians as they are for people of other societies; and it is likely that there are characteristics of the images that are peculiarly Indonesian. These characteristics, insofar as they stem from a common culture, will hold for most Indonesians in spite of differences of details of theory and opinion. Until there have been adequate studies of what the Indonesian images are, we can make no firm judgment as to the expectations which are couched in terms of the symbol.

There is no one Indonesian theory of democracy, nor has there been any single statement that comprehensively and cohesively presents a systematic theory. But there have been a whole series of arguments, polemics, political debates, and publications of various sorts which imply fragments of theories. Three elements are identified by Dr. Mohammad Hatta as the sources of democratic thought among the leaders of the Indonesian revolution:

> First, the notion of western socialism, which attracted their attention because of its humanitarian basis, which they cherished and which became their goal. Second, the teachings of Islam, which aspires to divine truth and justice in the community, and brotherhood of men as the creatures of God..... Third, the knowledge that the Indonesian community is based on collectivism. (1)

Different thinkers will lean more or less heavily on one or another of these elements. Dr. Hatta himself concludes that:

> The synthesis of all these only strengthens the conviction that the form of democracy which will become the basis of Indonesian government in the future must be a development of the indigenous democracy which is found in the Indonesian village. (2)

(1) These remarks were made by Mohammad Hatta is his speech of acceptance of the Honorary Doctor of Laws degree conferred by Gadjah Mada University, November 27, 1956. The text of this address was published by Penerbit Djambatan.

(2) Ibid., p. 42.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

An identification of "democracy" in Indonesia cannot be separated from consideration of the profound cultural changes now in process in the country. The direction of change is strongly influenced by contacts with the colonial power in the past, and with the wider world in general, especially since independence. Most of the elements of contact have originated in the West; Indonesia, as well as other new societies of Asia, has adopted institutions born in the West, and has more or less followed the forms for utilizing those institutions which were developed in the West. For a consideration of democracy, these include parliaments, political parties, elections, and so forth, and also the general notion of popular sovereignty exercised through the parliament. In general, these are the results of those aspects of democratic theory relating to the individual and the state. But cultural diffusion does not necessarily mean imitation; the end product for Indonesia, once the forces deriving from sources other than the West have worked on the borrowings, is likely to be something quite different from the theoretical prototype. At least, this must be the conclusion until empirical study proves otherwise. While automobiles in use in Indonesia may have been designed in Detroit, this does not automatically imply that the role of the automobile will be the same in Indonesian culture as it is in American. The same is true of legislatures.

Most of the elements borrowed from the West are regarded as steps in a process of "modernization" in Indonesia--the preparation for participating in the world community as a modern independent nation. (3) But there is a parallel urge to preserve certain traditional modes of behavior, the prototype of which, as Dr. Hatta pointed out, is to be found in the village. This approach recognizes the village society as being collective, with a strong sense of family responsibility. The collective society functions by the system of mutual help (gotong-rojong). When problems are to be solved, there must first be consultation (musjawarah), and the decision arrived at unanimously, by achieving the "sense of the meeting" (mufakat). These are the elements which must be "modernized"--made to function in the modern world, facing contemporary problems.

(3) We use "modernization" as a synthetic term covering various attitudes concerned with "renewal" of Indonesian society, or "growth," "improvement," "development," "building up," etc., all of which are aimed at creating a society functioning in the contemporary world utilizing contemporary techniques of international communications. The term does not imply a contrast with "primitive." It is strictly concerned with "the modern world."

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

But there are difficulties. In other contexts, Indonesians will declare that the village people are poor, miserable, illiterate, backward, ignorant, unable to utilize modern technology, unfamiliar with modern life, and very much in need of guidance, instruction, education, and leadership. The people must be awakened from the slumber imposed by three hundred and fifty years of colonial domination, and led out of the prison that this has imposed upon them. Thus the people must be subjected to reorientation and uplift; they must be made aware of the wider world around them; they must be taught their civic responsibilities as citizens of a modern democratic state.

Indonesian speculation on the democratic relationships is colored by the circumstances in which it developed--the need to justify opposition to the colonial rule claimed to be responsible for the situation described above. The stress is on independence of the whole society from controls external to that society. Less attention has been paid to the implications of democracy within the society. The colonial relationship left the society in a state of misery. It must be the task of the independent nation to rise out of the misery and provide a better life for its members. But the mechanics of how this is to be achieved are left vague. Indonesian thinkers are very much conscious of the need for change. For most, however, it seems to be an abstract awareness, from which it is difficult to draw specific proposals for action. The consciousness is often expressed as a desire to "control" the changes, or to provide the necessary "leadership" and "guidance." The goal is a "just and prosperous" society, which functions according to the prescriptions of the constitution. This, evidently, would be democracy.

We are avoiding here the difficulties involved in a discussion of the implications of the process of cultural change for political behavior on the sophisticated national level. This is a problem which by itself would require a long-term investigation. Obviously, the direction of change cannot be completely "controlled"; but by conscious application of predetermined efforts, it can perhaps be influenced. Before this can happen, the abstract awareness of change will have to be made concrete in reference to specific proposals for action, and the consequences that can be expected from the actions must be faced up to. (4)

(4) In this regard, see Soedjatmoko, Economic Development as a Cultural Problem, Translation Series, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Ithaca, 1958. The original was published in Konfrontasi, September-October, 1954. This excellent article is a discussion of this problem specifically as it relates to economic development. Many of the points raised, however, are equally applicable to other aspects of Indonesian life.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The Indonesian attitude towards democracy can be summed up, for our purposes, in two trends of thought. The first deals with ideal situations, and is expressed in terms of sovereignty, the people, representative institutions, justice, prosperity, and independence. Its stress is ideological, appealing to popular rule. The second is faced with the less-than-pleasant reality of the shortcomings of the society caused by its "backward" condition. It is expressed in terms of stimulating change, leadership, guidance, and education. Its stress is technical, appealing to future welfare.

2

Applying these considerations to the problem of government in the regions, what emerges is the expectation that democracy must be the characteristic of regional government, and that regional government is part of the democratizing process. Organization must be extended to the regions, of course, but it must be democratic, accommodating the principles of popular participation and popular representation. However this ideal picture is marred by the drawbacks inherent in the present Indonesian situation. Leadership and guidance are required, and the new democratic society must be carefully constructed.

We shall try to relate the symbol of democracy to specific structures later. Here it may be helpful to show the extent of the feeling that decentralization is tied in with democratization, and indicate the pervasiveness of the symbolism involved. We need not be concerned with any "mental reservations" our sources may have held, nor with any rationalized procrastination. Our point is only that the communication on this subject is unanimous, and that the climate of opinion that has been generated equates the two processes.

In the program of the Natsir cabinet, an explicit statement of the basic democratic intent can be found. The Prime Minister said:

> ...we are guided by the fact that a strong government must be based on the reasonable and just will of the people.... Thus our efforts must be directed towards the democratization of government. ...This democratization process of course must be seen also in the organization of regional government. (5)

(5) RP/1950/II/p. 329, 330.

(5a) IP/1957/42/p. 245.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

This was in 1950, when the reunited Republic of Indonesia was just starting to function. Subsequent Governments raised no objection to the basic theory, promising only to continue to fulfill the program. Thus, for example, Prime Minister Wilopo, presenting his program to Parliament in 1952, said his cabinet would

> complete the organization and give content to regional autonomy. ....The direction would be towards democratizing regional government and speeding up the achievement of autonomy. (5a)

The members of Parliament debating the various programs did not give up repeating the opinion. The connection between democracy and decentralization was clearly put forth by people of various parties. Thus, for example, the leader of a small nationalist party, who in a later cabinet became Minister of Justice, said during the debates on the Natsir program:

> The democratization of regional government should quickly be carried out, for the Government was correct in saying that a government, to be strong, must be based on the will of the people. Here, we would only like to remind the Government that in its implementation of this program it shouldn't think too much in formal juridical terms only. We would rather suggest that the emphasis be on the psychology of the people in the regions themselves. (6)

Or the bare statement without qualification would be made:

> Democratization according to Law No. 22 of 1948 must be effected throughout Indonesia. (7)

The Government program was viewed in the light of constitutional prescription:

> The consolidation of government by achieving autonomous government in the regions is the correct approach, in the definition of democracy and sovereignty as established by our Constitution. (8)

(6) Mr. Djody Gondokusumo, Independent PNI (later, PRN), RP/1950/III/ p. 984.

(7) Maroeto Nitimihardjo, Murba party, during Natsir debates, RP/1950/III/p. 916.

(8) Soendjoto, Parindra, RP/1950/III/993.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Even more specifically, the integral relationship between democracy and decentralization was stated:

> The democratization of governmental organization must be connected with the program for broad decentralization....If decentralization is to be realized as a consequence of democratic government, then the arrangement of the organs of government, from the center to the autonomous regions, must be in accordance with its principles. (9)

When the speaker is in opposition, thus expressing criticism of the cabinet, the theory is implied; the Government is accused of failure to fulfill the promise.

> The democratization of regional government which has already been promised goes on being unrealized, causing great disappointment among the people. (10)

3

We discussed some of the doctrinal determinants of the symbol "democracy" above. But, we are more interested in functional definitions, the implication of the term for practice. In other words, we want to know, and specifically for the decentralization program, what conditions are considered democratic, or what a demand for democracy consists of. The general tendency has been to leave vague the implications of "democracy." But there are sufficient statements in our sources to give some insight into Indonesian expectations in this regard, stemming from the more general doctrinal ideas. The interpretation rests on two types of demands: those relating to the need for popular participation, and those insisting on the accommodation of popular desires. A clear statement of the first type, summarizing several points, was given during the debates of the Natsir program:

> Mr. Chairman, in my opinion it is not superfluous to reaffirm that the aim of democratization lies in the effort to awaken and develop the energies of our people.

(9) Dr. D. S. Diapari, SKI (Serikat Kerakjatan Indonesia - Indonesian People's Association), RP/1950/V/1903.

(10) I. A. Moeis, PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia - Indonesian Nationalist Party), RP/1950/IV/p. 1281.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> Democratization will be properly achieved by the participation of the people in thinking about, striving after, and caring for their own interests and needs, so that gradually but certainly their prosperity will become a reality. The people must be invited to take part in the affairs of government in their places of residence, not only in the village, as the smallest political unit, but also in the larger units, the cities, the regencies, the provinces, and the state, and this both in and out of their representative bodies. The quicker the people become conscious of their position in the community, both the small one of the village and the large one of the state, the greater the possibility that they will participate with energy, gladly taking care of their own interests. And by that participation, there will arise a feeling of responsibility as to their own well-being and the well-being of the whole community. (11)

This line of argument can be found up to the present. Sometimes it is stated strongly, for example comparing regional energies to an irrigation system, in which the waters if not given a proper channel will flood and cause damage to the surrounding fields. (12) Or sometimes it is a frustrated demand after years of disappointment: "Release the shackles that bind the people." (13) During the debates over the bill to provide one uniform decentralization law for all Indonesia, one of the leading proponents of the decentralization system summed up this aspect of the purpose of the program:

> The problem of regional autonomy is in no way a question of continuing the steps of the Dutch government in apportioning some functions to authorities in the regions. It is rather the effort to find an answer to the question of how we can revive the spirit and energies of the people in the regions to build for their own glorious future. (14)

(11) Mr. A. Z. Abidin, PSI (Partai Sosialis Indonesia - Indonesian Socialist Party), RP/1950/III/p. 1154.

(12) Andi Gappa, Masjumi, IP/1952/61/p. 297.

(13) S. Sardjono, BTI, IP/1955/VI/97/p. 725.

(14) Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, PIR (Persatuan Indonesia Raja - Greater Indonesia Union), IP/1955/VI/65/p. 478.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The "demands" and "wishes" of the people are usually invoked in criticisms of existing situations, such as complaints as to the slow pace of development. Such statements are unanimous in demanding further and better implementation of the autonomy program, for anything else results in popular "disappointment" and "dissatisfaction." Either it is stated that the disappointment already exists, or the Government is warned that:

> The feeling of disappointment among the people of a region can easily arise, for example, because the autonomous status which has been awaited is not quickly conferred, or not completed. (15)

But while this negative note may be popular as a political tactic in decrying a situation, a much more positive interpretation of the people's will also appears. It is said that the people want to participate in government (16) for the general development of society. (17) The people demand decentralization as a means to achieve progress, security, and satisfaction. (18)

We have seen that decentralization has been accepted as an important part of the new Indonesian democracy, and that it has been interpreted as the fulfillment of the wishes of the people, and the participation of the people in the process of government and development. Such propositions are general enough to cover a multitude of concrete situations. Some further aspects of Indonesian democracy and decentralization are discussed in other parts of this paper. But we are doing an injustice to Indonesian political thought by extracting partial definitions of what democracy means in Indonesia through seeking out only those statements relating to one particular program, albeit important, in the process of building a democratic state. This cannot be helped, however, until there are many more critical studies available of political thought in Indonesia.

---

(15) I. J. Kasimo, Catholic Party, during the debates of the Sukiman program, RP/1951/X/p. 4453.

(16) Ibrahim Sedar, non-party, IP/1952/III/83/p. 385; also, Mr. Djody Gondokusumo, PRN, IP/1952/III/54/p. 271.

(17) Maizir Achmaddyn's, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/75/p. 354.

(18) S. Sardjono, BTI, IP/1955/VI/97/725.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

It is perhaps not surprising that the political spokesmen we have been quoting should stress the more abstract values of democracy that are to be attained through the decentralization program. There are, however, other more practical considerations which have been mentioned in the course of discussions of the subject. These can best be summed up as efficiency in responding to local needs. It is reminiscent of one of the more influential arguments leading towards the pre-war decentralization program, (19) but the problem to which it is a response would occur in any country as large as Indonesia.

The argument is well summed up in the observation of a commentator concerned more with administration than politics:

> The transfer of authority to the autonomous regions is accomplished in the expectation that through self-government strictly regional interests can be given better and more intensive attention by the regions, because the regions are more conscious of their own needs than is the central government. (20)

The reasoning involved here, of course, does not logically result in the demand for political decentralization, but could be satisfied by a reorganization of the vertical services to allow for local decisions. But this would not provide the sense of participation that is being demanded when the "democratic" symbols are invoked. The problem is eminently one of form; the questions are what will ease the tensions, quiet the complaints, satisfy the political forces, and thus stabilize the process of government. It is not a question of the most efficient provision of services. So the major debates are concerned with the abstract theories while the background to the argument is the real situation and the need for efficient technical governmental services. This, of course, has been the problem of political philosophy ever since the philosopher-king.

(19) See, for example, Mr. J. J. Schrieke, Bepalingen en beginselen der Decentralisatie van 1903, Weltevreden, Commissie voor de Volkslectuur, 1920, page 3-4.

(20) A. Sjafrudin, Dasar-dasar Tata Usaha Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia, Bandung, Handaya (1956). Similar opinions are to be found in the parliamentary debates also.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The "ideological" approach is concerned over theory without reference to how realistic an application can be made; the "technical" argument is concerned with "efficient" administration without reference to social responses. The result, as is usually the case, must be some sort of compromise if agreement is to be reached. But the course of compromise could be smoothed and hastened if the two trends were brought somewhat closer together through modifications by each of their ideal models.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IV

THE UNITARY STATE

1

The symbols of democracy are unanimously shared, if not always similarly interpreted. Another symbol, which, while perhaps not as universal, generated almost equal fervor, was that of the "Unitary State." On August 17, 1950, five years to the day after the original Declaration of Independence, the unitary form re-emerged from the ruins of the federal state which had been established seven months earlier. On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Declaration, President Sukarno, the most vocal champion of unity, greeted the newly achieved unification with enthusiasm:

> Here is the symphony of the living national spirit; and this national spirit is vibrant, inspiring the national will and national deeds which finally focus, culminate, reach an apotheosis in that one sacred guiding light that has been our source of strength for five years--the Proclamation of August 17, 1945, of the unitary Republic of Indonesia. It is this apotheosis we are experiencing now. My friends, this day we stand again on the ground of the Unitary State.

The Indonesia that declared independence in 1945 was the successor to the Netherlands East Indies, which was, in spite of efforts in its later years to alter its political practices, highly centralized. It is fruitless to speculate as to how the new Republic would have solved the problems of the diversity of forms it included, if it had been left alone. What did happen was that it faced an antagonist that devoted its efforts to establishing a federal government.

The original Republic was the mainstay of the revolution and the dominant force in the development of Indonesian independence. Indonesia dates its independence from 1945, not from 1949 when the Dutch agreed to surrender sovereignty. This point is vital to an understanding of Indonesian views of the Dutch, and the Dutch-created governmental forms. It means that in the Indonesian view the Dutch were no longer concerned with the welfare of the archipelago, and no longer

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

had any voice in determining its future. (1) The Dutch, after all, gave up their rights to Indonesia in 1942:

> The Indonesian people consider the Netherlands' power in Indonesia as having ended on March 9, 1942...Dutch sovereignty in Indonesia died with the capitulation of the Netherlands Indies to Japan. (2)

Thus, in Indonesian eyes, the post-war reconstruction of Indonesia was a matter for Indonesian solution, not Dutch. The Republic considered itself locked in a life-and-death struggle against the Dutch. It is hardly surprising that Dutch plans were looked on with some suspicion.

It has been a popular view among western observers that a federal form would be best for Indonesia. The assumption rests on the diversity of political and cultural forms, differences of levels of economic development, education, and so forth. It is argued that the geography of the country supports this thesis. While it is certainly true that the diversity exists, it does not necessarily follow that federalism is the logical concomitant, and even if it were, that the system developed by the Dutch was the only possible or the best one.

The formal classification of states into federal or unitary according to an appropriate clause in a constitution tells very little about actual political practices, and does very little to help political analysis. The diversity of modes of political behavior and constitutional structures in the world today indicates the uselessness of such a description in determining how a state actually operates. The United States, prototype of modern federalism, has spent most of its history in circumventing the limitations seemingly placed on central activity; the Soviet Union has effectively centralized political decision-making power

(1) That the Republic entered negotiations with the Dutch was more due to the pressure of circumstances than any widely held acquiescence to Dutch rights. On the negotiations, see Kahin, op. cit. A lucid presentation of the earliest phase of the discussions is given in Idrus N. Djajadiningrat, The Beginnings of the Indonesian-Dutch Negotiations and the Hoge Veluwe Talks, Monograph Series, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Ithaca, 1958.

(2) Mohammad Hatta, Verspreide Geschriften, Djakarta, Amsterdam, C. P. J. van der Peet, 1952, p. 326 (original in French).

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

while maintaining a "federal constitution." Unitary states, on the other hand, have demonstrated great versatility in devising types of local government and local government autonomy. The advantages to be "gained" through a federal system can be achieved by unitary systems, and vice versa. There is no limit to the political ingenuity of man.

The seemingly objective factors of ethnography and geography are not necessarily decisive. (3) In fact, it is just those factors which could be used in an argument in the other direction. The smaller groups must be given a sense of direct participation in the high affairs of state, the more backward ones must be helped along by their richer brothers, the divisive tendencies are present in sufficient quantity, unity must be stressed and strengthened. The poorer areas can ill afford the expenses of their own government, they do not have enough personnel to run a government, etc. But the most important single factor is the attitudes of the people involved. The case of Indonesia is interesting in this respect: some observers argue for federalism (whether it had to be the particular form created by the Dutch is not always clear); the political forces in Indonesia argued for unity. It should have been easy to predict the outcome.

The federal state was established in 1949. We need not be concerned here with the objective reality of Dutch motives. Whether or not it was intended as a device to continue Dutch influence in the archipelago is beside the point; what is important is that Indonesians believed it to be so.

> By most Indonesians (the federal system) had been seen as an instrument of Dutch control and an obstacle to the attainment of their independence. To keep this system meant for them the retention of an unwelcome legacy of their colonial past and the maintenance in power of many Indonesians who had worked with the Dutch for ends which appeared selfish and opposed to the struggle of the Republic, people who in nearly every case enjoyed little backing from the populations of their areas. (4)

(3) Karl W. Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communication, published jointly by the Technology Press of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1953, especially Chapter I, gives some interesting criticisms of traditional notions of nationality based on just such factors as these. His arguments would have application here.

(4) Kahin, op. cit., p. 450.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The Jogja Republic was, and had to be, the dominating influence in the new federation. In terms of population, development, leadership and spirit, it far overshadowed the other units. And the Republic fought for a unitary state.

Indonesia got its independence by revolution, and the revolution was made in the Republic. The federal form was imposed on it, accompanied by two "police actions" and mutual accusations of bad faith. The symbol "federal" itself came to be pejorative, conjuring up visions of continued submission to colonial influence, and the identification of the symbol as being of Dutch origin was sufficient to rouse opposition to it. It would have been far too much to expect that the bitterness of the revolution would dissolve immediately after the signing of the Round Table Agreements with which Dutch sovereignty formally ended. The federal government could not work because the leading people did not want it to work. So it fell. It was thought that Dutch influence fell with it.

> With the establishment of the Unitary State, the federal system, which the van Mook Government and its tools used as a political weapon to establish states--even the tiniest ones--in order to weaken the struggle of the Indonesian nation and the position of the Republic of Indonesia, and to strengthen the position of the Dutch in our country, is buried forever. (5)

It is significant that the new unitary form was specifically declared the continuation of the unitary republic that was proclaimed in 1945.

2

The spirit of 1950 was to make the unitary state work. It may well be that there remained groups and individuals still devoted to the symbolic autonomy that a federal organization would have given, but such feelings were seldom articulated. It is with the dominant symbolism of the unitary state that problems of regional government must be considered. It immediately became clear (indeed, it was apparent even before 1950) that regional demands would be put forth. In any general consideration of regional government, however, demands were couched in terms of action within the unitary

(5) The Editors of Mingguan Gembira, Dari R.I.S. Ke Negara Kesatuan, (n.d.), p. 80.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

state. The whole program of decentralization was to be a manifestation of the unitary state, a demonstration of how the unitary state was to be made effective in all corners of the country.

> Unitarism rejects federalism with its component states, unions, or federated states; it casts out a federated form--Indonesia divided into parts of a commonwealth; and it banishes the principle of insularity. Unitarism demands one unified state on the principle of oneness. The Unitary State rejects federalism, and will operate by means of autonomy in the regions, because, for the welfare of the regions, the division of authority and independence must be carried out with justice according to the needs and interests of good administration. (6)

Decentralization was a guarantee of the strength of the unitary state, both because of its own inherent value and because the people believed it necessary.

> (Article 131 of the Constitution) is a very desirable and very appropriate political prescription. Its fulfillment has been impatiently awaited for years by the whole population in the regions, for they are certain that that is the one way in which, besides guaranteeing the fundamental strength of the Unitary State, each region will be able to develop quickly and properly, to achieve the happiness and welfare of the people. (7)

It is worth noting that even severe critics of the centralization of authority of which the government came to be accused made it clear that their complaints were not directed against the unitary state as such. Especially in the early days, use of the term "federal" would have been politically unwise, if ever desirable. One speaker said:

> When I support broad autonomy, it in no way means that I would have a return to the federalism that

(6) Muhammad Yamin, Proklamasi dan Konstitusi Republik Indonesia, Djakarta, Djambatan, 1951, p. 81.

(7) Nungtjik A. R., PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia - Indonesian Communist Party), IP/1956/VII/39/p. 319, during the debates of the program of the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> we have already buried. The authority of autonomous regions in a unitary state is entirely different than in federal state. The authority is given by the Central Government on the principle of decentralization, and the autonomous region is not sovereign within the limits of that authority. (8)

Or, put another way, strong criticism of the central government was prefaced by the remark that it was not to be taken as a demand for federalism:

> Thanks to the joint will (of the people from all regions and their representatives) the Unitary State was created on August 17th, 1950. We are not retreating one step from the road then begun. (9)

The state would have to be decentralized as well as unitary, and failing the former, it was suggested, it would be hard to maintain the latter:

> The legislation on autonomy, in the final analysis, will determine the position and form of the state--federal or unitary. If the people in the regions are not satisfied with this legislation, there is no telling what the future form of the state will be. But if the Government and Parliament are capable of formulating laws which are satisfactory for the regions, I believe the people in the regions will receive the unitary form gladly. (10)

As time went on, more and more accusations were being made of the central government neglecting the regions, and failing to provide the necessary laws for regional autonomy. And as the critics became more vocal they warned of threats to the unitary structure that could arise from the growing discontent in the regions:

---

(8) I. A. Moeis, PNI, RP/1950/IV/1285.

(9) Zainal Baharuddin, non-party, IP/1952/III/97/p. 446.

(10) Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, PIR. These remarks were made to the Committee on Internal Affairs of the Parliament. Mr. Sutardjo was speaking in his capacity as Commissioner for Autonomy, an office established to aid the Ministry of Internal Affairs in drafting decentralization legislation. IP/1955/VI/64/p. 474.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> I'm not an astrologer, but if we in the center continue to serve the interests of the regions in the way we are now doing, there would be reason enough to predict that the time will come when, in spite of the wishes of the members sitting in this chamber, a federal structure will be formed on the ruins of the Unitary State. (11)
>
> Popular dissatisfaction in the outer regions towards the actions of the central government has given rise to the desire in some quarters in some regions to reconsider a federal system. If we had to eliminate the former federal system because it was a Dutch construction, what would be wrong with considering a federal system which would really be supported by the genuine desires of our people? That is what they are saying. (12)

In 1956, the Constituent Assembly, chosen in direct popular elections the previous December, started its deliberations which are ultimately designed to result in a permanent constitution to replace the present provisional document. It is within the power of this body to alter the structure of the state, and turn it into a federal form. It can, theoretically, establish any type of relationship between the regional centers and a national authority that it wishes. But there is no reason to suspect that the constellation of political attitudes in this body is very much different from that of Parliament, so that some estimates of the limits of political possibility for the former can be judged from the latter.

During 1956, if the question had had to be decided immediately, there is little doubt that the Constituent Assembly would have chosen to remain with a unitary but decentralized structure. The distribution of the positive symbolism of the unitary state and the negative associations with the term "federal"--strengthened by the vows of loyalty to unitarianism by even the strongest critics--would probably have required such a result. There was some growing feeling that a bicameral legislature was desirable, with one house specifically devoted to representing the regions. But even this met strong opposition.

(11) Sjamsuddin Sutan Makmur, PIR, during the debates on the draft law on regional government, IP/1955/VI/67/p. 496.

(12) Nur El Ibrahimy, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/87/p. 402.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

In December, 1956, the regional "movement" started, successfully in Central Sumatra, unsuccessfully in North Sumatra. This was soon followed by similar actions in South Sumatra, East Indonesia, and Kalimantan. There were variations in each case, but in general, the military commander in each area led regional forces in establishing controls over the course of regional government, thus superseding the central government's position in these matters. The most serious change in activities brought about by these movements was in the financial field and the establishment of direct barter trade with foreign sources. (13) The regional governments ,thus reformed, operated for over a year. They maintained order and demonstrated the ability to perform governmental services on their own initiatives.

Several conferences were held in efforts to solve the problems raised by this novel situation, but solutions did not seem to be available as yet. The solutions became harder to find as time passed, for each side grew more intransigent in its position, and the problems became intermingled with other political problems, and even world politics was implicated. But the difficulties of the growing tensions between the regions and the central government are long-standing ones, and whatever the solution to the regional "movements" and subsequent rebellion turns out to be, basic questions may still remain to be answered. The regional "movements" in one form or another were not difficult to foresee. Attitudes have been developing over the years that have indicated some of these problems; we must now turn our attention to some of these attitudes and the symbols used to express them.

(13) We do not call these movements "revolts," especially not during the course of 1957. Such a term would be highly misleading. While these regions did "rebel" against some of the authority of the central government, they remained within the state. In fact, this was never an issue. Most central government services continued functioning as before with normal communications between region and ministry. Most of the army officers involved not only remained in the army, but were given increased legal authority for those "acts of defiance" through State of War and Siege regulations which went into effect in March 1957. The situation got worse in 1958 and some of the "movements," notably in Central Sumatra and North Sulawesi, did change into "revolts."

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER V

"PROVINCIALISM"

1

While affirmations of adherence to the unitary form may have been the rule, especially in the early days after 1950, expressions which gave rise to charges of "provincialism" began to be heard--and as quickly were accompanied by denials of the charge. "Provincialism" is more a symbol of political accusation than a precise descriptive term. While it could be used to imply the existence of local loyalties within a wider community, it does not often help, by itself, to explain or describe the pattern or responses to political stimuli. It, like so many terms in political jargon, is useful in emotion-evoking political debate, but adds little to understanding of political situations, unless its use is carefully circumscribed. For our purposes, the way in which the symbol has come into prominence on the Indonesian political scene is of interest.

There is no doubt that local loyalties in the form of identifications with the various ethnic groups that make up Indonesia do exist. But the implications of this almost self-evident generalization for political action are not easily drawn. Questions emerge that have not yet been answered by empirical research; until this is done, conclusions in this regard must remain highly tentative. With this in mind, we can suggest some hypotheses that have a bearing on the subject.

While for purposes of facility of speech we talk of "the Indonesians," in fact we must have it clearly in mind whom we are talking about. As a first gross division, we might suggest that the problem of "local loyalties" as it affects political action does not refer to the average small farmer, the peasant, whose awareness extends little beyond his village. He is cognizant of his ethnic group, and he is also cognizant of Indonesia. His political responses, however, are largely confined to the village, and are probably a negligible factor--or at best a passive factor--in the larger problems implied in the conflict between "regional" and "national" loyalties. In other words, while the peasant may be classified as "provincial" it is a village provinciality,

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

and not concerned with the political disputes we will be discussing in this section. The problem concerns the articulate minority, the educated or semi-educated, largely the city dwellers from whom political symbols directly evoke responses. Further, it is the leaders among this group, the opinion formers, that have raised and fostered the disputes giving rise to the tensions. And while ethnic variety among these people can be determined, it is also true that these people are in large measure "Indonesian." Their education, their work, their residence is often in places other than their areas of origin. Their political attitudes are not determined primarily by their origin, but by their training. The cultural factors of personality discovered in village studies are not readily translated in terms of political action among an educated elite. Other factors must be searched out.

There is, however, readily apparent even among the articulate minority a dualism of loyalties that could easily (and evidently at times does) give rise to tensions. On the one hand there is felt a loyalty to the concept of Indonesia and Indonesian nationalism that was fought for with blood and suffering during the revolution, and which tries to face the outside world with a united front; on the other hand there is a consciousness of differences, often stemming from ethnic origins, which leads to judgments of propriety, conduct, status, and prestige. It is this latter phenomenon that leads to conclusions of the ethnic basis of the provincial problem in Indonesia.

But the question is whether these ethnic factors are sufficient to explain the political difficulties that were expressed as charges of provincialism. We would suggest here that this is not the basis of the problem, and is actually only an added confusion rather than a basic contributory element.

It is not at all certain that political actions are based on ethnic differences. Such feelings, for example, do not explain the patterns of party strength in the recent national elections. Though some of the parties evidence a preponderance of influence in certain areas, there was sufficient diffusion of political strength in each area to indicate that the leadership of each ethnic group is far from politically unified. (1) Further, the responses of people residing in regions other than their ethnic area has never been systematically investigated. There is evidence, however,

(1) The best analysis of the recent elections, including tables showing the distribution of votes, is in Feith, op. cit.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

to indicate that these groups for purposes of politics identify with their area of residence. If this pattern is regular, there may be political and economic factors which far outweigh the ethnic as bases for action or demand.

This is not to deprecate the extent of the problem faced by Indonesian national leaders in unifying the great variety of cultural forms present in the country. Nor can it be denied that ethnic feelings--sometimes antagonisms--do exist, and play a role of undetermined importance in motivating a person's political reactions. We again face the opposition of the ideal aspiration and the real situation. The same speaker will utilize symbols of identification claiming the unity of Indonesian nationality on one occasion; and plead for a strengthening of unity on another. This again may be interpreted as on the one hand the "ideological" attempt to act as if an ideal goal is already reality, and on the other hand the "technical" recognition that the ideal is still far from achievement. Just how "far" is perhaps the measure of the problem of "provincialism" and also the measure of the inability thus far to solve it. In any case, the clear indications of regional loyalties--whatever the basis--complicate the process of politics, but, at the time of this writing (and in spite of the regional "revolts") do not make it impossible.

2

Charges of "provincialism" arise when the representatives of a region present demands for their region that are critical of the programs being carried out by the central government. These demands are often, but not always, expressed in terms of the lack of implementation of the decentralization program. In the earlier years of the unitary republic, the policy most often criticized was concerned with the placement of personnel in local areas. The charge was that too often the choicer jobs were given to people not originally from the region concerned. Later, other problems became equally prominent. It was complained that the use of development resources was being unfairly distributed, and that the regions whose products secured large amounts of foreign exchange were seeing little returns for their contributions.

These complaints were usually expressed by speakers claiming to represent the "Outer Islands," and directed against "Java." (It must be noted here that the division between Java and the Outer Islands is an old heritage going back to Dutch practice.) The actual truth of the claims

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

need not concern us here. (2) What is important is the widespread and growing belief in what are felt to be real grievances.

When complaints are made about the placement of personnel in the regions, reference generally is to the pamong pradja--the civil administration corps resonsible for general government as opposed to technical services. The positions in question usually are those of Governor (head of a province), Resident (head of a residency), and Bupati (head of a kabupaten, or regency). The problem was immensely complicated by the experience growing out of the revolution and the Dutch efforts to establish federal states. The Dutch had to turn government over to Indonesian personnel who were willing to participate in their plans and staff these several governments. Feelings of hostility arose between those who cooperated with the Dutch and those who did not; they were labeled the "co"(operators) and the "non"(cooperators).

With the establishment of the unitary state in 1950, and the concomitant extension of the power of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there was evidently a large-scale shift in appointments, in which the "nons"--those who did not cooperate with the Dutch--were given preferential treatment. A large source of supply of such people was in Java, where in any case there was a larger number of people with governmental training available. The greatest number of complaints expressed in the parliamentary debates referred to Kalimantan, but other areas were not ignored. A Sumatran leader sums up the accusation, saying

> The outer regions are getting the impression that in the placement of personnel the key positions are always reserved for our Javanese brothers. (3)

As clear as these complaints seem to be, they are not uncomplicated. The speakers evidently recognize that ethnic

(2) The "objective truth" of these charges would, of course, be difficult to establish, and would depend entirely on the criteria of "contribution" and "distribution" chosen. Some light is shed on the question of the supposed monopoly of top positions by one group in the very interesting study by Soelaeman Soemardi, "Some Aspects of the Social Origin of Indonesian Political Decision-Makers," Madjalah Hukum dan Masjarakat, Vol. II, No. 2., April 1957, pp. 24-32.

(3) Mohammad Sjafei, non-party, IP/1952/III/55/p. 274.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

origin is not by itself a sufficient basis for opposition to an appointment, and that as Indonesians they could not resent Javanese officials merely because they were Javanese. Thus, they modify their complaints, by claiming that they are made only when there are capable personnel available locally. Local people, they say, could do the job much better, for they understand the local language and customs. Besides, it demoralizes the existing staff when new people are placed over them, even though the new appointees are not necessarily more "capable." Referring to the personnel pattern in Kalimantan, one speaker says:

> All this would not lead to any objection from me provided there is indeed no Kalimantan person that could fill those positions, and provided the central government holds honestly to the principle of "the right man in the right place." Any Indonesian regardless of where he is originally from, wherever he is placed should be received with open arms by the population concerned. (4)

The symbol to which all appeal is "the right man in the right place" (the English phrase is usually used). There is, as might be expected, a variety of situations covered by it. The central government uses it as a slogan for its personnel policy; the critics use it as a slogan against that policy. The universality of the symbol in the face of this obvious lack of agreement raises the question of where the distinctions lie. Aside from the possibility of political pressures motivating the various positions taken, there still seems to remain the influence of the two trends of thought mentioned in other contexts in this paper. The "ideological" argument defines the symbol as referring to acceptability, by which is meant trusted by the people, close to the people, etc. The "technical" argument refers to capability, which is identified by training, experience, etc.

While purely ethnic considerations may influence attitudes towards this problem, especially as regards prestige factors--the positions in question are all high prestige positions--they alone would be much too simple an explanation for a complicated phenomenon. This is demonstrated by the cases in which strong opposition was generated against appointments of officials of the same ethnic background as the region concerned, and the acceptance in other cases of officials from other ethnic backgrounds. Further, one does not find criticisms of appointments of people from all other ethnic

(4) A. R. Djokoprawiro, PIR, IP/1952/III/81/379.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

groups, but rather mainly against one. And that one is not the only group from which officials are drawn.

Whatever the factors leading to dissatisfaction, the personnel policy of the central government led to criticisms which gave rise to a new set of symbols which set the tone of the "regional problem"--that of "Javanese imperialism."

> Because of the dissatisfaction (over the central government's personnel policies) the feeling has emerged that Kalimantan now is no longer ruled by the Dutch, but an imperial colonialism from Jogja has arisen. (5)

> Does the Cabinet or even Parliament know that the saying has been heard: "Gone is Dutch colonialism, coming is Javanese colonialism"? (6)

The existence of such expressions has been an open secret in Indonesia, which from time to time is denied officially. How widespread it has been, and what its pattern of growth has been, however, is not known, and has not been systematically investigated. The emergence of such feelings is not simply a response to the personnel question, though we notice them first in that context; it is tied in with a more general attitude that most of what benefits are available go to Java. Actually, the expression of dissatisfaction is confused. It is not always Java and the Javanese that take the bulk of the pie; often it is the central government and Djakarta that are the culprits. It may be that there is an identification of the central government and the Javanese, but this is not always indicated by the sources. This is supported by discontent among Javanese speakers also. The mode of expression is probably a carry-over of the influence of the prewar practice of dividing Indonesia into Java and the Outer Provinces. In this relationship, Java was definitely the center of attraction and the receiver of benefits. This latter phenomenon is implied in statements such as the one made by a Sumatran, after referring to the economic contribution of the Djambi area in Sumatra:

> In spite of that, Djambi is nothing but Outer Territories, fodder for the center. (7)

(5) A. B. M. Jusuf, Labor Party, RP/1950/IV/1638. The reference is to Jogjakarta as the capital of the Republic of Indonesia of the revolutionary period.

(6) Mohammad Sjafei, non-party, IP/1952/III/55/p. 274.

(7) Mohammad Sjafei, non-party, IP/1952/III/55/p. 273. The last phrase was "makanan pusat."

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

In terms of statements that might be labeled "provincial," those concerned with the placement of personnel in the regions soon took second place to another type--statements critical of the central government's policies in distributing economic benefits, usually expressed as development projects. While the major part of Indonesia's population and most of what secondary industry exists is centered on Java, the greater portion of foreign exchange earned by Indonesia is from the export of primary products which originate in the outer islands--oil, rubber, tin, copra. Foreign exchange is very much in the forefront of people's minds, because, given the economically backward condition of the country, development is seen as depending on the import of capital goods. It was quickly apparent that development projects and general improvement of living conditions were not proceeding at a pace commensurate with the ambitions of the revolution. Blame, naturally enough, was placed on the central government.

The disparity between the amounts received by the central government from the outer islands and the amounts spent by the government in the regions became a point of severe criticism for many speakers:

> The people of Kalimantan know how much rubber from Kalimantan was exported. They can calculate how many millions of rupiahs flow into the central government's coffers each day in customs. They realize they are assisting the central government in the foreign exchange problem. But they are disappointed that there are no moves by the government in the field of development, not the smallest thing that could give them some satisfaction. (8)

> One port in Inderagiri--Rengat--produces three millions a month in customs. This money is taken completely by the central government. Under the Dutch...a part of the money was given to the principality there. But now, not one cent stays in the region, and the Central Government isn't able to build one Junior High School for the whole kabupaten. (9)

(8) Ir. Pangeran Mohd. Noor, Masjumi, RP/1950/III/p. 1211.

(9) H. Siradjuddin Abbas, Perti (Pergerakan Tarbijah Islamijah - Islamic Educational Association), IP/1952/III/59/p. 289. Perti is a small Moslem party; its greatest concentration of strength is in Central Sumatra.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

It would be hard to claim that this concern over the division of income and development projects is a result of the diversity of cultures and forms in Indonesia. It seems pretty clearly a problem of local interests, economic and political, opposing the central government--and, it might be said, opposing the national interest. Certainly, the central government would have a good case for claiming that its responsibilities were to the whole country, and that its decisions as to where projects should be placed couldn't be based merely on which particular part of the country produced the crops that were exported. They would have to claim that they viewed the economy of the country as an integral whole, and they would have to claim that only the central government, with its overall view, could best decide where the limited resources could best be spent.

It is a good argument; but it didn't convince the regions. Regional spokesmen not only claimed that Java was getting the best of everything; they pointed to waste and corruption in the central government (ignoring the problem of corruption in the regions), the increase in luxury goods to be seen in Djakarta, and so forth. They compared this to the shortages in their own regions, and the dissatisfaction increased. This problem of distribution is one of the keys that sparked the regional movements of 1956-1958. One of the steps the regional "councils" took was to establish direct barter trade with foreign sources, exchanging raw materials for commodities desired in the regions, bypassing the central government's import-export regulations and controls. According to leaders of the movements, the barter trade was intended as a temporary expedient, to be halted as soon as a reasonable settlement of the whole regional problem is achieved. Nevertheless, it is a question that will make settlement difficult. Having once tasted the fruits of direct income, the regions will find it hard to surrender the privilege unless some real concessions are made to them.

4

The accusations of "provincialism" and charges of "Javanese colonialism" became stronger as the years passed with little visible implementation of the decentralization program. It is interesting to note the mode of expression regarding these attitudes. The speakers claimed to be reporting feelings among the people of the regions, while at the same time disassociating themselves from these attitudes. The statements were made in support of criticisms of government actions--or lack of action--or to indicate the need for corrective action, and, possibly, as veiled threats of

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

additional trouble if that action were not taken. The dominant symbols of national politics (such as "democracy" and "unitarism") were at the same time reiterated.

At first, the threat to national unity--a symbol which has received universal approval--arising from regional dissatisfaction was emphasized. Referring to the central government's personnel policy, one speaker said:

> I consider this problem to be of the utmost importance; the unity of Indonesia could be ruined because of it, through the rise of provincialism in the regions. (10)

Overtones of possible future danger are present in this statement, but the tenor is mild compared to later remarks. The same speaker two years later said, first defining his terms:

> In my opinion, provincialism can be called a neurosis of a group (segolongan bangsa) which arises from the feeling that that group is treated unjustly, that it is not given its proper due, etc., by another group.

Applying the definition specifically to regional feelings, he continued:

> Thus, many among the peoples outside Java feel that they have been treated unjustly, and have not been given their due by the people in Java. (11)

The dangers which were considered a future possibility in 1950 are viewed as imminent in 1952.

The threats implicit in earlier attitudes become specific as the criticisms become more intense. In terms of the symbols of Indonesian political life, one of the more favored ones, that of the unitary state itself, is challenged. The danger of separatism, not found in the first few years, comes to be mentioned. More generally, it is the threat that dissatisfaction will lead to the emergence of demands for a federal structure. Again, the speakers disassociate themselves from the attitude, claiming only to be reporting a growing opinion to be found in the regions. The "federal symbol throughout this period (1950-1956) remains an unpopular one, and political wisdom would not allow its use. When it is

(10) I.A. Moeis, PNI, RP/1950/IV/p. 1284.

(11) IP/1952/III/101/p. 481.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

referred to, it is put in terms of "what they are saying" in the regions. The statements in Parliament are put forth as means to preserve the unitary state.

This loyalty to the symbol of the unitary state even in the midst of the strongest of criticism deserves to be emphasized. Those speakers most insistent on the interests of the regions are quick to disavow the charge of provincialism, denying that their demands are aimed at particularistic desires. Their claim is that the regions must be built up for the good of the whole state. At first, the attitude was that the charge of provincialism should not be too quickly issued each time regional problems were brought to parliament.

> I hope the Government will truly heed the voices from the regions. Don't consider them as mere details. Furthermore, don't be quick to label all the claims as "provincialism," for such charges only increase and sharpen the tensions. (12)

Blame was put on the situation. It was a "reaction against the shortcomings faced in regional development," (13) and "not surprising if it existed." (14)

The real situation in Indonesia, the background against which these debates and the development of these attitudes have taken place has been one of general economic and political deterioration culminating in the regional movements of 1956-1958. But, even these extreme actions, which have done violence to the symbol of the unitary state, have been accompanied by statements of loyalty to the symbol. Colonel Ventje Sumual, leader of the "Permesta" movement in East Indonesia has been quoted in a press interview as saying that the allegations of separatism are "'concoctions and lies'. He firmly denied that the developments in the regions were aimed at separating the areas from the unitarian state."(15) Colonel Barlian, head of the South Sumatra movement is quoted as stating: "'We still love the Unitary State, but at the same time we should also pay due attention to the interests

(12) Ir. Pangeran Mohammad Noor, Masjumi, RP/1950/III/p.1208.

(13) Andi Gappa, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/60/p. 296.

(14) Maizir Achmaddyn's, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/75/p. 356.

(15) PIA News Bulletin, August 27, 1957, p. 8 (English language edition).

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

of our own province'." (16) And former Vice President Hatta, after a trip to Central Sumatra, reports on the "Banteng Council" in that region:

> The Banteng Council itself has several times given its standpoint...and sent its messages to the central government, that its movement is not designed to separate (from the Republic of Indonesia); neither was it an ethnic movement. Rather it was a corrective movement--corrective towards the central government which has treated the regions as step-children up till now, and corrective of the political machinations at the center which has already become characterized by the spirit and practice of corruption. (17)

He emphasized that it was a regional movement, aimed at regional development, brought about because of definite faults in the central government. In general, the regional movements have been claiming to be the true defenders of the ideals of the revolution. The attitude can be summed up as follows: It is not the Unitary State that is at fault; it is the politicians in Djakarta who are ruining the Republic by neglecting the regions while indulging their own interests.

Several conferences were held between regional and central leaders in efforts to solve the problems raised by this novel situation. There was little result, and 1957 passed with a steadily worsening relationship developing. It would not be surprising if the continued existence of the crisis is causing many people--especially those supporting the regional regimes--to revise some thoughts on the structure of the state. A solution must be found; the regions have demonstrated their tenacity. It may well be that the direction of change will be towards a structure in which regional autonomy will be constitutionally outlined--in other words, a federal structure. Thus far, the communication which has taken place on the subject would still not indicate such a solution. The symbols of unitarism are still much in evidence. But expressions of disappointment with it are heard, and the term "federal" has shown the beginnings of a return to respectability. But the situation is volatile, and change, when it comes, will come rapidly.

(16) PIA News Bulletin, June 26, 1957, p. 9 (English language edition).

(17) Pedoman, June 2, 1957.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

One can come to no firm conclusion regarding "provincialism" at this time. There is a general demoralization not only in the regions, but also in Java, and even in Djakarta. The failure of the national government to fulfill the promises of the revolution, the growing realization of mismanagement, the frustration at constantly being prevented from taking action because of the centralization of decision-making, the frustration of seeing the promises of the revolution subverted in Djakarta politics have led to a general discontent which has been searching for scapegoats. When added to the real problems of ethnic differentiation and historical development that do exist, it was perhaps natural that Java and the Javanese became the whipping-boys for the growing protests from the outer islands. What is meant, evidently, is Djakarta, and not Java. But once the expression of anti-Java symbols started, they multiplied. Given the general discontent, however, the same or similar problems would have arisen even if the whole country were of the same ethnic group.

This does not lessen the fact that regional loyalties are becoming stronger. The central government symbolizes the nation, and the central government, especially since 1956, is becoming a negative symbol, an authority to be opposed. The leaders of the regional movements may try to maintain an atmosphere of loyalty to the nation, but unless some accommodation with the central government is worked out, and the prestige of the central government given some concrete form in the regions, regional loyalties will continue to replace national ties.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VI

CENTRAL-REGIONAL RELATIONS

1

Given the attachment to a structure of authority in which the central power has at least nominal control and responsibility for the totality of governmental affairs, together with the recognition and acceptance that regional government in some form shall be established, the question immediately arises as to what expectations there have been as to the relations between the central authority and its regional units.

No clear pictures of the respective roles emerge from our sources. It is possible that the reason for this is the absence of a set of delimited practices which could be used as a point of departure in discussions. Or, it may be that in the nature of political disputation, the demands for a role for the regional units is deliberately left vague. In any case, while partial patterns of expectations can be determined regarding the central government, the case of the regional governments is much more difficult.

There was a general agreement, at least at the beginning, on the consequences of the unitary structure: that it is the responsibility of the central government to dispose of the regional problem. It has been first and foremost a task for the central government to design and implement a satisfactory decentralization program. Each of the cabinets included a statement of its intention to carry out decentralization, which would indicate at least a recognition that it could not be ignored. When the programs were debated in Parliament, there may have been criticism and opposition to many aspects of government policy, but no hint of criticism of this intent. The speakers, even the most ardent champions of the regions, have not challenged the idea that the organization of the regional government was to be designed by the central government.

To understand this point, and its importance for the development of the problem under consideration, we must digress for a moment from discussion of the regional problem alone. It has been noted as a "dynamic factor" that there is a "trend

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

toward highly centralized governmental authority" (1) in the newly emergent countries of Asia, and to this generalization Indonesia provides no exception. The tendency is connected with the whole development of the nationalist movement on one hand, and the high level of aspiration compared to the low level of development on the other.

Considering the latter point first, the leaders of Indonesia fully realize the shortcomings and difficulties abounding in their country. They are painfully aware of the lack of an educated and active citizenry, and the lack of training in all fields of modern life. They know that technically Indonesia is a very backward country. Yet hopes are high, and there are aspirations to change these characteristics. The need is to overcome these shortages and reconstruct Indonesian society in a modern pattern. It has been noted that leadership in this type of country is undifferentiated. This, at one level, is the conscious response to the problems readily apparent. Consciously the feeling exists that available leadership is too scanty to be specific, and each educated person has responsibilities wider than his specialization. Since the greatest concentration of educated people is available only to the national government, or the central leadership, it is the central authority that must guide the reconstruction--and this leadership must be provided in all fields.

A word should be said here about the role of leadership in Indonesian society. When President Sukarno announced his plans for "Guided Democracy" in 1957, it was greeted with enthusiasm in some quarters, but it engendered strong opposition too. But, while the plan itself was unacceptable to several of the parties, there was not much of an attack on the "leadership" element involved. The need for leadership in Indonesian democracy is generally admitted, and reference is often made in political debate not only to the people, but to the people "and their leaders."

The concept of guidance and leadership advocated by President Sukarno is not a new development. He--and many others--have held the belief in the need for it for a long time. In his first address as President of the United States of Indonesia in December 1949, Sukarno said:

> For us, an Eastern nation, the Indonesian nation, democracy is not something new, popular rule is not something new. But there is a difference between our democracy and that of others. Eastern

(1) John F. Cady, "Evolving Political Institutions in Southeast Asia" in Philip W. Thayer, ed., op. cit., p. 120.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> democracy--more clearly Indonesian democracy that has descended to us from generation to generation, is democracy accompanied by leadership; democracy with leadership! That is Eastern democracy, Indonesian democracy. The leader carries a great responsibility. The leader must know how to lead. The leader must lead.

But what after all is leadership? Using a minimal definition of the exercise of influence over the actions of others, we find a tradition of "leadership" that goes back into Indonesian social history, summed up in a "paternal" relationship between ruler and ruled. And, as a product of the history of Indonesian culture, the problem must be concerned with the factors of prestige and status and the positions of leadership.

The social response to status positions is based more on a habit of obedience than on any rational recognition of accomplishment. The high-status people expect to be followed; the ordinary people expect to give their obedience. The extent to which this generalization does not hold true is perhaps the best single measure of the extent of social change in Indonesia. But how are high status positions--and thus leadership positions--attained? We are here suggesting that it is not by measurement of accomplishment, or rather, not by measurement of accomplishment in fields of political concern (note the large number of doctors and engineers in positions of political importance). There must be other roads to these positions, a subject demanding much further study. Obviously there is no single process at work that will describe all instances, and as the social change progresses, the pattern will become even more diversified. Further, protest may be accounted for in Indonesian history, but only by informal means (whole villages moving away from an area under the control of a tyrant, passive resistance, etc.). "Constitutional" means for channeling and resolving disagreements are relatively new.

When, to this tradition of open obedience, the notion of mufakat--the custom of arriving at agreement by the unanimous "sense of the meeting"--is added, some interesting speculation arises as to the nature of the "leadership" that is to be exercised. The leader, or the person in a prestige position, may be approached with disagreements. Discussion is to take place until the disagreements are resolved in unanimous consent. But how far will the protesters carry their arguments in the face of the opposing opinions of the higher-status person? In fact, how well will their arguments be presented in his presence? Open agreement may be reached, but to what extent is it really a meeting of the minds? Or is it that the protesters subordinate their discontent for the sake of the open agreement, only to have it emerge later when they realize their protests have not been fully answered?

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

This is a problem of interpersonal relationships. Traditional culture made clear demands in this regard, but the process of social change is doing them violence. Until a new pattern of such relationships becomes sufficiently stabilized to accommodate disagreements, we can expect a high degree of instability in the political process.

2

The building up of the country is more consciously professed in Indonesia than ever was the case in the West, and the social responsibility to participate in this process is constantly reiterated. "Natural" growth is out of the question; the objective is "planned" growth.

> We cannot allow and surrender (that) improvement to mere developments. We reject the concept of "evolutionary determinism" which, as you know from sociology, considers a community as the "resultant of forces, often mechanical, that operate almost automatically regardless of man's efforts." (2)

Whether or not people actually act according to these professions of faith is beside the point. Actions, demands, claims are all justified by reference to this ideal.

The growth is to be national, and the leadership is responsible for the development of the whole Indonesian nation. The image of development is for the country as a whole, and the plans are referred to as national. This may in part be a consequence of a system of symbols with which the nationalist movement developed, and especially with which the revolution was fought. Great stress was placed on national unity to resist the enemy, and the victory was attributed to the national will of the Indonesian people. When, after the revolution, problems did not immediately disappear, the same symbol of national unity was appealed to in order to meet them. (This is particularly true of President Sukarno, who goes a step further in arguing that the revolution itself is not yet complete. It is also true of many others). Translated into practical terms, the appeal to national unity may be expressed as an appeal to follow the plans of the leaders, which, to all intents and purposes--up to the end of 1956--meant the national government.

(2) Roeslan Abdulgani, Funksi Penerangan di Indonesia, Kementerian Penerangan R. I. (nd), pp. 63-64.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The centralization of responsibility, or the attribution of initiation of action to the central government,has been readily apparent in almost all the political communication that has taken place in regard to specific problems. Demands are stated in terms of appeals for the central government to take a certain action, or for the central government to correct a situation. Motions passed by groups, resolutions taken at meetings, speeches in Parliament all reflect this tendency. It is especially true for technical developments, in fields such as education, industry, agriculture, or transportation. It is also true for demands as to regional problems, though in recent years the universality of this mode of expression has been somewhat reduced.

Prior to 1956, regional demands were demands for action by the central government. Criticisms of the central government's actions were expressed as charges of neglect of regional interests. What was being demanded, essentially, was more central activity in a region rather than less. While general claims were made for more regional activity, specific appeals were made to the central government to carry out development in the regions. This may be interpreted as acknowledgment of the central government's responsibility for regional development, or it may be a function of the vagueness of the picture of the regional roles. Certainly it seems to conflict with the general demands for a regional scope of action. But it suggests that the lack of that scope of action has not been the root of Indonesia's political difficulties.

The point deserves to be stressed. The complaints we have already discussed, such as the personnel policies, or the distribution of goods, are claims against the way the central government's policies have been carried out, or criticisms against the adoption of specific policies. There was no challenge, in the earlier years, of the central government's possession of the role of initiator as such in those areas of activity. This will be found to be true for other aspects of the decentralization program as well. Demands are for central government action in granting autonomous status, in providing for regional legislatures, etc.

The complaints arose from feelings of concrete grievances, which most probably stemmed from the tremendous gap between promised ideals and disappointing reality, and from the slow, seemingly invisible pace of development in the regions. When problems arose and demands were made, they weren't specifically answered, but were greeted with appeals to unity. In other words, the complainers were being told to wait patiently and follow the national leaders.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

To tell a person to "be unified" does not satisfy an urge for guidance in action. The people were already "unified"; what they wanted were material results. The people were told also to work hard for the completion of the revolution, but there was no guidance given as to how they should work hard, and few examples of it set. Besides, it was difficult to work hard while waiting months for decisions from Djakarta. Unity might be the basis of an appeal, but only if put in terms of a concrete line of action, such as fighting a revolution, militarily, against an invader. Without an accompanying line of action, appeals to unity are meaningless; they do nothing to alter the situation or mitigate the circumstances which gave rise to the original grievance. The failure of the central government, while it held the monopoly of authority, was its failure to provide a firm line of action, and its failure to keep the promises it too easily made. It barricaded itself behind its legal position of responsibility for national development, and blinded itself by the universal lip-service paid to the immaterial ideal of unity. The result was the regional actions of 1956-1958.

When military leaders took over the reins of regional government in some provinces, and arrogated the role of supervisors of activity in the regions, they effectively challenged the reliance on central government action. These were essentially the culminating acts of long-standing and ever-growing impatience at the non-fulfillment of the central government's role. It was not an explicit challenge to the formulation of the role. For the first time, regional forces expressed their initiative in formulating responses to regional interests. But this is what the central government's decentralization program was designed to achieve in the first place. No violence was done to the images communicated in discussions and demands concerning regional autonomy.

These regional acts of defiance cannot be assessed quite so easily. Since the central authority was successfully and publicly defied for over a year, there is no telling what forms central-regional relations will take in the future. Many of the forms of central government responsibility for development have been preserved, especially in the more technical fields. But, the regions have expressed themselves strongly as capable of initiating action themselves. It is doubtful that responsibility can be quite as centralized again.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

3

Especially prior to 1956, the predominant expectation was that the central government held responsibility for building up the regions. But criticisms was leveled against the way that responsibility was handled. The dissatisfaction became stronger and stronger, resulting finally in outright defiance. In general, the criticisms or demands were expressed in statements that the central government must pay more attention to the interests of the regions, or, negatively, that the regions were being treated as "step-children." The latter quickly became a popular symbol to indicate the less than satisfactory treatment accorded a region. Usually, but not always, statements of complaint were accompanied by the symbol, as:

> In Riauw there is not a thing being done by the Central Government for the progress of the area...
>
> What are the activities of the Government (in Atjeh)? There aren't any. (3)

While the demand for central government action has been the most pervasive in defining the 'step-child' treatment, there is evidence that the same symbol was also used more directly to relate to the values of decentralization. It has been used to symbolize the situation in which the regions

> because autonomy has not yet been given...cannot carry out development projects in their own regions. (4)

The symbol of the regions as "step-children" has been associated with the dissatisfaction in the regions at the course of implementation of central government policies. The way out was reform of these policies and practices in general; specifically, quicker and better implementation of the decentralization program. Thus, in the national election campaign, the PNI--the party often associated with "Java"--could state:

> If PNI wins the election, it will struggle for the end of the situation in which the regions feel treated as step-children. It will strive for this by assuring autonomy as broad as possible. (5)

(3) Mr. Burhanuddin, non-party, IP/1952/III/51/p. 257.

(4) I. R. Lobo, Progressive, IP/1952/III/64/p. 311.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Thus the symbol of the step-child covers two types of demand: more central government activity in the region; quicker implementation of the decentralization program. The images evoked by it are associated with other complaints. Connected with the charge that not enough is being done in a region is the accusation mentioned earlier that most of what goods are available go to the central government, or to Java. Connected with the demand for more decentralization is the question of financing projects in the regions. It may be appropriate to mention here the metaphor sometimes used of the regions coming to Djakarta as "beggars" asking for funds to carry out projects. This became necessary, according to the argument, because regional government has been financed by subsidy from the central government.

4

We must make some attempt to approach the problem of a role for the regions, some image of what the regions are supposed to do. A region, according to the constitution, and according to the ideals expressed in the decentralization theory, is to have the authority of governing its own affairs (rumah tangga sendiri--lit., its own household, following Dutch terminology). We can gain some insight into the problem by examining the attitudes towards the meaning of "affairs" as it is used here.

It must first be reiterated that on one side of this question is the central government's constant attitude, which influences its interpretation of the sphere of activity for the regions--the insistence on the consequences of the unitary structure, and the central government's monopoly of responsibility for the general welfare of all Indonesia. This is very well summed up--specifically relating to decentralization--in the explanation given by the government of its draft of a new basic law on regional government, submitted to Parliament in 1954. It said:

> We have created the Unitary State; by its nature it centralizes all affairs which have reference to the interests of the whole territory of that Unitary State, and the whole unified nation. This centralization has two aspects:
> 1) The task of the unitary state regarding those centralized interests;

(5) Sistim Ketatanegaraan menurut pendirian PNI-Front Marhaenis (nd), p. 9. This was a pamphlet issued for the election campaign.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> 2) The supervision of activities dealing with local interests, which, though they are local, because of their interrelationships with other interests around them, are also in a sense public interests, as viewed from the unity of the state and the nation. (6)

Or again in the Government's answer to the debates on the bill:

> The Government repeats its opinion....that the autonomous regions in our country are all integral parts of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, which means that the government of the autonomous region implements a portion of the task of national government for its own particular area, while continually keeping in mind the character and interests of that unified national government. (7)

To such a concept of the relation of regional affairs to national affairs, no specific objection was found in our sources. There was some feeling expressed, however, that this formulation emphasizes the center too much, to the detriment of the regions. More opposition is found, and this grew over the time-period covered, to the notion of the centralization of authority. This however is more a protest against methods of carrying out government than objection to the type of expressions given above. Given the strong position of the symbol of the unitary state, it is not surprising that the issue of theory of the structure of a state was avoided. Debate over the composition of regional affairs, was thus carried out in the framework of the unitary state. But this still allowed a wide area of variation, and a complete turnabout of official approach.

In Law No. 22 of 1948 and in the laws passed in 1950 setting up the provinces on Java and Sumatra, it was provided that matters entering regional affairs were to be enumerated, leaving residual powers with the central government. (8) Over time, this formulation was reversed to the point that in the new Law No. 1 of 1957 residual powers were in effect left with the regions. At least they could take up any matter not regulated by higher levels.

(6) IP/1954/V/136/p. 1003.

(7) IP/1954/V/138/p. 1018.

(8) See my previous Interim Report, Decentralization in Indonesia, op. cit.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

In the period 1950-1957 some matters were transferred to the regions, in each case there being a government regulation specifying which responsibilities would be given to the regions, and which would still be held by the Ministry concerned. Two interesting points immediately emerge from this type of arrangement. First, while a function was transferred to a region, it was usually stipulated that technical questions relating to that function were still maintained as the responsibility of the central ministry. Thus, while the provinces were given responsibility for elementary school buildings and equipment, the central government maintained competence in regard to standards and techniques. In general, whenever these transfers have taken place, the regulation stipulates the central government's dominance in technical matters. (9)

While at first the formulation of Law No. 22, 1948, was generally accepted, dissatisfaction with it soon appeared, perhaps with the realization that only few matters were actually being transferred. Or perhaps it was realized, as one speaker pointed out, that an item by item enumeration would take years. Several speakers proposed that it would be better to specify those matters which would remain in the hands of the central government, and allow the remainder to the regions. Examples of the type of affair to remain the concern of the center according to these proposals, would be foreign affairs, defense, currency, etc.

It is not clear from these suggestions how the implications of this reversal of the original arrangement would be treated. Specifically, it was never explained whether the central ministries would be eliminated, or would remain in purely advisory relations to the operational services of the regions. Evidently what was intended was more an emphasis on allowing the regions more fields of activities than any cohesive plan for the central-regional relationship. In some cases a further step was taken in elaboration of this approach. Matters that would be the concern of the Central Government, it was suggested, should be specified. All remaining matters would be available to the regions, depending on their capabilities and needs. Implicitly, the regions themselves would determine their own ability to take over a function.

(9) See, for example, M. Hutasoit, Compulsory Education in Indonesia, Unesco, Studies on Compulsory Education, XV, 1954.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

5

The predominant symbol of demand in regard to the constitution of the affairs of a region is need for a division of authority (pembagian kekuasaan) between the central government and regions. Whatever scheme is proposed for settling the division, one tentative suggestion can be made. By the authority that is to be divided is implied a set of ongoing activities--we might here use the term functions--which must be performed by government. The question at hand is what organizational arrangement must be made for performing them--region or center.

The content of regional affairs then does not seem to be general areas of authority within which a region would be free to act; it is rather a series of operations which are to be carried out by the region. Further, since they cannot be separated from the techniques of implementation, these operations cannot be isolated from the general performance of the activity as directed by the ministry. In other words, there would be no escaping the need for an integrated effort between regional and central authorities. If this is an accurate reflection of the attitudes involved, the problem of the central government maintaining technical control--or a monopoly over technical advisory services--becomes more interesting, for it immediately raises the question of innovation.

If the region is to have an area of activity within which it is free to act, it must have the implicit power to recognize new problems, and devise new techniques for meeting them. This is strengthened by the democratic demands of popular participation, and the need to respond to popular desires on the local level. It is given additional significance by the recognition of diversity in the country, and the concomitant need to adapt to differing local situations. As one measure of the efficiency of government, we may take the speed as well as the success with which it recognizes and meets problems, while still satisfying the more abstract demands of the community as to forms. This is evidently the basis for demanding power for local authorities,and it can be satisfied if the local authority has the freedom to make decisions. If, however, the division of authority indeed implies a distribution of already existing functions, the question of innovation and adaptation to local needs is not so easily answered. The power to make changes in the existing techniques would have to be located. The location of the advisory authorities would have to be determined (again, many of the problems implicit in this discussion could be met by "deconcentration"

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

of central government activities, without "decentralization" of government). The question of innovation is not discussed in our sources.

The general practice has been for the central government to decide on the question of regional capacities to take over functions. (It has been suggested, however, that the regions themselves should decide. This does not have too wide currency in our sources.) It has been recognized that even when residual powers were to be left with the regions, there would be a possible limitation on the ability of a region to perform all the activities left to it. This very real difficulty could be, and is, quite frustrating to the achievement of ideals. The problem consists mainly of finances and competent personnel.

Concerning finances, there is the general recognition that any authority granted to a region without the means of financing the operation would not satisfactorily fulfill the requirements of "autonomy." The debates were not too specific on this point. In discussions of regional competence, more emphasis seemed to be placed on the lack of trained personnel (tenaga ahli--expert manpower). The argument of the shortage of such personnel has been one of the most pervasive in limiting the implementation of the whole decentralization process.

The argument is that Indonesia has available only a very small number of people technically qualified to perform certain functions necessary to the governmental process. The numbers are so few that they are insufficient to staff even the central government. A function cannot be turned over to a region unless the region has the means--including the personnel--to carry it out. Thus, for the time being, there are matters which properly should be included in the affairs of regions, but which, due to the absence of experts, must be performed by the central government.

This argument is a persuasive one, for none would demand the regions be given functions they are incapable of performing; none would argue for a deterioration of services. But from the point of view of the critics of the government's caution, it was not sufficient. Several speakers pointed out that the argument could be used against the central government itself, and against the whole revolution, for certainly Indonesia as such is faced with a shortage of technical personnel. Such an argument, they said, was the continuation of "colonial thinking." The problem would be met, according to this approach, by moving what personnel is available to the regions. The same people would be in office, but under regional authority.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

But the counter-argument does not answer the basic problem of who should determine the capability of a region to perform a function. As a result, there remains the dilemma: Do you allow a carefully controlled central government directed performance of services? Or do you gamble on a deterioration of services by granting them to the regions which do not have the ideal capacity for carrying them out? If the former is chosen, does it guarantee any better performance of services?

The demand for leaving residual powers to the regions grew apace with thelack of satisfaction with the central government's development program, and would probably correlate well with the growth of complaints against the government's handling of the distribution of goods. Had the services provided by the government measured up to any appreciable degree to the promises made, and the hopes engendered, there would have been much less searching for alternatives by those who felt themselves to be suffering most. But in the context of the general economic and developmental difficulties faced by Indonesia, compared to the level of promises being made by the political leaders, the results were inevitable. The golden age promised by the revolution was manifestly not at hand, and in disappointment, the existing organization was criticized for it.

In any case, this emphasis on capabilities of performing functions supports the thesis that the division of authority involves a "fund" of functions which must be distributed to one authority or another. To follow this up we would have to go far beyond the realm of this study. We would have to investigate the whole concept of the purpose of government and the scope of government action for Indonesians. Indonesia, as a new country, did not develop acceptable roles of government over an evolutionary period; it came full grown into the modern world faced with a multiplicity of problems which it is automatically assumed are for the government to solve. What it did inherit was a tradition of colonial administration in which the relation of government to the population was a paternal one.

6

There is one role for government that must be specifically mentioned, for it is intimately tied in with the image of the central government as the monopolist of leadership. Economic development is a major concern of the new countries of Asia. The course they have chosen to achieve their goals rejects the notion of private initiative competing within the confines

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

of the regulatory powers of the state. Indonesia is no exception to this; government assumes the responsibility for general economic development by positively directing its energies in direct or partial ownership of enterprises, and the direct stimulation of other industries by means of its general economic policy. Private initiative is in principle channeled by government programs of technical instruction and general education, and protection. And the government sets standards and controls for the conduct of enterprise.

Activities of this sort present a tremendous challenge, for which the new government of Indonesia was poorly prepared, in terms of technology, to undertake. Professor Cady has noted that:

> The policy of state-directed economic development... has had and will have far reaching effects on the evolution of political institutions. In the first place it saddled fledgling governments with onerous responsibilities extending far beyond the minimal services afforded by prewar colonial regimes. (10)

The problems that arise over the realization of the ideal are technical; there is little dispute as to the goal. But the technical problems are overwhelming, especially in terms of the high level of aspiration of the goals. As little prepared as the central government is to deal with these problems, how much further from achievement of the goals are the units further down the hierarchy.

The concern for "development" and the "building up" of the country pervades almost all political debate, and is perhaps the most frequently used symbol in demands for decentralization. In such a context it raises a question as to the control of economic policies, or at least part of them, which, if carried to its logical conclusion, challenges the monopoly of decisions held by the center. To the extent that the regional spokesmen are demanding only that the central government act more often in their region, this need not present a problem. If, however, they are demanding the right to make independent decisions in these activities, a very serious difficulty arises: Can the central government afford to allow a part of its power over economic development out of its hands? Recalling the various shortages Indonesia is faced with, and comparing them to the magnitude of the problem (and the attitudes towards leadership), the central

(10) Cady, op. cit., p. 119.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

government may well decide, in the normal course of events, that it cannot do so. But, involved in its own difficulties, the central government has not demonstrated its ability for efficient expeditious operation in the eyes of the regions. Thus its moral position of leadership is compromised, and its legal monopoly of power and ultimate responsibility for decisions is challenged.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VII

THE DECENTRALIZATION LAWS

1

It seems clear that the primary demand for action was directed to the central government. Decentralization was a necessity unanimously agreed upon, and it was up to the central government to carry it into effect. A constitutional basis for it was in existence, and inherited laws to give it structure. Indonesian political debate depends in large measure on legal form, and demands are often couched in terms of legislation deemed necessary for the particular desire. The laws themselves become symbols in the communication process. Thus we must consider the attitudes towards the basic laws on regional government, for they will help give insight into the whole course of the program.

As we already pointed out, the new unitary Republic of Indonesia started with the assumption that there would be established units of regional government which would have the right to decide upon their own affairs. Growing out of the agreements between the United States of Indonesia and the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja) it was accepted that R.I. Law No. 22 of 1948 would be the basis for those units. Recognizing the importance of central-regional relations, and given the role of legal forms in Indonesian political thought, it is not surprising that Law No. 22 was regarded by many as a major step in the political reconstruction of the country. For some, it, or the spirit behind it, evoked enthusiasm:

> (By this law) the Republic of Indonesia has indicated to the outside world that the Indonesian nation is capable of organizing its government internally, based on democracy, representation, and consultation. Law No. 22 of 1948 is a national document and also a national monument. (1)

The Natsir cabinet, the first one of the newly reunited Republic, foresaw no great difficulty in utilizing the prin-

(1) Mr. M. Nasroen, Pembentukan dan Tingkatan Daerah Otonom, Djakarta, Endang, 1954, p. 21.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

ciples and provisions of that law. In its program it included the statement that:

> In R.I. Law No. 22 of 1948 the possibility is opened for the democratization of government, even though its implementation meets with great difficulties due to insufficient preparations. Thus the Government will propose a law for all Indonesia which in general will not differ much from that law.
>
> Provisionally, outside of Java and Sumatra, the Government will urge the establishment of governments which can be considered as preparation for the creation of autonomous regions in accordance with R.I. Law No. 22 of 1948. (2)

This statement sums up well the attitudes towards the legal basis of regional government in 1950. It was acknowledged that a single law for the whole country was needed, replacing the two laws, each valid in a different area; this was not expected to cause difficulties, since the 1948 law provided sufficient guidance. But troubles were already beginning to show, Natsir himself signalling them by his reference to "difficulties of implementation." Criticisms of the Government statement were made during the debates in Parliament, but still the feasibility of Law No. 22 was not directly challenged.

> If it indeed provides a basis, and efforts have already begun in its implementation, there is no reason for the Government to delay efforts in this direction. If R.I. Law No. 22 is still unsatisfactory, let the Government quickly take the initiative in proposing changes in that law in as short a time as possible.....Wouldn't it be better if the Government as quickly as possible proposed a bill guided by the existing laws, and then carried it outuniformly for all Indonesia? This task shouldn't be too difficult. (3)

Law No. 22, which had been applied down to the second level on Java at the time the unitary state was reformed, seemed also to be accepted on Sumatra, even though the divisions of territory there, at the second level, were not legally validated. Several speakers refer to efforts that already

(2) RP/1950/II/330.

(3) Zainal Abidin Achmad, Masjumi, RP/III/1950/831.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

had taken place to bring the governmental situation there into line with the plans of the law. The steps generally were taken by the governors of the three provinces of Sumatra. The second level units, while not legalized according to law, operated, and were often accepted as if they had been.

The Jogja law did not completely escape criticism, but at least in the parliamentary debates, opposition was sporadic and unspecific. But as problems of implementation became more serious and it became apparent that the government could not fulfill its promise to provide a new law for the whole country, Law No. 22 began to lose some of the favorable symbolism that had been attached to it. Prime Minister Sukiman, who replaced Natsir, in presenting his program to Parliament said:

> The basic difficulty is the lack of a regulation on regional government which is uniform for all Indonesia.
>
> Law No. 22 of 1948, with three levels of autonomous regions...is difficult to apply in some areas.
>
> In connection with that, the Government will review Law No. 22 of 1948 so that it can, after it has been amended and perfected, become the law of the unitary state applicable to the whole territory of the Republic of Indonesia.

But he went on to point that much could still be done in the field of decentralization:

> Without waiting for that new law on regional government, the Government will complete the regulations which are now valid...(thus giving) content to the autonomous regions (which have already been established). (4)

A good deal of uncertainty can be noted, caused evidently by the confusion of legal values with political maneuvering in fulfilling the program. A point of implementation caused the downfall of the Natsir Cabinet; (5) yet the point was at

(4) RP/1951/X/4191,4192.

(5) Prior to the formation of the unitary state, the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja) issued Government Regulation 39, 1950, to form temporary regional councils on the basis of organizations in the region, which would serve until there could be elections for the councils demanded in the

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

best an expedient designed to cover a transitional period. No one disagreed that some such step ought to be taken, and no one would openly oppose making the period as short as possible. The assumptions of the decentralization law were in no way challenged. But the political problem became enmeshed in the legal. A new provisional measure was needed, or even better, the holding of elections; dissatisfaction with the existing organization was demonstrated. However it seemed pointless to do anything while imminently awaiting the new basic law for the whole country. Impatience with the existing laws grew. Prime Minister Wilopo in 1952, repeated in essence the same statement regarding the laws that Sukiman had given in 1951. But the difficulty of actually producing a bill was now an open secret. Wilopo admitted, in answering the debates on his program, that he could not give a date when the new bill would be submitted.

The disappointment and loss of hope was becoming more widespread. The optimism that, in spite of the lack of a uniform law, efforts in the direction of decentralization could be carried out seemed to be dying. A growing impatience at the delays in producing a draft took its place.

> We indeed agree with the Government that the present situation cannot be tolerated any longer...thus we request an affirmation from the Government: when will Parliament receive the bill for the law demanded by article 131 of our provisional constitution? (6)

In 1953, the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet came into office. It no longer claimed reliance on Law No. 22, but specifically--in answer to the debates on its program--stated that experience proved the two separate laws insufficient. In general, the symbol used was that the two laws "no longer were in accordance with the development of the community." The Ali program included the hope that the new law could be proposed to Parliament within three months. And in early 1954 a bill was introduced and started on its way through the parliamentary mill. But the road was a long one, and the solutions proposed in it to some of the outstanding problems were not immediately accepted. A revised version was

---

decentralization law. In 1951 a motion in Parliament introduced by Hadikusumo of PNI called for the suspension of activities under regulation 39, and also the suspension of all councils formed under its authority. The Natsir cabinet, which strongly opposed the resolution, resigned after its passage.

(6) B. Sahetapy Engel, Democratic Fraction, IP/1952/III/98/457.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

submitted in 1955, when Mr. Sunarjo replaced Prof. Hazairin as Minister of Internal Affairs. But when the Ali cabinet fell in July 1955, the bill still had not been passed, and it was inherited by the Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet. Also in the Ali period, in an attempt to solve the problem of legislation, a Commission was established headed by Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo with the task of helping to draft suitable bills. Many were drafted, but few made any progress towards enactment.

Implementation of the decentralization program was hindered through the years for a variety of technical reasons. One of these was the difficulty of drafting a law sufficiently perfected in its details through all the changes of cabinet and Ministers of Internal Affairs, and still acceptable to the political parties represented in Parliament. Lacking the law, while aware that it had to be forthcoming, many matters were postponed. While the government waited for the law, the situation deteriorated. The delays cannot be separated from the general political impasse in Indonesia caused by a multiplicity of parties with unspecific programs which did not differ in major matters (except in a few outstanding cases), and the growing frustration of unfulfilled ambitions. But while general political difficulties may have made any solution to the regional problem impossible until goals were made more realistic in terms of possibility, attention was focused on laws, and the hope that their appearance would solve problems.

The new law finally appeared in 1957, though actually passed by Parliament in December 1956. Except in a few important details, it was not very different from Law No. 22. Seven years had passed by, and by that time the regional movements had gone from talk to action. The difficulties of orderly implementation of decentralization were manifoldly increased. The new law, rather than being the major milepost in the development of the program as was hoped, is instead, for the time being, incidental. The regional actions of 1957 and 1958 radically changed the emphasis of debate. From a growing stress on the need for legislation, in one blow legislation was shunted aside in the State of Emergency, and a system of bargaining between central government and regional forces took its place. Debate turned to the need to "normalize" the situation.

But the new law is not without interest to us. Many of its forms are still being followed in many areas, and its promises are of use in settling the discontent. It must be remembered that the regional movements were designed to hurry

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

the fulfillment of the decentralization program, not to destroy it. When Indonesia emerges from its present crisis the existence of the new decentralization law may well be one of the factors for stabilization. It is at least a minimal requirement for alleviating the tensions now existing between central government and the regions.

2

There are still questions to be raised as to the role of these laws in the whole decentralization process, but these are involved in the general question of the role of laws in the Indonesian political system as such. Answers to these questions would demand extensive investigation of their own. But as a result of this study of a particular political problem, some of the questions can perhaps be phrased a little more clearly.

First of all, Indonesia inherited a complete legal system from the Dutch, and an almost complete governmental structure. We have already mentioned that the idea of decentralization was current and accepted before the war. A popular demand stated in much of Indonesian political oratory is the need to change the "colonial system" to a "national system" in various fields. It is not always clear exactly what is meant, whether there is to be a radical alteration of procedures, content, and purpose, or that the changes are to be mainly in titling and personnel. Regarding decentralization, commentators have tried to make a case for the advance for the Indonesian system as first laid down in Law No. 22 of 1948 over its prewar predecessor. The question therefore is the extent to which legal forms in contemporary Indonesia follow Dutch patterns, and the extent to which changes have been made. Further, to what extent is the importance given to the role of laws in the political process an inheritance from the Dutch system of political values, and to what extent does it derive from original cultural sources.

One of the points raised in support of the thesis that Indonesian decentralization is an improvement over the Dutch has been that in the earlier system the autonomy given to the regions was largely devoid of content and largely meaningless in terms of the important practices of government. In contrast, the autonomy promised by the provisional constitution and the decentralization laws of Indonesia would be "as broad as possible," presumably going much further than the Dutch were willing to go. Yet the complaints that have grown up in the past seven years belie that claim, and the critics speak of the present program in much the same way as the commentators refer to the Dutch program.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

But the promise of the laws is there, and the constitutional prescription is indisputable. What then is the relationship between legal form and actual practice? This cannot be answered at the present time. We can only suggest, on the basis of this one problem, that legislation may be more a statement of ideal purpose than any framework for immediate action, and that the key role, legally, is in the escape clauses of transitional arrangements that allow postponement of action, or the gradual changing of a situation. But one important change from the prewar situation is that it is now up to the Indonesians themselves to effect the system outlined in the laws. The relationship of law to practice will turn out to be whatever Indonesians make of it.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VIII

THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1

Regional autonomy in Indonesia implies the existence of local organizations established to perform certain operations of government and to fulfill certain aspirations. (1) The decentralization program is designed to bring these structures to life. Up to now we have been considering the roles these organizations were envisaged as playing. Now we must turn to the specific structures created to carry out the roles. We shall concentrate on two institutions around which most of the debate has centered: the Regional Legislature and the Kepala Daerah.

In keeping with the importance of the symbol of democracy, it has been automatically assumed that the regional organization would be endowed with a popular representative body. In the prewar decentralization plans this was an important element which was referred to as a demonstration of the direction the program was taking. During the revolution, together with the establishment of some kind of national representation through the Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat, there were parallel bodies set up in the regions. (2) Law No. 22 on regional government passed in 1948 contained specific provision for a representative body. The Constitution of 1950 specified popular representation as a condition for the autonomous divisions provided for in article 131. The requirement can be summed up in the words of one observer of the subject:

> A Swatantra must, as an absolute condition, have a democratic organization in which power must be in the hands of the people of the region....The highest instruments of authority must be held by a Regional Representative Council, the organization of which must be determined by election. (3)

(1) For descriptions of these organizations, see my earlier interim report and John D. Legge, Problems of Regional Autonomy in Contemporary Indonesia, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Interim Reports Series, 1957.

(2) Komite Nasional Indonesia (Daerah), set up under the authority of Law No. 1 of 1945.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Ideally, the representative council (4) was to be elected by the people of the region concerned. Provision to that effect was included in Law No. 22, and in all proposals for changing that law. Implementation, however, proved difficult. Until elected councils could be brought into existence, temporary bodies would be allowed. Subsequent debate on the subject dealt as much with how to devise a temporary body as with the need for an elected one. Since transitional periods in Indonesia are liable to last for a considerable time, the provisional arrangements to take care of the period are themselves subjects of protracted dispute. In 1950 three different regulations were issued by the government in attempts to establish these temporary councils. All three were nullified by the provisional national Parliament. The last of these regulations, Government Regulation No. 39, 1950, stayed in effect less than a year, until the Hadikusumo motion was passed calling for its suspension, and resulted in the downfall of the Natsir cabinet. But during the time that the regulation was operative, many councils were formed for the first and second level autonomous regions--with the notable exceptions of the provinces of North Sumatra and East Java.

The Hadikusumo motion actually called for the suspension of the councils already formed under Government Regulation 39, as well as the cessation of steps to form additional ones. But through a political compromise the existing councils were allowed to continue. Their terms of office, originally stipulated as five years--by which time elections were to have been held--and once extended, finally ran out in July 1956. A decision of the Minister of Internal Affairs instructed them to dissolve on July 1st of that year. But elections were still not in sight, and to meet the situation, a private member bill was introduced in parliament by M. Isa, PNI, providing for transitional councils based on the electoral strength of the parties in the region demonstrated

(3) Soenarko, Susunan Negara Kita, Vol. IV, p. 7.

(4) In my earlier Interim Report, these bodies were called "Regional Legislatures" because according to the functions assigned them in the law, they are supposed to carry out a legislative role. But inasmuch as we are here concerned with defining just what that role is according to the attitudes towards it, I prefer not to prejudge it on the provisions of the law. Thus, for this report, I utilize a more direct translation of the Indonesian term. Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat Daerah literally means Regional Popular Representative Council.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

in the recently held national elections. This was passed, and immediately afterwards an election law was passed. In 1957 elections for regional councils were held throughout Java, and started in a few other places. The transitional councils continued functioning until the elected ones were installed. This process has been for the most part completed on Java.

During the seven years in which there were no representative councils, or only provisional appointed ones, the lack of these bodies became the provisional appointed ones, the lack of these bodies became the focus of much of the discontent expressed regarding the situation in the regions, and an important symbol of protest used by regional spokesmen. Along with the pleas for a new basic law was the cry for an election law--and, failing that, for some means of substituting the provisional councils--though this latter was heard less often after the compromise solution to the problem of Government Regulation 39. A symbol often occurring in the debates was "one man government" (eenhoofdig bestuur--the Dutch phrase was often used) in relation to the position of the Kepala Daerah. It referred to an undesirable condition in which a regional council did not exist, and all government was in the hands of the one Head. This will be discussed further in connection with that office. Here it is only important to note it as stressing the importance, in thought, of having the councils operative in the regions.

Why was it important that there be a representative body? This was to be the incarnation of democracy in the regions, thus a major aim in the democratizing process.

> The desires of the people--including those living in rural settlements and villages--to participate in giving leadership to government of the regions by means of electing their representatives to a council which can take the place of one man government (eenhoofdig bestuur) must be quickly fulfilled. Only in that way can democratic government by and for the people, which for years has been our aspiration and our boast--as contained in our constitution--be brought into existence and practiced. (5)

> The longer autonomous regions with representative councils are not formed, the longer too the realization of democracy is hindered. (6)

(5) Ibrahim Sedar, non-party, IP/1952/III/83.

(6) Andi Gappa, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/61.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Most of the stress on the democratization process to be found in our sources was stated in terms of the need for such a representative body.

When the existing councils were decreed out of existence in 1956, turmoil resulted, with some councils going so far as to declare their intention not to dissolve. This can perhaps partially be explained by the strength of feeling in the regions against leaving regional government without any type of popular body. It is not clear why the government itself did not seem to have plans ready for substitute arrangements. But once Isa's private member bill was introduced, the government lent its support, and the bill became law in record time. This may well have been the reason the dissolution of the councils did not cause more agitation that it did. The regions were not to be left without a democratic form, and the furor which seemed imminent when the Minister of Internal Affairs issued his decree did not materialize. According to the clarification of the bill, the substitute arrangements were

> considered necessary...in order to prevent the emergence of a democratic vacuum in the organization of the government of the regions which are already autonomous. (7)

There could be no moving backward. If something wasn't done, it would result in

> the revival of a one man government that cannot be justified after we have been planting the seeds of democracy for so long. (8)

All parties agree that ultimately the councils must be elected. There seems to almost unanimous agreement that the system of election should be proportional representation--which is the system used at the national level.

(7) IP/1956/VII/58/p. 475.

(8) Hikmah, Vol. IX, No. 5, 4 Feb. 1956, p. 4. This magazine reflects the Masjumi view. The statement was actually made in February, in face of the imminent ending of the existing councils. The demand was actually for the prolongation of the terms of office of these older councils. The arrangement under which these councils had been formed favored Masjumi, but the party finally supported the transitional councils bill passed later in the year.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The considerations of democracy and the provisions of the decentralization laws--which were accepted without question--should indicate at least partially the role envisaged for the councils. According to the law, the council is to be the repository of "autonomy." The council issues general regulations for the implementation of autonomous activity; the council reflects the will of the people concerning autonomous affirs; the council, in the name of the people, exercises control over the execution of regional activities. This would sound like a fairly complete role of a legislature, but there are indications that such a conclusion should not too quickly be drawn.

A natural consequence of the lack of clear definitions of the role of the region as such, in general government, is a vagueness in our sources of statements on a role for the representative councils. Further, there are seeming contradictions which are bound up with the dilemma of democratic symbolism and the will of the people on one hand, and concern over shortcomings, backwardness, and a general lack of trust in the abilities of the people to carry out regional government on the other hand. Ideally, the representative council legislates on regional affairs. Yet, given the nature of "affairs" transferred to the regions, where "technical" considerations are reserved to the central ministries, there is immediately a check on the scope of legislation permitted the councils. The requirement, often included in regulations transferring authority to the regions, that the instructions of the ministries be followed, would seem to detract from the freedom of decision of the council. The lack of clear fields of regional action--a possibility discussed earlier--and the consequent need for accommodation with the continuing central government organization in the region, especially when the central government does not transfer a complete set of activities to the regions, results in lessening the significance of the legislative function.

With the redefinition of regional affairs given in Law No. 1, 1957, whereby the region can handle any matter not taken up by a higher authority, the possibility is opened for much more extensive legislation coming from the councils. They could act now, within the limits of their own imagination and sense of ability on a whole range of matters which they could argue the central government has not treated. This could potentially locate innovation in the regional governments, giving them a major part to play in the development of the country. But the limitation on what is imagined

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

for the councils is at present a severe one. Until there is an awakening on the part of regional people as to what they want to do, this possibility cannot be realized. There is little hint in our sources of this potentiality being recognized, and the regions have always been satisfied, in terms of specific action, to do either what is traditional, or what the central ministries advise.

This arrangement is more easily understood by relating it to the role of the central government as the caretaker of national development, plus the role of leadership of which it has a monopoly. While the decentralization program has as one of its purposes the accommodation of development to local needs and variations, it seems that in practice it is not the region itself which determines that adaptation. The region, through its council or other authorities, can state its demands, and can define perhaps its needs and propose variations of application of services. But the central ministry with its exclusive control of technical competencies evidently has the power to determine whether or not, and in what way, local variation can take place.

There is a consideration which must not be forgotten, which lessens the somewhat harsh judgment of the regional role. The Indonesian spirit of compromise, which has been much commented on, applies also to the relations between region and central government. Differences of opinion, according to the principles of musjawarah and mufakat, are not openly stated, with the predominant authority openly exercising its will to force a decision. Where there is disagreement it must be talked through until it reaches a point that all agree upon, and this is carried out until the final decision is achieved. But how well this system works in the context of a modern technical administration, with its complex interwoven pattern of acts and decisions, needs much further study. It may turn out that what appears as unanimous agreement is only the superficial cover for the exercise of predominant power. While there may have been surface agreement, the events of 1957 and 1958 in Indonesia indicate that it did not eradicate deep-seated grievances.

3

Discussions concerning the councils have usually been in terms of creating them where they did not exist, and the urgent need for them as the fulfillment of the promise of democracy. We do not find in our sources mention of the councils in connection with any actual problems of governing,

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

or what the councils were supposed to do. In other words, while the representativeness of the councils was stressed, the work of the councils was ignored. It might be suspected from this that the councils were envisaged as having primarily a political (as opposed to governmental) role, that is, to formulate and articulate regional feelings and desires. This of course neglects the specifically legislative activities given the councils by law. However there is some confusion in regards to such a picture, and some indications negating such a conclusion.

Government Regulation 39 of 1950 based the selection of temporary councils on various types of organization as well as on political parties. After the Hadikusumo motion successfully opposed that regulation, the Sukiman cabinet, which followed the Natsir ministry, promised to direct its efforts towards forming councils only of political parties. This was opposed by the former Minister of Internal Affairs in the Natsir government, now speaking as a member of Parliament:

> Parliament forms a representation of parties, but the regional councils do not. The outlines of policy are determined here in Parliament. The regional councils need not consider them further, but rather it is sufficient if they carry them out or guard that those political lines are held to firmly. To take care of regional affairs it is more necessary that they have members experienced in economic and social fields. (9)

Of course we would expect a man in such a situation to defend his former position, even though already defeated, and to criticize changes from that position. However we are not interested here in the opposition as such, but in the images used in the argument.

Supporting this attitude of a non-political role for the councils is the opinion expressed by a member of the temporary council of South Sumatra. The Communist Party members of that Council had raised the question of the validity of the membership of people who held central government jobs in fulfillment of which they took up residence outside the region. In answer to this, one of the people concerned said that the complaint was just obstructionist tactics by the PKI.

(9) Mr. Assaat, non-party, during the debates on the Sukiman program, RP/1951/X.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> The character of the Temporary Regional Representative Council is more executive, to assist the regional government in carrying out its work. Thus it is more important to discuss budgetary matters, not political problems as is always urged by the PKI at this time. (10)

One further indication of possible limitations on the role of the council is the opinion expressed during the debates of the Sukiman cabinet. The speaker was explaining why he had supported the Hadikusumo motion:

> Mr. Chairman, the main reason we agreed to the suspension of the regional councils formed according to Government Regulation 39 was the tendency observable that these councils would be passing motions designed to bring about the downfall of the Kepala Daerahs, and to propose new Kepala Daerahs in order to strengthen their own position. In that way they were actually trying to alter entirely the organs of government. (11)

This last opinion would have to be balanced against the much more widely expressed desire to avoid one-man government. Certainly the negative symbolism of eenhoofdig bestuur would indicate some proposed power of the councils over against the Kepala Daerah, usually expressed in terms of some kind of "control."

(10) Pedoman, 5 July 1956, p. 2. The speaker was Basri, PSI.

(11) Mr. Tadjuddin Noor, PIR, RP/1951/X.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IX

THE KEPALA DAERAH

1

One of the most difficult problems besetting the course of the decentralization program has been the determination of the position of the Kepala Daerah--the Head of the Region. In this figure are summed up many of the conflicts, dilemmas, and political disputes that have marred the course of Indonesian constitutional development. Here is the epitome of the struggle between the ideological trend and the technical trend which we have noticed cropping up in most manifestations of politics. For the sake of analysis, however, we limit our discussion to those matters pertinent to central-regional relations as such. We have seen that the representative council was intended as the body responsible for autonomous affairs, and that the central government expected to continue activities in the region in its own name. A consideration of the institution of the Kepala Daerah will shed light on the relations between these two sets of activities, as well as sharpen the focus on many problems of regional government.

The prewar Dutch East Indies government was administered through a hierarchy, the Binnenlands Bestuur, consisting of a Dutch part and an Indonesian part, the meeting point between the two, at least on Java, being at the regency level. Above that level it was all Dutch, below it, all Indonesian. This service was spread through the islands according to territorial divisions, sometimes traditional as in most of the outer islands, and sometimes constructs, as in all the higher levels. When decentralization efforts were begun, this service continued to play an important part in the new regional government, with its functionaries remaining the leading governmental figures in their respective territories. In independent Indonesia, this service, completely Indonesianized, is known as the pamong pradja. Its influence has continued to be of major significance.

Immediately after the Declaration of Independence in 1945 functionaries were appointed by the central government to head territorial divisions. Government had to be carried to all parts of the country, and these officials had the task of establishing the Republic's authority, and seeing that

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

government continued functioning, especially in the difficult times of the Dutch attacks. With the acknowledgment of sovereignty, the withdrawal of Dutch forces, and the revision of the federal form, these officials continued to lead regional activities. They came under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and operated in the name of the central government. This was the pamong pradja.

However, these regions were to be given autonomy to "govern their own affairs"; each autonomous division was to have a "chief of government," but under the terms of the decentralization law, this Kepala Daerah was not to be a separate organ of regional government. (1) He was, however, given prominence in it by being made the ex officio chairman of the Regional Executive Board (DPD), which as a whole was responsible, according to the law, for the daily administration as agent for the representative council. As chairman of the executive board, it might be said, the Kepala Daerah was the leading figure of regional government.

Thus, when the unitary state started functioning in 1950 there were two systems for carrying government to the regions. In practice, the two came together in the person of the Kepala Daerah, who thus carried responsibilities of the pamong pradja, as well as those designed by the decentralization law--in both cases ultimately responsible to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but by different routes. The distinction between pamong pradja official and Kepala Daerah, while legally valid, was largely invisible. What emerged in practice was the Kepala Daerah embodying a dual role: functionary of the central government, and chairman of the regional executive board.

"Dualism" became a symbol of an undesirable development in regional government. It is defined, in one place as

> besides regional government which is based on popular representation (regional representative council with its executive body which also includes the Kepala Daerah), there also exists government which is carried out by the Kepala Daerah alone, and this latter government has the largest part in the region. (2)

(1) See my previous Interim Report, op. cit.

(2) Clarification of Law No. 22, 1948, paragraph 10. This definition seems to be the accepted one. It has been used as well by regional authorities. See Moh. Sjafe'i, working

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

It is pejorative, because "it is not in accordance with government based on democracy, which was the aim of our revolution. (3) Such dualism was identified as a colonial heritage (4) and the elimination of dualism was declared one of the purposes of the decentralization legislation. (5)

2

Dualism was not avoided, and the position of the Kepala Daerah as also the head of the pamong pradja in the region symbolized its continued existence. The Minister of Internal Affairs could admit in 1955 that

> The intention (to eliminate dualism) clearly was not firmly held either by the designers of Law No. 22, or in its implementation. (6)

The problem had become one of deciding whether the Kepala Daerah was to be exclusively a national official, or exclusively a regional functionary.

There were several attempts to come to a decision on this question. The bill submitted to Parliament in 1954, designed to replace the two existing decentralization laws, specified that the Kepala Daerah was to be a state official, that is, exclusively a servant of the central government. In the revised version of the bill debated in 1955, this was changed; the Kepala Daerah was to be specifically a regional official, but in addition to that position, there would be a new office--State Commissioner--directly under the central ministry. In the version of the bill finally passed by Parliament in 1956, which became Law No. 1, 1957, the provision

---

paper at the Inter-Provincial Conference, Bandung, March 1955; "Dualistic government occurs when, besides the legislative and executive bodies, the Kepala Daerah still holds authority by himself."

(3) Clarification of Law No. 22, 1948, Paragraph 10.

(4) Mr. Djody Gondokusumo, Tatahukum Daerah Otonom, Jogjakarta, Menara Pengetahuan, p. 21.

(5) "With this new law (No. 22, 1948) dualistic government will be avoided." (Clarification, paragraph 10.)

(6) IP/1955/45/317. Minister of Internal Affairs Sunarjo, in presenting a redraft of the proposed new decentralization law.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

for a State Commissioner had been removed. But, then the events of December 1956 to March 1957--when some regions rejected the authority of the Government--led to the Declaration of War and Siege, which had the effect of superceding ordinary procedures, and giving extraordinary authority to the military. Each province was given a top military commander who was in effect over the Kepala Daerah. In April 1957 at a conference of these military authorities, including the leaders of the Banteng Council (Central Sumatra), the Garuda Council (South Sumatra), and the Permesta Council (North Sulawesi), it was decided that the provisions of the new law in regards to the Kepala Daerah should be postponed, and that official should be appointed by the central government. This returned the situation to essentially the same as it had been since 1950. But, soon afterwards, at another conference, this decision was again reversed, allowing for the newly elected regional representative councils electing, in their turn, a Kepala Daerah, thus fulfilling the requirements of the decentralization law.

3

Before discussing the debates specifically around these points, there are some preliminary questions which must be clarified. Arising from the attachment to the general symbol of "democracy" there has been a widespread acceptance of the symbol of "collegial" in reference to regional government. The denotation of the symbol is not always clear; it seems sometimes to refer to the representative council as the repository of all regional autonomy, and sometimes to the collective responsibility of the executive board to carry out daily government. The undesirable situation, the converse of collegial, which the application of collegial government is designed to improve, is an independent position for the Kepala Daerah. (7) Sometimes the opposition is set up as "collegial" vs. pamong pradja. (8)

Closely associated with the positive symbolism of "collegial government" is the negative value of "one man government." The rise of this latter symbol probably correlates well with the persistence of regions having no representative councils, thus allowing a situation in which the Kepala Daerah acted alone. It will be recalled that of the seven autonomous provinces created in 1950, two were not

(7) See Clarification of Law No. 22, 1948, paragraph 12.

(8) Andi Gappa, Masjumi, IP/1954/V/141/p. 1043.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

able to form temporary councils before Government Regulation 39, 1950 was suspended by Parliament. Of the five provinces that did have councils, one, Central Sumatra, had its council suspended in 1951. The attitudes expressed towards one man government give some expectation of the role of the Kepala Daerah.

Regional government, being democratic, could not be left in the hands of a single person: one speaker complained that when Kalimantan joined with the Republic of Indonesia, in 1950, people were hoping for the substitution of a more democratic government, but they got instead

> an absolute bureaucracy and autocracy masked in fine words such as "national" and "revolutionary." In practice the implementation of government is in the hands of one person only (eenhoofdig bestuur) with a complete lack of control from the side of the people. (9)

Evidently, regardless of the position of the Kepala Daerah in relation to either the central or regional government, "controls" or restrictions on his freedom of action would be demanded. The democratic shortcoming of one man government was that it would allow the one man to "act according to his own wishes." The controls and checks on the activities of the Kepala Daerah would be supplied by the establishment of the regional representative councils.

The image being projected here is that of the Kepala Daerah being subjected to popular checks emanating from the regional community itself.

> Where there are regions that are aupposed to be autonomous, but up to now do not have Representative Bodies or Executive Boards, so that their governments are left in one man's hands (of an "eenhoofdig" character), there should be efforts to form such bodies quickly in order to prevent local "dictatorship." (10)

It may be noted that the problem of one man government has been discussed out of any context of the functions of the Kepala Daerah. While the functions will be discussed below, it must be admitted here that the discussions regarding this

(9) A. R. Djokoprawiro, PIR, during the debate on the Natsir program.

(10) I. J. Kasimo, Catholic Party, RP/1951/X/p. 4453.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

problem take place in the context of demands for the establishment of representative councils, which is more a politically motivated problem than a technical one. While, as will be seen below, the expectations as to a regional role for the Kepala Daerah could be accommodated to the demands for controls from the region over that office, it is difficult to determine the relation of this problem to the Kepala Daerah's central government role. We may conclude that the regions are demanding regional controls over the central government activities in the region which would be more direct than any that might be provided in the national Parliament. One is left with a vague feeling that the problem of "eenhoofdig bestuur" is secondary, and is reduced to unimportance compared to the general problem of relations between central power and regional authority.

But the problem, even only as a matter of form, cannot be ignored. It has become a plank in the platforms of political parties, and a strong symbol of protest against the way the decentralization program is carried out. Parkindo--the Christian Party--for example states:

> Democratic government which is collegial as required by the constitution has not yet been created...The result of this one man government has been that parties in North Sumatra are apathetic and dispirited, and do not want to take any action concerning government...The Kepala Daerah acts according to his own ideas and wishes, which results often in protests from groups and parties. (11)

What we are actually concerned with here is again the gap between political-ideological demands on one hand, and the technical needs of administration and the real situation on the other. The charge that a man in office "acts according to his own wishes" could mean a very serious malfeasance if taken literally. What it probably means is that the Kepala Daerah, who after all was acting under instructions from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, did things which turned out to be unpopular with certain parties. As we have suggested, due to the level of political ambition being so far above the level of reality in the Indonesian situation, this does not necessarily mean that the Kepala Daerah did anything but act within the realm of possibility or the real demands of the particular situation. We would further have to investigate the regional branches of the parties themselves, to see

(11) Fourth Parkindo Congress, 10-13 April 1952, Malang, East Java.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

if they are self-determining bodies capable of reacting to a local situation independent of the central mechanism of the party in Djakarta. If not, the apathy of the local party may not at all be due to the lack of democratic government, but exactly the reverse. The opposition to one man government is less a reaction against shortcomings in regional administration than an a priori judgment that it is an undesirable state of affairs.

4.

Closely related to the problem of the position of the Kepala Daerah is the question of the method of appointment to this office. According to Law No. 22 of 1948, the Kepala Daerah was to be appointed by the central government from a list of two to four candidates nominated by the representative council. This method satisfies the dual role noted above, for it brings in elements of both regional and central government action. In the draft bill for a substitute decentralization law, as submitted in 1954, the Kepala Daerah was specifically named a state official, thus to be appointed by the central government with no reference to regional action. Under the amended version of 1955 in which the office was to be specifically regional, he was to be elected by the representative council. The ultimate solution as contained in Law No. 1 of 1957, after the various emergency changes brought about by the military, is for the Kepala Daerah to be elected by the representative council, with the goal of popular election sometime in the future.

Law No. 22 of 1948, which was the basis for decentralization activities through most of the life of the Republic, contained an escape clause for the "transitional period" of unspecified length under which the central government in making its appointments did not have to heed the nominations of the representative council. Thus the practice from 1950 to 1958 has been for the central government to make all appointments on its own initiative. When appointments are made, there are often outcries from groups in the region against the person appointed. Political parties and other organizations pass resolutions on the question and send them to the central government, but usually these measures have been ineffective, and the appointment has remained in force. Whether there will be a smoother process of assuming the position if elections are held, remains an open question as long as it has not been fully tried.

The agitation for direct election of the Kepala Daerah is closely related to the demand that he be a regional official.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The central government, in the person of Minister of Internal Affairs Sunarjo, was willing to admit that the two went together. During the debate of the revised decentralization bill in 1955, (in which it was proposed that the Kepala Daerah be a regional official) Minister Sunarjo said that in principle he could agree to the need for elections, but that

> for the time being, the Government still considers it necessary /that there be limitations/ due to the real situation and the /level/ of development of the community at present; the fact is that it is probably not yet at a level which could guarantee the immediate carrying out of elections and achieve from those elections the best possible results. (12)

He considered it sufficient to have the Kepala Daerah elected by the representative council, for that body was "a 'crystallization' of the faith of the people in the region concerned."

Those who demanded popular election of the Kepala Daerah appealed to tradition to support their case.

> The Kepala Daerah, according to the ways of government of our people that are still alive today, must be an inseparable part of the people, and cannot be appointed by the center. (13)
>
> To choose their own head is a strong and living right of the people which has been preserved from olden times to the present. (14)

And they appealed to the negative symbolism of colonial practice:

> The Dutch system of placing a Kepala Daerah on top of the people of a region is in strong opposition to (our) native system, for the Kepala Daerah must originate from the area of the people concerned. (15)

The tradition referred to is the selection of the head of

(12) IP/1955/VI/p. 315.

(13) Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, PIR, as Commissioner for Autonomous Affairs, IP/1955/VI/64/473.

(14) Ardiwinangun, Masjumi, IP/1954/V/142/1047.

(15) Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, IP/1955/VI/64/p. 473.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

desa (village) administration, which is often accomplished by election in the village. The argument has also been used by regional figures in making the same kind of demand. Generally, those who insist on the principle of direct election would allow selection by the regional representative council as a compromise with the times.

There is an evident connection between the insistence on a regional voice in selecting the Kepala Daerah, and, as was discussed earlier, the concern over the central government's personnel policies, and the placement of people from one area in positions of leadership in another. These complaints, usually concerning people included in the pamong pradja, often referred to Kepala Daerah s when the office in question was Governor or bupati (as distinguished from residents who had no autonomous region to lead, or from bupatis attached to the office of a higher official). While the two claims--for direct election and for native sons--may be related, they are not necessarily the same. The first is a demand for the central government to give up its authority to act; the second is a request for the central government to choose the "right" person.

The argument for choosing the "right" person is stated in terms of "acceptability." An acceptable person evidently is one who would not arouse unfavorable reactions among large segments of the populations concerned--or, more realistically, from too many of the "mass organizations." Further, it has been argued, he should be familiar with the people of the area, their customs, and their local language. He should be capable of doing a good job, based on his training and experience. According to the proponents of this argument, the ones best able to fit the first two of these criteria would be native sons; it is only when it is certain that there are none with the capabilities required that one goes to other areas to recruit candidates.

Once again it is worth noting that purely ethnic considerations, while in evidence, are not necessarily decisive. There have been cases where Kepala Daerah s, even though of the same ethnic group as the area under them, have been strongly opposed by mass organizations in the region. And there have been examples where Kepala Daerah s, though of different ethnic origin than the region in which they were placed, have done outstanding jobs both technically and in relations with the regional population. "Political" considerations would probably better explain the patterns of reaction to the heads of the regions. One might better investigate the political make-up of the articulate forces in the regions, and which groups are represented by the particular critic, than start analysis on the origin of the Kepala Daerah. For

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

example, one speaker who stresses "acceptability" does so in favor of the interests of other government officials in the region:

> The cause of the disappointment and anxiety among government servants in East Kalimantan (and Kalimantan in general) is the placing of officials in key positions to lead the region, for which the Government always sends people from Java, without calculating whether they are indeed acceptable and capable. The reason it gives is to prevent the flaming up of the sentiment of the people against those who worked for the former federal government. (16)

As another kind of example, we have the strong complaints expressed against the Governor of North Sumatra voiced by a person of Javanese origin. Regarding the placement of two bupatis in that province, the speaker said:

> The appointments were opposed by the entire population as proved by joint meetings of parties and organizations...because they claim that during the life of the State of East Sumatra, these two bupatis were tools of the Dutch. (17)

The speaker continued about the unsuitability of the governor because he would not surrender to the will of the people. It seems fairly clear that this speech was politically motivated, in the light of the long-standing and difficult problem of illegal settling on estate lands in East Sumatra.

The argument over native sons would not solve the problem of whether the Kepala Daerah should be a national or a regional official; similar problems could arise in either case. "Acceptability" is not restricted to technical competence, but is based more on political conditions. It is a phenomenon of Indonesian political life that is a source of grievance to many Indonesians that government appointments are made too often under political party influence, especially regarding positions which should be non-political. The appointment of Kepala Daerah s has not escaped this charge. Acceptability as a criterion for an appointment can perhaps best be interpreted as "acceptability to my group interest."

(16) A. B. M. Jusuf, Labor Party, RP/1950/IV/1638.

(17) Dr. A. Tjokronegoro, BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia, Indonesian Peasants Front), RP/1951/X.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

5

Whether the regional government is "collegial" or not, whether the Kepala Daerah is elected or not, whether he is a native son or not, there is great emphasis on the need for a person with technical capacities. Thus, even if the Kepala Daerah is to be directly elected it is suggested that there be criteria established (by the central government?) for standards of competence, to ensure that the person elected could do the job. It is not clear from the sources available to the writer what should be included in such standards. If the role of the Kepala Daerah is to be mainly political, then obviously success in an election would be one possible index of ability. If the role is to be mainly administrative, a point could be made that "acceptability" should be based only on technical considerations. The government--in this case the Ministry of Internal Affairs--is publicly most concerned with technical considerations, while the political leaders, especially those claiming to represent regions, are more concerned with political matters. Actual practice is, as usual, generally a compromise between the two.

Before we can try to draw together the various questions raised, we must look for what the Kepala Daerah is expected to do, what kind of work he is expected to carry out. If the totality of government is divided between regional and central activities, then in a formal sense the Kepala Daerah as such has very little function. Autonomous regional affairs are in the hands of the representative council and exercised through the collegial executive board. It is in the realm of central government activities going on in the region that a need is felt for some functionary; this requirement up to now has been fulfilled by the pamong pradja official, who, up to 1958, had also been the Kepala Daerah if the region was autonomous.

First, there is the need for the coordination of services which take place in the region in the name of the central government. (In practice there has been little separation between these and regional services. The Kepala Daerah coordinated all together.) Up to now these have been the majority of operations in the region, but even under the ideally envisaged decentralization there would have to be some activities reserved to the center (defense, post and telegraph, immigration, monetary policy are often mentioned in this connection) which while reserved to the central government will require regional execution. Coordination has been among the traditional tasks of the pamong pradja. We meet an interesting problem here, one requiring further study, of the interrelationship of the lines of communication and authority among

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

central government services at the regional level. The pamong pradja is under the Ministry of Internal Affairs; the technical services are under their respective ministries. Coordination through the pamong pradja takes place at the regional level in the administration of the services, while responsibility for technical decisions goes directly to the central ministry concerned. The picture is complicated when the added factor of regional services (that is under the autonomous regional government) is brought into it. The Kepala Daerah, or the pamong pradja official in his Kepala Daerah role, has to extend the coordination to include these activities.

The second activity of the Kepala Daerah, in practice and authorized by Law No. 22 of 1948, is the supervision (pengawasan) of regional government, to ensure that it does not violate its authority. This, while there have been attempts to call it a function in medebewind (18) given to a regional official, is so manifestly a central government concern that it is more logically described as an activity carried out by the central government's representative in the region (recalling the dual role of the Kepala Daerah). In all the changes of the government's presentation of proposals for a new decentralization law, it has steadfastly maintained its insistence on the need for clear lines of supervision controlled by itself.

A third activity referred to in connection with the position of Kepala Daerah has been the providing of leadership for the region. Presumably this would be in development programs as well as in general government. The kind of leadership needed is not specifically defined in our references. We assume, however, that this is a manifestation of the general attitude towards leadership and the role it is expected to play in political action. This would seem to be a reflection of the technical approach; it seems to imply stress on the inability of the community to initiate action, thus requiring guidance if the goals (set for the whole country) are to be achieved. It would make an interesting study to see if the leadership provided at the regional level tends towards a uniform development throughout Indonesia, or tends towards emphasizing the distinctions between the regions.

(18) This literally means "cooperating government," and refers to functions which are only "partially transferred" to the region. See my previous Interim Report.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The original bill, submitted in 1954 as a replacement for the earlier decentralization laws, would have established the Kepala Daerah exclusively as a national official. When this was revised in 1955, in the face of strong parliamentary feelings, to accommodate the demand that the office be strictly regional, a new idea was introduced. Aside from the Kepala Daerah, who would no longer be the central government's representative in the region, there would be a State Commissioner acting for the central authority. In his explanation of this move, the Minister of Internal Affairs said:

> The task of supervision, and other activities of the Central Government which still exist in the regions...will be carried out by organs of the Central Government. (19)

Thus specifically the second task outlined above, and by implication the first one also--coordination--would not be surrendered to the region. The government insists on its direct control over these functions. Given the general attitude towards leadership in Indonesia, it may be expected that the Commissioner will assume that task also. In other words, the Commissioner will be given the work which practice has evolved for the Kepala Daerah as the representative of the central government in the region.

The image of the Kepala Daerah as purely a state official is adequately given in the explanation of the original draft of the bill. (20) His main task would be supervision to ensure the proper governing of regional affairs by the organs of regional government (representative council and executive board), and to see that they do not exceed their authority. He would be made chairman of the executive board (as in previous practice) in order for him to be close to the regional government; he would be given a vote, for this would be "only one vote" so that he could not dominate. This one vote could be beneficial in cases of deadlock on the board. "...the Kepala Daerah's vote, the vote of the Central Government, could help to break the deadlock." Further, he could give advice to the regional government (provide leadership?). But since he is a state official, he is not to domineer the regional executive board, nor interfere with its

(19) IP/1955/VI/p. 317.

(20) IP/1954/V/136.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd

Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

carrying out its task; the leadership in the actual operation of the autonomous government of the region is in the hands of the Deputy Chairman of the executive board, who is a regular member of the board chosen by the representative council. The Minister of Internal Affairs in his answer in the parliamentary debates further clarified that

> "...some affairs must remain in the hands of the Central Government. These affairs require the continued existence of vertical bureaus. Coordination of these bureaus, both among themselves as well as with the regional services, is also included in the task of the Kepala Daerah according to this bill. (21)

Parliament rejected the concept of the Kepala Daerah as a state official, and threw out the proposal for a State Commissioner. Implied in these acts are the conflicts and complications of determining a regional role, and the relation of region to center, depending on what might be called regional and central viewpoints, but which are actually translatable into the more basic dilemma of ideological vs. technical approaches to the problems of Indonesia. The central government, in technical fulfillment of the strictures of unitarism and the concomitant obligations of leadership, constantly stresses the need for supervision, if not control (depending on how a translation of the word "pengawasan" relates to the intention of those using it) over the course of regional government. It is not sufficient to have it after the act, in the form of a veto power; it must take place during the act in the locality. There could be no other justification for insisting on a central representative in the region. The "ideological" side of the argument is less clearly articulated; it consists for the most part in the repudiation of the above mentioned position. It would be difficult to say, in terms of our sources, what is expected as a substitute for supervision--and other tasks of the central government in the regions--or even if a substitute is desired. One can surmise that to the extent that this question is considered it is hoped that these tasks will be left to the regions themselves. The "ideological" approach evidently leaves the effectuation of its positions to later development, possibly through informal mechanisms.

Opposition to the central government's position is most often expressed in terms of the symbol of "dualism," with the accusation that that position would result in its continuation or revival. The symbol is further related to the

(21) IP/1954/V/238/p. 1020.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

charge of perpetuating colonial type relationships carried over from prewar days. To establish the Kepala Daerah as a state official reminds one speaker of the "emergence of dualism in government circles during the colonial period."

> If in the past it was said that the Central Government would undertake to "emancipate" (the "native" civil service) by promising broad authority to the heads of self-governing communities, while the hoofd van plaatselijk bestuur (lit: head of local administration--a European position) in the area would be said to have only an advisory role rather than be the chief official, practice proved the unreality of that promise. The heads of self-governing communities were still governed by the hoofd van plaatselijk bestuur, though by more subtle means. (22)

Or, as another speaker observes:

> (The Government) has with great difficulty endeavored to find a method for governing the relations between center and regions, especially as concerns the position of the Kepala Daerah. But evidently it has not met with any overwhelming success. The dualism of the old system of government has not been eliminated in the proposals now before us. Perhaps this dualism is an absolute condition for regulating central-regional relations. Can we accept that dualism by claiming that the former dualism was colonial, and the present dualism is national? If this is the conclusion, the problem is not yet solved. (23)

The same concern about dualism as well as a fear of the reemergence of the power of the pamong pradja can be found behind the opposition to the proposals for a State Commissioner. It reminds one speaker of "former times, where alongside the Bupati was placed an Assistant Resident" who was supposed to be a friend only, but "the one actually in authority was the Assistant Resident." Further, "the impression emerges that 'the authority of the Central Government' in an autonomous region , which was just removed by way of the front door, now enters again through the back door." (24) Another speaker

(22) I Gusti Gde Raka, PRN (Partai Rakjat Nasional, National People's Party), IP/1954/V/139/1031.

(23) Andi Gappa, Masjumi, IP/1954/V/141/p. 1042.

(24) Peris Pardede, PKI, IP/1955/65/p. 483.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

fears that "The Commissariat...will be a substitute for the pamong pradja which is now going through a process of liquidation, so that dualism will reappear in new dress." (25)

The regional spokesmen, opposing Djakarta, demanded the right to choose their own Kepala Daerah s. We must ask what role they have had in mind for that official if such were the case. This is not clear from our sources. Referring back to our discussion of the symbol of collegial government, it might be suggested that a Kepala Daerah as a purely regional functionary has no place at all. The ceremonial functions that would have to be performed in the name of the region could be taken care of by the chairman of the executive board. While one might debate the efficiency of a multiple executive, it is not an impossible structure. In effect, this is what the new law on regional government accomplishes. The Kepala Daerah is the chairman of the Regional Executive Board; he is purely a regional official, no longer carrying out supervisory functions as a central government representative. But then why mention a separate official, especially when the issue causes so much controversy? And especially since the ideal is to have "collegial" responsibility? It would seem that the effect of habit is at work here. The problem inherited was whether the Kepala Daerah should be a regional or central official, and the solution was given in those terms. There was no suggestion, in our sources, that with "collegial government" there need not be any Kepala Daerah at all.

In connection with the position of the Kepala Daerah we must consider how it is related to the symbol of the unitary state. When Minister of Internal Affairs Hazairin was arguing that the Kepala Daerah must be a state official, he appealed to the needs of the unitary form. When his successor, Minister Sunarjo, argued for the State Commissioner, he put it in terms of

> the task of supervision and other tasks of the Central Government which are still in the regions (being carried out) by organs of the central government itself. (26)

Recalling the image of regional government as the incarnation of the unitary state, which was suggested earlier in this work, it would seem that that image is much blurred in face

(25) Ardiwinangun, Masjumi, IP/1955/VI/66/p. 487.

(26) IP/1955/VI/45/p. 317.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

of the real problems of government. The central government does not consider the regions to be automatic extensions of itself.

Under the system in which the Kepala Daerah operated both as a regional and as a central figure, his office represented, for some observers, the point of synthesis between the respective requirements of unitarianism and autonomy. To some, this was not sufficient as a demonstration of the unity of responsibility of government. To others, the synthetic character of the office should have been maintained. (27) But by 1956 the position of the central government was evidently already too weak, the distance between it and Parliament too great. Though the government's arguments on the need for having its own representatives in the regions met with some response among the legislators, Parliament as a whole rejected the Commissioner plan in the final version of the bill. The law on regional government requiring direct election of the Kepala Daerah and no Commissioner was passed in December 1956. It was not promulgated until January 1957. In between the two dates the army officers in Sumatra took their steps of defiance against the central government. In Central Sumatra the Banteng Council, which organized the action successfully, removed the Kepala Daerah from active office.

The Banteng Council maintained itself in power for over a year before events took a decisive turn in the declaration of a substitute government for all Indonesia in February 1958. During 1957 however, the Banteng Council's actions were more or less duplicated in other areas. The situation, now that armed conflict has taken place, is at present writing extremely unstable, and is likely to be at least partially resolved before this work is published. Nevertheless some estimates of the possibilities may be suggested. Legal forms have not yet caught up with events, and the symbols are at present tied down by emergency measures. The State of Emergency that was declared in March 1957 legalized in a sense the power that the military had practically assumed, at least in some regions. But this, unless the situation completely deteriorates (and unlikely even then) cannot be looked upon as providing final solutions. The central government seeming finally to be conceding to the regional insistence on the appointment of the Kepala Daerah, at least in form, must find alternative means to ensure the continuity of its authority. If it does not, it will in effect be giving the regions veto power over its actions. This is a length to which it does not seem willing to go.

(27) See Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, IP/1955/VI/64/p. 475. This idea is also supported by Mohammad Hatta, speech at Gadjah Mada University, op. cit.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

7

The complexities of the problem of the position of the Kepala Daerah are a reflection of the complexities of the whole regional question, and sum up better than any single factor the divergencies and dichotomies in attitudes and expectations. The two major trends of opinion which we have noted in other contexts are also visible here. There is the conflict between the symbols relating to democracy and the symbols relating to the shortcomings of Indonesian society requiring guidance and control. The desirable symbolism of "collegial government" plus the antipathy towards "one man government" can be contrasted to the need for coordination of the vertical services located in the regions, the need for leadership, and the need for supervision. The ideal of a directly elected Kepala Daerah reflecting the will of the regional society cannot yet be reconciled with the need to ensure capable people in that office who can work within the context of the whole state. The "ideological" approach demanding democratic elections cannot yet be trusted according to the "technical" approach. The "technical" approach should logically be demanding "one man government" for purposes of simplicity in lines of authority and efficiency of control, as well as for economy of action. But given the development of political doctrine in Indonesia, such a suggestion would be impossible.

The second trend is the conflict between the demand for autonomy, local determination of decisions, and the demand for careful control over the distribution of goods and the course of development. A connection can be seen between this and the democracy-leadership conflict mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is essentially a different manifestation, using different symbols, of the same phenomenon. If the regions were considered capable of performing the functions envisaged for them, perhaps it would not have become a major issue whether or not the control organ should be an integral part of the regional mechanism. The procedures demanded by the democratic symbols could then have been allowed to operate. But the caution evinced by the Ministry of Internal Affairs worked against the surrender of full decision-making powers in broad areas of competence. One method of doing this was maintenance of the authority of and control over the Kepala Daerah in his pamong pradja guise.

Once the Ministry turned to the device of the State Commissioner to exercise its authority in the regions, a question could be raised as to why it had to be mentioned in the decentralization law. The law as it stands after its

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

final approval by parliament allows for investigation into the activities of the regions, and for various supervisory functions. These functions presumably could be carried out by appropriate officials of the Ministry, who could be sent wherever the Ministry should determine. Parliamentary objections were not directed against the functions of supervision; rather against the symbol of inclusion of a central functionary in the discussion of regional organization. It is not clear why the Ministry could not carry out the functions envisaged for the Commissioner in less formal ways.

It may be that we here encounter the problem of forms. If, as we have suggested, the proponents of the regional side did not have any clear role depicted for a Kepala Daerah, it would be possible that their rejection of the Kepala Daerah as a state official as well as their veto of the State Commisioner plan was based on their feeling a need to demonstrate their rejection of central government domination. They did not protest the functions deemed necessary by the central government, nor did they propose any alternative functions. Perhaps the years of growing impatience and continued protest of "unfair" treatment were decisive; anything savoring of central government control was to be opposed.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER X

REGIONS

1

The term "region" has appeared throughout this work--both in the narrative parts and the quotations--in a variety of contexts. It now remains for us to examine the term itself to see what light various usages shed on the problem of regional government. We can immediately differentiate two uses of the term. First, it implies the territorial subdivisions of the present state, whether the unit has been given autonomous status or not. Second, it refers to areas forming a more "natural" unity, usually because of ethnic considerations (i.e. Tapanuli, the home of the Bataks of Sumatra) or geographical factors (such as reference to an entire island, though the island may form neither an ethnic nor an administrative unity). When the "ethnic" unit is referred to, it is often congruent with a vestigial administrative unit, such as a Residency.

The first gross division that must be understood in the context of the problem of the relations of the center with the regions is the tradition inherited from the Dutch East Indies practice of distinguishing between Java (including the nearby island of Madura) and the Outer Territories (Buitengewesten). Dutch overlordship lasted much longer, Dutch penetration went much deeper in Java than in the other areas. Until recent times, the other areas were largely ignored by the Europeans, while on Java administrative procedures were being regularized. Java was mainly under "direct rule," while large parts of the other territories were governed by contract with local princes, under "indirect rule."

In regard to population, Java is intensely settled, while most of the other areas are underpopulated. Java shows a good deal of ethnic homogeneity while the other islands are ethnically splintered. While Sumatra contains some groups which can be counted in the millions, these are still small and localized compared to the size of the island. The same, to a lesser degree can be said of Sulawesi.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Java as a whole has long been subject to development. Its transportation network is good, and its industry, which is extensive compared to the other areas (but not in terms of its own population) is well distributed. There is a wide network of urban settlement, whether for industrial, commercial, or administrative purposes. The opposite is true of the Outer Islands. There have been pockets of development, such as the estate area of the East Coast of Sumatra, and the oil-rich Palembang area of South Sumatra, Makasar, the largest port of East Indonesia, and copra-producing Menado in Sulawesi. But interconnections between these areas and the rest of the islands on which they are located have been relatively poor, and there has been little history of interdependence.

The administrative structure as it existed on Java just prior to World War II consisted of five levels: Province, Residency, Regency, District, and Sub-district, headed respectively by a Governor, Resident, Regent, Wedana, Assistant Wedana. The first two named officials were European, the others Indonesian. Below this hierarchy was the village, with its own traditional forms of organization, though modified--unintentionally as well as deliberately--by Dutch rule over the centuries. According to the Dutch decentralization plans, the province and the regency were to have "autonomy," while the village had its traditional forms of self-government, now enshrined in legislation.

In the Outer Islands, the situation was much more complex. There were no provinces, but some areas, such as the island of Sumatra, were formed in "Governments," which was a step prior to being given provincial status. The islands were divided into Residencies which largely followed a combination of ethnic and economic lines. Below the residency were districts and sub-districts, of varying size--both in population and area--depending on the distribution of ethnic groups. The lowest level, the "natural" units, varied greatly. Some were organized on family lines, some territorially. In each case, there was a great range of definitions. In addition to this Dutch-imposed administrative organization, large parts of the Outer Islands were still nominally ruled by traditional families--sultans, rajas, etc. Dutch overlordship was usually recognized by the contractual relationship known as the short declaration. In many cases, final submission to the Dutch was not achieved until the 20th century.

Law No. 22 of 1948, which established the pattern of decentralization after 1950, required that there be three autonomous levels of government below the national level--province, regency, and village. In terms of Javanese experience,

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

this was not hard to imagine. Villages are territorially determined on Java, and are accustomed to functioning as units. Regencies had long been established, and had been considered "autonomous" prior to the war within the framework of the Dutch decentralization plans. Provinces had had at least ten years of experience with autonomous affairs before the war. In the outer islands the situation was different; provinces were unknown before the revolution brought them into existence. While there were some units that could be equated with regencies, these did not extend over entire islands. Some efforts had been made prior to the war in the direction of ethnic unification, which included granting some self-government to the units thus formed. The villages of the outer islands demonstrate great variety in the basis of their organization and traditional practices.

2

With this bewildering array of forms, and based on the agreement between the Republic of Indonesia (Jogja) and the United States of Indonesia, the unitary state started life in 1950 divided into ten provinces. The provinces were initially established as administrative units, but six of them had already been given autonomous status by laws specifically passed for the purpose under the general authority of Law No. 22, 1948. (1) This tenfold division provides a convenient second step in refining the notion of the region. These units were the primary official divisions that functioned for at least six years, and provide the context for much of the difficulty that plagued Indonesia in its regional problem. When speakers refer to "the regions" they are often concerned with these official divisions.

It seems clear that much of the dispute that raged around the regional question was based on the relation of these provinces to the central government. When one referred to the longed-for development, it was often with these provinces in mind. In terms of the kinds of activity envisaged for regional government, these provinces would in the first instance be involved--certainly at least for coordination and application of modern techniques of economic and political life.

Looking at the ten provinces, one is immediately struck

(1) In addition to the ten provinces, we must also note the existence of the Special Region of Jogjakarta, and the Municipality of Greater Djakarta, both of which are provincial-level units.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

by the difference in the situation in Java, and that in the outer islands. Java is divided into three provinces plus Greater Djakarta and Jogjakarta. Each province conforms more or less to the pre-war unit of the same name. Each is ethnically fairly homogeneous--West Java the home of the Sundanese, Central Java eminently the center of the Javanese, and East Java showing some mixture between Javanese and Madurese. Each province is densely populated, containing about 17 million people.

On the other islands a much more complex picture is apparent. Sumatra was divided into three provinces. North Sumatra combined the residencies of Atjeh, Tapanuli and East Sumatra, each the home of a different (sometimes several) ethnic groups. Atjeh, and the Atjehnese people, were one of the last conquered by the Dutch, and even after that event were very little penetrated by Dutch influence outside the coastal areas. East Sumatra is one of the richest areas of Indonesia. Both of these areas are predominantly Moslem, but Tapanuli, home of the Bataks, is largely Christian. Cultural characteristics and personality types differ widely among the three groups. Central Sumatra included the residencies of West Sumatra, Djambi, and Riauw. The first named is the home of the Minangkabau; the last named includes the many islands between Sumatra and Malaya, with close ties to Singapore. Communications from Djambi and Riauw go eastward to the Straits of Malacca, while the Minangkabau look west to the Indian Ocean. South Sumatra is made up of the residencies of Palembang, Benkulen, Lampongs, and Bangka-Billiton. It thus contains both the oil-rich Palembang area as well as the Kubus, one of the most primitive tribes of Indonesia. It contains huge tracts of impenetrable jungle as well as large resettlement areas for surplus Javanese.

The whole island of Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) was one province. There distances are great, and population is scanty. With 36 per cent of the land area of the country, it holds only 4 per cent of the population. Land communication between the three population centers of the island--Bandjarmasin, Pontianak, and Balikpapan--is virtually impossible. Ethnically, the coastal areas are divided among a variety of groups, while the inland people are given the general term of Dyak, though there is no certainty on the ethnography of the area. The island of Sulawesi was made into one province. This island reflects all of the problems mentioned for Kalimantan, though probably intensified, for it contains some densely populated parts, and some highly developed areas. It further demonstrates religious conflict between the Christian Menadonese of the north, and the Moslems of the south. The

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

island groups east of Sulawesi are collected in Maluku. Most of the individual islands are small, and with a few exceptions unimportant in the larger picture of the country. The islands east of Java, formerly called the Lesser Sundas, are now called Nusa Tenggara. They include densely populated Bali, but fertility of soil and level of development fall away further east.

Each of the provinces of the outer islands thus shows peculiar difficulties in organizing a cohesive government. In addition to the factors mentioned above, the differing experiences and traditions contained in any one province can and do lead to distrust and suspicion between groups. When to this are further added the complicating facts of Djakarta politics, the problem of establishing viable satisfactory regional divisions becomes formidable.

From the very beginning the division into ten provinces gave rise to protests. Groups claiming to speak for the people of various areas were demanding separation from the province they were situated in, and that they be given provincial status for themselves. As time went on the number of these demands and the number of groups involved increased. Atjeh, East Sumatra, Djambi and Riauw in Sumatra, East, West, and South Kalimantan each demanded provincial status, and groups in Sulawesi, Maluku, and Nusa Tenggara desired that their provinces be further divided into two or three provinces. Some of these demands were fulfilled in 1956. Then the regional movements of late 1956 and 1957 complicated matters, as the regions started taking independent action in granting provincial status to areas within the existing provinces. It is probable that further divisions will take place. The whole question has been examined by a State Commission established by the central government in December 1956 to investigate the various regions' claims.

Because of the original division into ten provinces and the subsequent activity in regard to provincial status, we may ask what was expected from a province, what needs was it expected to meet, and what were the bases for these demands. The answers emerging from our sources are not at all clear. Evidently part of the problem in individual provinces is similar to the national problem; instead of complaints of neglect from the national capital, there were protests against the provincial capital. This explanation would be valid, for example, for Central Sumatra, where the economically, politically and educationally more advanced Minangkabau dominate provincial affairs to the exclusion of people from Djambi and Riauw. The same elements are involved in the plans to set up a province of Central Kalimantan apart from South

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Kalimantan; the Dyaks of the inland areas fear the domination of the Bandjarese. Lines of communication are helpful in this context also--or rather the absence of them. To get from Bandjarmasin in South Kalimantan to Pontianak in West Kalimantan, it is easiest to go via Djakarta. Nias, the island off the west coast of Sumatra demands independence from the Tapanuli residency. Not only does there seem to be objection to the domination of people from Tapanuli, but communication with the mainland is far from satisfactory.

We cannot answer the question specifically of what the provinces are expected to do; we can only present the reasons for claiming provincial status. To attempt to achieve a functional definition from the actual practice that has taken place would be far beyond the scope of this work. Not only would there be difficulty in abstracting a single definition from the variety of provinces, but the problem of differentiating what is provincial practice and what is pamong pradja activity would have to be solved also. Further, it is difficult to assess the basis of the demands for provincial status a single factor. Certainly ethnic solidarity is apparent, with feelings of loyalty to the local group allowing the group to be the carrier of demands. But the demands themselves arise because of political and economic dissatisfaction, which are complicated by the ethnic factor. It is perhaps significant that there has rarely been any serious attempt to separate from Indonesia.

The second-level autonomous region gives rise to less controversy. The unit, the kabupaten, is well established on Java, where it has had a long history. While new in Sumatra and Kalimantan, it seems to have been well adapted. In some cases regencies coincide with ethnic groups, but this is not always the case. In the territory formerly included in East Indonesia, the picture is more complicated, giving rise to some discontent, but to a far lesser degree than is the case with demands for provincial status. Part of the difficulty is caused by the attempt to equate the three levels below the province authorized by Law No. 44, 1950 of the State of East Indonesia, with the two levels of Law No. 22 of 1948. A good case in point is the island of Bali which is a daerah under Law No. 44, 1950. It is too large to become a kabupaten, and too small to be a province. If it were subdivided into its eight "natural" parts, each would be too small to be a kabupaten, and too large for a village. Any attempt to combine any of these subdivisions would be artificial. (2)

(2) See I Gusti Gde Raka, PRN, IP/1954/V/139/p. 1030. The speaker is himself Balinese.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

An interesting point that arises in regard to these second-level units is the opinion that they, rather than the provinces, ought to be the center of attention in the endeavors to establish autonomous regional government. This argument has been presented strongly by former Vice President Mohammad Hatta. This is not a new idea growing out of the obvious difficulties faced by the central government in dealing with demands for provincial status. It was evidently his original conception of regional autonomy. We can find reference to it as far back as 1946, before any regional government law was passed. (3) Higher levels, according to this plan, would be for coordination purposes, and would not have representative bodies. The idea has thus far not met with any significant response in our sources.

3

According to Law No. 22 of 1948, there would have to be a third level of autonomous government, specifically named the "desa" (though allowing for different terminology from different parts of the archipelago). The formulation used in the new decentralization law--at most three levels--allows for the postponement of their establishment. This was probably necessary, for in the six years' experience with decentralization, not one village had been given autonomous status.

The village is the home of traditional Indonesia, and the home of approximately 80 per cent of the population. The village is "the basis of an agricultural state," (4) and it is "the starting point, the foundation of our country." (5) The people who live in the village, the farmers (tani), "are the measure of our national value." (6) It is the source of the attributes which are honored as characterizing Indonesian-ness--gotong rojong (mutual aid), musjawarah (consultation), mufakat (unanimous agreement).

Under the Dutch, the village was left as the Indonesian sphere. When reference is made to the preservation of or lack of interference in native organization on the part of

(3) "Kedaulatan Rakjat," op. cit., pp. 21-23.

(4) Burhanuddin Harahap, Masjumi, IP/1952/III/52/p. 264.

(5) Sumitro Kolopaking, IP-KI.

(6) K.R.M.T.H. Woerjoningrat, RP/1950/III/p. 796.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

the Dutch, it is done with the village in mind. (7) The Dutch did pass special ordinances, the IGO and the IGOB, (8) which formalized aspects of village organization, and regulated the performance of village autonomous government.

Thus it would seem quite natural that when the new Indonesian government turned its thoughts to autonomous regional organization, the village was considered the basic or lowest unit in the program. The Dutch had separated activities concerning the village from those dealing with decentralization at higher levels. The Indonesian planners were determined to include it in a single integrated program.

According to the legislation, there was to be no differentiation; the village would have the same organization as the higher levels, and areas of activity would be specified as included in its own affairs. But there were problems. The position of the village eminently sums up the difficulties facing Indonesia today. It sums up as no other institution the conflicts between the ideal of democracy and popular will, and the ideal of progress and development towards a better society. For the village is the home of "backward," uneducated, tradition-bound, "primitive" in terms of modern techniques of production, politically unsophisticated culture. Further there is no uniformity of situation or level of development even among the villages of a single area, making planning difficult if it is desired to have one single general rule for the entire country. The situation in the villages is

> very much backward if compared with other groups, not only in their economies and in their levels of education, but also in the organization of their governments. (9)

(7) Of course such a generalization can only be considered as relative to European penetration in other areas. The very presence of the Dutch in Indonesia forces one to assume there was influence on village organization--not to mention the 300 years of occupation prior to the adoption of the Dutch "ethical policy."

(8) Inlandse Gemeente Ordonnantie (Native Community Ordinance) and Inlandse Gemeente Ordonnantie Buitengewesten (Native Community Ordinance for the Outer Islands).

(9) K.R.M.T.H. Woerjoningrat, RP/1950/III/796.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

It has been suggested that people in the villages

> cannot yet be freed from the bonds of their way of life, which by this time has been caused by their misery and ignorance. (10)

By and large the villages have been closed communities suffering from the debilitating influences of colonialism:

> Dutch colonial policy caused the village to remain in a primitive condition, as a unit of community encaged and alienated from the wider world, isolated from the world of progress. (11)

In terms of the ideals and aspirations which are used to describe the motivation of the revolution, it is precisely in the backward condition of the village that one of the major needs for change is to be found. In terms of the demands for the decentralization program, the application of regional autonomy to the village is intended as a device for bringing about changes.

> If the principles of regional government as provided in Law No. 22, 1948, were already applied down to the village as the lowest autonomous level, the village would be released from its present imprisonment and backward condition and would show progress in all fields. Thus it is the responsibility of the Government to assist the village in the fields of education, combatting illiteracy, agriculture, etc. and to provide leadership for the village in its preparations for being able to receive that autonomy." (12)

An autonomous region, at whatever level, as well as the central government itself, is meant to be a device for bringing the benefits of democracy and modern life to its population. We have seen that one of the major concerns of the central government has been the technical capacities for performing the necessary functions for the achievement of that purpose in the regions. The problem is clearly

(10) Sutan Sjahrir, in Symposium Tentang Kesulitan-kesulitan Zaman Sekarang, April 26, 1952, Balai Pustaka, 1953, p. 20.

(11) Mohammad Tauchid, BTI, IP/1952/III/73/p. 348.

(12) Prime Minister Natsir in his answer to the first term debates on his program. RP/1950/V/p. 1803.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

intensified regarding the village, and it is further complicated by confusion with attempts to preserve the idealized traditional modes of behavior. When it is said that the village is the basic unit of community with a tradition of autonomy, emphasis is being placed on the very modes that are criticized and rejected--consciously or unconsciously--by those who talk of modernization and technical improvement.

> Bound by the ancient system of customs, still believing in a nonsensical magical world with all kinds of taboos, the peasant community is static, it doesn't move, it shows no progress or renewal. The villagers' life and the way of caring for the rice fields have not changed from those of their ancestors. The agricultural equipment they are using now is similar to that used by their forebears in ancient times...." (13)

This static condition encompasses a mode of every day existence that is dedicated to limited social and economic influences. Village affairs refer primarily to the physical upkeep of the village, and maintenance of production in the first place of agricultural goods. Within this limited scope there is indeed a tradition of autonomous activity, but, distinct from the present concept of "progress," it emphasizes tradition and resists change. Even within the traditional sphere there are indications that self-reliance is not always as complete as is sometimes thought.

The decentralization program is designed as a division of authority among the various levels of government. Recalling the stress placed on economic development as a function of government, it is doubtful that villagers in their present condition could perform the modern operations demanded for such development without careful and close supervision by the technical experts available at higher levels. There is, at the present time, little in this field that could be transferred to the village as areas for the application of its own initiative. Even in the fields traditionally within the scope of village upkeep--maintenance of village roads, buildings, irrigation works, etc.--the ideal being progress, the village will be subjected to instructions, advice, and examples that would be severe limitations on free or autonomous decision-making. The villagers must not be allowed to do as they want; they must be taught to change their ways, become dynamic, think of progress and the future.

(13) A. Hamid Siregar, Ekonomi Desa, Medan, Islamiah, 1952, p. 12.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The difficulty of compromising this need with the ideal of the third-level autonomous region has been one of the major drags on the implementation of the program.

The picture we have suggested for the condition of the village is not completely accurate; it does not account for the changes that are taking place. The revolution was not limited to the towns, and the spirit of change has not completely escaped the attention of the villagers. To a greater or lesser degree from village to village

> ...the village structure and its economy are in transition, breaking down as a result of the incursion of modern money economy, modern life and communications, and also as a result of the struggle for independence and of independence itself. (14)

But the villagers are poorly prepared to direct their attention to the fulfillment of the national ideals and the aspirations towards progress. An awareness of and ability to use modern technical methods in economics and government do not come naturally; and education and training are newly found for villagers. To cite one example, in the village of Djabres in Central Java, it is reported (15) that of a total population of 879, 61 per cent regard themselves as literate, (16) but only 33 per cent of the population over fifteen years of age have attended elementary school, and 2 per cent have attended secondary school. While the Indonesian government has been making heroic efforts in the field of education, such figures make it unlikely that the necessary basis of an educated and aware citizenry for the conduct of autonomous modern government can be achieved in the immediate future. (17)

The question might well be asked here as to the fate of the traditional modes of behavior that are cited as worthy of being preserved--collective life, gotong rojong, musjawarah,

(14) Soedjatmoko, in Thayer, op. cit., p. 132.

(15) Lembaga Penjelidikan Ekonomi dan Masjarakat, "Some Data on the Population of Djabres, a Village in Central Java," Ekonomi dan Keuangan Indonesia, December 1956.

(16) This would be a very high rate of literacy, and some question is raised by the reporters as to the reliability of the figure.

(17) The value of the educated and aware citizenry has been stressed by Indonesians themselves.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

mufakat. We can take it as axiomatic that they will change apace with the "modernization" of the village. Certain demands of rational economic organization are universal--to the extent that the goals to be achieved, such as efficient production, are the same. The technical requirements of machinery cannot be subjected to compromise. A hierarchic bureaucracy cannot be avoided in the making and carrying out of well-planned decisions. Collective life is cited as the basis for modern Indonesia. The theory however does not suggest how the traditional collectivity of the village will be transformed into a society capable of maintaining an advanced industrial plant. "The spirit of gotong rojong of the old and feudal type," says one observer, "must be capable of change to become a conscious and rational spirit of gotong rojong." (18) But it is not suggested how.

There are indications that it is not necessarily the traditional village that is intended as the third-level autonomous region. More recently stress has been placed on the ketjamatan (sub-district) level, which would include several of the presently existing villages. If this is done, the consequences for the traditional values cannot be foreseen. It is largely an unknown factor how the villagers will interact with enlarged circles of community when their traditional circle of activity and communication is expanded to include other villages. If there is no interaction, or if the village maintains its unity, the problem of the ideal unit of community has not been solved. If the closeness of the community is violated by combination with other villages, it is possible that the traditional responses will be modified. There have been some cases of combinations of villages forming new and still viable units. So far, however, the process has been much too slow to have any meaning for the present plans.

While the ideological approach to Indonesian government may stress the traditional village as the basic level of community, the technical approach generally realizes its shortcomings as it exists now in becoming an autonomous level, and has been searching about for a way out of the impasse thus far encountered. One of the attempts to stimulate the kind of activity necessary to a viable, self-sustaining village society in the context of the modern world has been to establish "experimental villages" (desa pertjobaan). Here the technical services of the central government were set to work, encouraging and initiating village activity in fields deemed necessary to their welfare. To be emphasized here is the role of the central government in these activities.

(18) Sutan Sjahrir, op. cit., p. 37.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> It must be confessed that when they were formed, activities were organized at the suggestion and urging of the appropriate pamong pradja officials, assisted by the (technical) bureaus. (19)

But the ideal is to have these activities undertaken by the people themselves, on their own initiative. There is some question as to whether that has been achieved yet. While instances of village initiative can be pointed to, there is also the realization that the scale thus far has been disappointing, especially in those cases where central government encouragement has been reduced.

As far back as 1948, it was declared that the traditional village might not be a viable unit for the purposes of decentralization. It was suggested then that there might be combinations of villages to form a stronger unit. (20) But by 1955, while still claiming that "combination is still the main road" to achieve an acceptable level for the village, it was admitted that "according to the present facts none want to do it." (21)

The problem of the third-level autonomous region is still far from solution. Each cabinet has promised investigations or experiments, perhaps seriously, perhaps as an excuse; for it must be admitted that the complexity of the problem does not allow for easy resolution. A conflict between ideals and practical reality is obvious. While it may be a basic aspiration to have the mass of the population living in more or less traditional surroundings, but acting in terms of modern economic and political techniques, the hard facts of backward village life point to a long-term process of information and education before such a goal can be achieved. If this is so, then the central government's concern over leadership and supervision is well-founded. A village left to its own devices at the present time would find it difficult to initiate the improvements which are hoped for.

This is not to suggest that the traditional "autonomy" of the village must be entirely neglected. It would seem, however, that the terms of reference for a village cannot be the same as those for a province; the village requires distinct

(19) Prime Minister Burhanuddin Harahap, in his answer to the debates on his cabinet's program, IP/1955/VI/110/p. 832.

(20) See Clarification, Law No. 22, 1948.

(21) Prime Minister Harahap, IP/1955/VI/110/p. 832.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

treatment, suitable to its characteristics. But to set up separate legislation for the village would violate a widely conceived image: the Dutch had done just that and also "neglected" the village; Indonesia must correct that situation by bringing the village integrally into the decentralization system. The difficulty, if not impossibility, of doing so is indicated by the lack of any third-level villages, and by the change in the wording of the new decentralization law to allow for the postponement of their establishment. Another assumption that has pervaded activities regarding villages is that the regulations governing them must be general for all. In the face of recognized wide divergencies of development, it is difficult to see how this could be accomplished in the near future. But, while all the higher-level activities go on about the village, thus far the village itself has continued to function within its traditional realm. Some changes are already apparent however, and as outside influences continue to intrude the changes will become more profound. The ideal of the collective village may well be lost in spite of the wish to preserve it on the part of the Djakarta leaders.

Modern techniques are to be put at the service of the village. The villager is not to be left in ignorance. Starting with the widespread anti-illiteracy campaign, there are being planned and already going on a variety of programs designed to bring about this transformation. The scope of these activities, however, tends to support the thesis that for the immediate future, the village will be much more the subject of action by others than the initiator of autonomous activities. (22) The wishes of the village populations can be made known through devices such as village assemblies, but the actual decisions on work, other than that traditionally done by the village, will probably continue to originate from other sources.

4

We have pointed to the problem of whether the third-level autonomous region is to be a "natural" village, or a "construct" made up of combinations of presently existing units. We noted

(22) Even the co-operative movement, which requires large-scale direct participation, is essentially led from above, and must provide education and training "which must consume decades." See, passim, Mohammad Hatta, The Co-operative Movement in Indonesia, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1957. This book, a collection of translated speeches by the former vice president, provides, in addition to information on the co-operative movement, excellent statements of Indonesian ideals.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

that the preferred solution tends in the direction of combinations. However, in the discussions concerning this possibility, it is usually emphasized that the villagers must not be "forced" to combine, that such combinations must emerge from a popular realization of the needs and benefits to be derived from such a step; the new unit is thus to be "natural" in its own right.

This is evidently an application of a more general symbol used in expressions concerning the actual division of territory: the regions must form "living unities" (kesatuan jang hidup), a term which is meant to apply to all levels. The viability of these units would be judged according to existing situations, based on certain indices; the contradistinction to this type of unit would be "artificial constructions"(bikin-bikinan).

There seems to be fairly general attachment to the symbol of living unity, both on the part of the central government and of the regional spokesmen, though with sometimes varying terminology. The Minister of Internal Affairs, in his answer to the first term debates on the 1954 draft decentralization bill said:

> In principle it would be extremely unwise to have autonomous units which would be merely artificial constructs, thus not basing them on the legal communities that do exist. Therefore a region which is to be given autonomy should as far as possible be a community unit that clearly demonstrates the factors of the bonds of unity. (23)

Examples of similar expressions are easily found in a variety of sources, not only governmental:

> In order for autonomy to give satisfaction to the people, it must be conferred upon regions which really can be considered as unities by the people, or be received as such. (24)

Another manifestation of this line is the opinion that one of the big mistakes made by the various cabinets in implementing the decentralization program has been that

(23) IP/1955/VI/45/p. 321.

(24) Sukarma, Otonomi Daerah, Djakarta, Sikap, (nd), p. 15.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

> autonomy has not been given to regions of unified popular life, but rather to regions constructed at an office desk. (25)

The question of viability is subject to differences of interpretation, and one might expect that in any given political situation such interpretations would be influenced by political and economic interests. We can, however, consider the factors which are discussed in relation to the divisions that either have been made or are demanded, either in justification or in criticism of the decision. We can differentiate four types of factors which are often referred to. Unfortunately we do not get a clear picture of their interrelations, or of the relative importance of each.

The first set might be called physical and social factors. Those who argue for the division of Kalimantan into more than one province point out that communication between the various parts of that large island is at present extremely difficult; to travel from Pontianak on the west coast to Bandjarmasin on the south coast it is easiest to go by way of Djakarta. Economic rationales are invoked; arguing for provincial status for West Kalimantan, one speaker (Maizyr Achmaddyn's of Masjumi who comes from Kalimantan) claimed this region had most of its economic relations with Java and Singapore, but very few with South and East Kalimantan. Prime Minister Natsir, in defending his cabinet's program said that

> in determining the level of an autonomous region, most attention must be paid to the social and economic progress of the region... (26)

Under the heading of physical and social factors we would have to include ethnic composition. Some political parties actually refer to the ethnic groups as a possible basis of division of territory, though most are not quite as explicit. It is not clear how an entirely ethnic division would be implemented; some of the groups are quite small, including some extremely primitive tribes. Others are economically backward, and would find it difficult to function within the framework of the orientation of the decentralization program. In the demands for status that have been articulated in the past few years, sometimes the ethnic basis is embarrassingly close to the surface, to the neglect of other, more "objective" technical factors. This occurs when

(25) Major Polak, PSI, IP/1954/V/142/p. 1046.

(26) RP/1950/V/p. 1796.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

included in one province there are groups with differing levels of influence in the province, and there is a fear of domination of the stronger over the weaker. This evidently was an important part of the demand for a separate province of Central Kalimantan (to escape from the control of the Bandjarese), and in the movements for separate provinces of Djambi and Riauw, in Central Sumatra, where the Minangkabaus were seen as having predominance. Whether or not the ethnic composition of an area is explicitly mentioned, it should be inferred as one of the bonds that unify segments of the population in the "viable units" put forth as the objectives.

The second group of factors can be called technical. It includes problems such as the availability of qualified manpower, sufficient financial means, and in general the equipment needed for functioning autonomous regional government. Reference to these factors is almost a monopoly of central government spokesmen, and it seems more a basis for negative argument, to be used in justification for refusing to make a division, than a consideration of the realities of regional life. There is no indication of the meaning of "sufficiency." Certainly in terms of the high level of ideals of economic development and modern government, no region would have these factors in sufficient supply, but then, by the same token, the central government faces similar shortages.

Reference to these technical factors in rejecting claims to status is illustrated by Prime Minister Wilopo's answer to the demand the Kalimantan be divided into more than one province. This was at a time when Kalimantan was a single administrative province:

> Keeping in mind the growth of government throughout Kalimantan based on its present administrative form, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been endeavoring to establish Kalimantan as a single autonomous province. This does not mean that we reject or ignore the demands of the people of, for example, West Kalimantan, for the division of Kalimantan into two or more provinces. Possible solutions to this problem can be examined more deeply, in accordance with the political development of various regions, while awaiting the preparation of all the materials needed to equip an autonomous province, such as organization, apparatus, trained manpower, sources of finances, and so forth. (27)

(27) Keterangan dan Djawaban Pemerintah atas Program Kabinet Wilopo (Program of the Wilopo Cabinet and the Government's Reply to Parliamentary Debate), Djakarta, Kementerian Penerangan, 1952, p. 49.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

These two sets of factors are actually two different ways of looking at the same phenomenon which we can call the general development of an area. They are in practice sometimes combined in this manner, such as in the statement by Minister of Internal Affairs Sunarjo:

> In order to be able to determine that sort of community unit we must not only pay attention to the economic, geographic, cultural and sociological factors, but also the development of that community itself. In this matter, that development is the major factor, for that is what determines, and brings the community to, a true unity of life; that is what guarantees viability or the ability to exist. (28)

The third group of factors are the references to the wishes of the people, usually of the region concerned. Here we find the various claims, most often to provincial status, presented in the name of the people. Sometimes this is coupled with an identification of the claimants with some other widely accepted value, such as the Unitary State. For example:

> I wish to further a claim from West Kalimantan (for provincial status)....This is not just the wish of one group that wants to continue the idea of federalism in the form of a province with broad autonomy. Mr. Speaker, the ones that want provincial autonomy for West Kalimantan are mainly those groups that formerly, with all their strength, fought for the Unitary Republic of Indonesia. (29)

The desire of the population for provincial status has been invoked in each instance of such claims, as was to be expected given the importance of democratic symbolism. How meaningful such arguments are in the determination of provinces is an open question. It is complicated by the difficulties of measuring popular desires. In the first instance popular desires are expressed through resolutions transmitted by organizations, political party branches, and mass meetings. But some questions can be raised as to the validity of such media as actual reflections of public opinion. Nevertheless, they are the manifestations with which the central government is faced. The question should more properly be put as how

(28) From the answer to the debates on the draft decentralization law, IP/1955/VI/45/p. 321.

(29) Dr. M. Soedarso, PNI, RP/1950/III/p. 1163.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

much political pressure such manifestations can generate. These pressures, which can vary from mild urging to outright violence, result in a political decision which may entirely neglect the more "objective" factors of viability.

The first concrete step taken by the central government to adjust the number of first level divisions was in 1956, when Atjeh was separated from North Sumatra, and Kalimantan was divided into three provinces. In its explanation of this move, the central government specifically referred to "the demands of the people."

> It is already generally known that the division of the territory of the State into ten provinces is no longer able to fulfill the hopes and desires of the people in general, and further gives no satisfaction to the people of the regions concerned, especially those of Atjeh, East Sumatra, Riauw, Djambi, East Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, and also from Sulawesi and Nusa Tenggara. Voices are heard, especially from Sumatra and Kalimantan, which strongly demand that their respective regions be established as autonomous provinces. They have repeatedly demonstrated their wishes, both in resolutions and motions, and in the newspapers, and they have sent delegations to the Central Government without ever losing the hope that their demands must be heeded by the Government. (30)

The problem of Atjeh was very much complicated by the existence and continuation of outright armed revolt which had been going on since September 1953. It had in fact been argued that provincial status for Atjeh could not be decided before peaceful conditions were restored. But as time passed this desirable objective was no closer to attainment. In 1956, the government did move to establish Atjeh as a separate province, with some hope that this might help settle the armed conflict. In the course of 1957 peace was attained, but there is no way to measure the contribution of the granting of provincial status to this. It is impossible to say what would have happened to the claim for status if there had been no revolt. The demand for separation is an old one, dating back to the time Atjeh was first included in North Sumatra, in 1950 (Atjeh was a separate province for a short time prior to that). It would be a gross oversimplification to attribute the Atjeh revolt in 1953 solely to the

(30) From the Clarification of the bill for the establishment of the Province of Atjeh, IP/1956/VII/92/p. 754.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

demand for autonomy, but this was an element involved in the political maneuverings in that area.

The success of Atjeh and the new provinces of Kalimantan in achieving the desired status evidently gave new ammunition to other areas making the same demand. They argued that the only way to stimulate action on the part of the central government was to engage in armed revolt as Atjeh had done. Before any of these other areas could develop a course of action, the regional movements led by army colonels, based on the existing organization, began at the end of 1956. The Central Sumatran leadership, the Banteng Council, indicated early in 1957, their accession to the claims of Djambi and Riauw to separate status. The central government, faced with practically a fait accompli, indicated its willingness to legalize this move, and started on the procedures for establishing those areas as provinces. The action of the Banteng Council evidently hastened the process.

The fourth factor we might call historical development. It encompasses a variety of forms of growth, not the least important of which was the administrative structure devised by the Dutch before World War II. Under the Dutch system, the division which served almost uniformly throughout the Outer Islands as the main administrative unit was the residency. In Java, this unit was superceded in later years by the province, but this level was never reached on the other islands. As was mentioned, in Java the administrative structure was quite regular, but in the outer islands below the residency level there was great variety. Reference to regions in current debates often is to the divisions as they were before the war, and the one most often mentioned is the residency.

As first conceived, the decentralization program would have led to the elimination of the residency as an administrative unit with its functions being absorbed by the province. This development has not taken place, causing some adverse comment in Parliament. At one point, because of new appointments of residents--the top administrative official of a residency--the accusation was made that the Ministry of Internal Affairs was trying to strengthen the position of the pamong pradja by stressing the residency level, instead of working towards the demise of the whole corps. Recent developments, however, may make the whole question academic; some support has been developed for the notion that the first-level autonomous region should be the residency. While this might not be significant--and even possibly a regression--on Java, it would accord with the most vociferous demands from the outer islands. The claims for provincial, or first-level status have been based on the former residencies, such as

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Atjeh, Djambi, Riauw, etc. While there has been no great enthusiasm for this suggestion as an abstract solution, the practical situation is approaching more and more to its fulfillment.

The factor of the historical background of the various areas is often utilized in discussions as to the number of levels that would be most suitable for receiving autonomy. It will be recalled that Law No. 22, 1948 required three autonomous levels, but this formulation was changed to allow "at most" three. This was to permit the postponement of the creation of the third level. There was little objection in Parliament to the notion of the first and second levels, though there was debate as to the extensiveness of the first level. Outside of Parliament, however, there has been some discussion of whether three levels would be desirable at all. When this question is raised, the determining consideration in the speaker's point of view seems to be whether or not there had been a tradition of any given level in the various parts of Indonesia. In this vein, Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo could recommend three levels for Java and two for the rest of the country, for in Java and Madura

> such an arrangement has been in operation for years, and can be accepted and understood by the people... (while)...for the areas outside Java it can be said that the arrengement of three levels is something new, for the level of Province and Kabupaten are still foreign to the people there...

Utilizing the same appeal, but arguing in a different direction, the speaker for Maluku at the Inter-Provincial Conference, held in Bandung in March 1955, could claim that three levels would be proper for his region because it would correspond with "the arrangements from former times, which included divisions into Residencies and Sub-districts." He claimed that the requirement of three levels

> corresponds with the objective situation in Indonesia; it is practical; it would not be artificial. (Further, this is true for areas outside of Java also). But the size of any one level, of course, cannot be the same for Java and the areas outside Java. (31)

(31) Kenang-kenangan Konperensi Antar-Propinsi Seluruh Indonesia diadakan di Bandung pada tanggal 7-8-9 Maret 1955, p. 155.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The reformulation of the requirement of the number of levels, we have suggested, is to allow the postponement of the establishment of third-level units. This step was necessary due to the immensity of the problem, and the changes required in relation to village society. Aside from this, there are no major changes from the situation which developed since 1950, based on Law No. 22, 1948. There are more provinces being established; the kabupaten divisions of Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan seem fixed; there has been some readjustment of "kabupatens" in Sulawesi and Maluku; ignoring the question of cities, there have been no third-level units established. We have suggested four groupings of factors envisaged as determining new divisions, and we have indicated that units are expected to demonstrate bonds of unity that would make them viable. We cannot indicate, in terms of expectations, which factors or combinations of factors carry most weight in making the final decisions. In practice, however, it would seem that the redivision of provinces has been taking place as a response to urgent political pressures rather than in fulfillment of rationalized predetermined planning. One might interpret this as giving most weight to the factor of popular will for separate status expressed in an area through political demands. If so, however, it is still far from the ideal informed citizenry expressing their self-interest to a receptive bureaucracy through representative institutions, and basing their expressions on rational grounds in interpretation of the common welfare. We here beg the question of whether or nor the redivisions which have taken place would have occurred in any case within the framework of a rational plan considering all the factors. But--and here the question of time enters--the demands had been expressed for six years before the redivisions started; and the redivisions were finally accomplished at a time when political tensions over what is generally called "the regional problem" were becoming acute.

Generated at Columbia University on 2025-02-19 21:21 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924008563458
Public Domain / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd
Digitized by CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Original from CORNELL UNIVERSITY