

# THE CATASTROPHE IN INDONESIA



THREE ARTICLES ON  
THE FATAL CONSEQUENCES  
OF COMMUNIST PARTY POLICY

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Cover photo: Remains of Communist Party headquarters  
burned down in wake of military inspired anti-communist  
rioting in Jakarta.

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## INTRODUCTION

by Joseph Hansen

The three documents reprinted here as a pamphlet\* deal with a defeat to the world socialist revolution—a major defeat that is still reverberating in world politics. The documents attempt to analyze the defeat and to draw some critical lessons from it.

It is quite fashionable among revolutionists to talk about the need for criticism and self-criticism in relation to setbacks to their cause. Unfortunately the breach between acknowledgment of the need and actually carrying it out is a wide one.

There are a number of reasons for this.

First of all, the struggle for socialism is a difficult one. Of all the great tasks which humanity has faced in the slow upward climb from savagery and barbarism toward genuine civilization, the battle to overcome capitalism and to establish planned economy on a world scale is undoubtedly the most toilsome and complicated single undertaking. To compensate for this, there exists a strong tendency to concentrate on the heartening signs, the successes, that prove that progress is indeed being made. The other side of this is a readiness to offset the demoralizing consequences of serious setbacks by excluding the real situation from consciousness.

These psychological reflexes are given strong and often quite deliberate reinforcement by the narrow-minded or self-seeking bureaucracies to be found in many working-class organizations. Conservative trade-union bureaucrats prefer to completely ignore defeats like the one in Indonesia when they do not actually cheer the crushing of "Communism." But

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opportunistic leaders of political parties whose programs are ostensibly dedicated to socialism are just as guilty. The most pernicious are those who claim to stand in the tradition of Leninism but who have converted *criticism*—the application of ruthlessly objective analysis—into a mere ritual that aims at covering up and even prettifying costly and damaging setbacks to the workers' movement.

In the case of Indonesia, neither the Kremlin nor Peking has offered even a ritualistic simulacrum. An entire year has passed since the disaster that shattered the largest Communist party in the capitalist world, yet not a single attempt, however superficial, has been made by either of the centers to analyze what went wrong and why.

Certainly sufficient resources are available to both governments to make such an analysis. Moscow has proved its capacity to secure first-rate photographs of the other side of the moon and Peking has recently provided most convincing proof of its capacity to produce a hydrogen deterrent to war. Surely either of them, or both of them combined, should be able to crack the secret that enabled a handful of reactionary generals in a backward country to overcome a huge mass party able to count on the experience and advice of both Peking and Moscow!

It requires no James Bond or Superintendent Maigret to discover why Mao and Khrushchev's heirs are not vying in the field of analyzing the defeat in Indonesia. The policy of each is to say nothing. To put it bluntly, they have a tacit agreement not to probe into this delicate area where the only real difference concerns which was most to blame.

For revolutionists—and much broader circles!—it is nonetheless a vital matter, even a life and death matter, to understand serious defeats and how they could have been prevented. Thus in Indonesia, it was precisely the lack of widespread understanding of the defeats and setbacks suffered by the socialist revolution in the twenties and thirties, and again in the postwar period in Europe, that paved the way for another debacle comparable to the one suffered by the workers of Germany at the hands of Hitler in the early thirties.

And it is precisely because the working class generally still does not understand the role played by Stalinism in the events leading to World War II that the world today stands at the brink of a nuclear conflict.

The series of defeats in a number of countries, above all in Germany, gave the imperialists in the mid-thirties the conviction that they could plunge into a world war without thereby signing a death warrant for capitalism. They were confirmed in their belief by what happened in the civil war in Spain where Stalin, to prove to imperialism his capacity to play the role of savior of their system and thereby win for the Kremlin at least forbearance from attack, deliberately blocked a socialist victory. Spain, as Leon Trotsky pointed out at the time, constituted the "last warning" for humanity; inasmuch as the imperialist powers, by intervening in the civil war, were converting Spain into a proving ground for World War II.

Today the course of the conflict in Vietnam offers many striking parallels to the tragedy in Spain. Not the least of these is the parallel between the defeat in Germany and the defeat in Indonesia. The events in Indonesia can be glossed over only at risk of paying a most fearful price!

In analyzing what happened in Indonesia, it is possible to make a serious mistake in methodology. This is to confine the analysis to the Indonesian scene alone, leaving out the international context. Such an error would emphasize what is peculiar to the archipelago and tend to obscure the general pattern that applies to other countries as well. It would likewise tend to isolate Indonesia from the overall context of international events and block an understanding of the reciprocal play of cause and effect on a world scale.

To fully appreciate the enormity of the debacle in Indonesia, it is necessary, for instance, to see it as the culmination of a series of setbacks that occurred after the colonial revolution reached a high point with the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. The immediate consequence of the triumph in Cuba was to provide fresh inspiration and hope to the masses throughout the colonial world. This was particularly visible in the upsurge in the Congo and elsewhere in Africa, as in Algeria and Zanzibar.

Then a series of setbacks occurred, some due to adventurist actions associated with a wrong appreciation or wrong application of the lessons of the Cuban victory, some due—and this was much the more decisive and widespread—to class-collaborationist, "peaceful coexistence" policies.

In one country after another, the military caste seized power

in coup d'etats and proceeded to crush or drive underground the revolutionary movements seeking an agrarian reform, national liberation, a planned economy. The biggest defeat before the one in Indonesia occurred in Brazil in April 1964. Other sharp setbacks occurred in the Congo and Algeria, to name but the most prominent. Since the defeat in Indonesia, Ghana has been added to the list.

In brief, the series of defeats in a number of other countries in the colonial world increased the potentiality for a defeat in Indonesia.

Thus, instead of being provided with a new example like Cuba—one that would serve both to provide fresh inspiration to the masses and also a model more applicable perhaps to conditions in their own country—the Indonesian masses were confronted with a series of depressing setbacks.

It was all the more important, therefore, for the leaders of the Chinese Communist party to play a positive role and to do their utmost to help put the Indonesian Communist party on the right track. The Chinese Revolution had enormous impact on the Indonesian masses, as it did on the masses throughout the colonial world. The successes and achievements of planned economy in China—despite the errors and limitations—further impressed the masses, especially when viewed against the continued stagnation and decay in countries like India where capitalism still prevails. The credit due the Chinese Revolution thus redounded to the leaders of the Chinese Communist party, lending extraordinary authority to their attitudes and advice.

But the policy of the Mao leadership was to cover up and even foster the opportunism of the Aidit group in the Indonesian Communist party. Thus in relation to Indonesia, Mao played a role comparable to that of Stalin in the German events. Just as Stalin, out of passing diplomatic needs, blocked the German Communist party from developing a revolutionary policy that could have stopped Hitler and put the German working class in power, so Mao out of similar passing diplomatic needs (an alliance with Sukarno and the Indonesian bourgeoisie) blocked the Indonesian Communist party from developing a revolutionary policy that could have stopped the reactionary generals and put the Indonesian working class in power.

Clearly, the defeat in Indonesia cannot be understood without understanding how and why the Indonesian masses turned towards China and how and why it was possible for Peking to play such a pernicious role in turning these same masses away from the road to victory.

If the connection between the defeats in other countries and the defeat in Indonesia is ill understood, this holds all the more so for the international repercussions that followed upon the defeat.

In Vietnam the struggle of the freedom fighters at once became ten times more difficult.

A victory in Indonesia would have meant a great new powerful ally in the camp of the workers' states. It needs little to visualize how this would have affected the popular mood in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China, compelling the governments of these countries to firm up their foreign policy. The pressure upon them to furnish adequate aid to the Vietnamese fighters, for instance, would have increased to irresistible proportions. A revolutionary government in Indonesia would itself have intervened directly in Moscow and Peking along these lines, not to mention the aid it would have mobilized in consonance with its own immediate interests to beat back the thrust of American imperialism in Southeast Asia.

Instead of this, the defeat in Indonesia acted as a new depressant on the Vietnamese freedom fighters. That they have maintained their struggle as valiantly as they have *despite this* shows how heroic they really are.

The defeat in Indonesia also had grave repercussions for the colonial revolution, the workers' states and the socialist struggle in general through the encouragement it provided the most belligerent sectors of the American ruling class—those that want to get on with the grandiose scheme of spreading their empire until it girdles the globe. The physical liquidation of the Indonesian Communist party deprived Johnson of one of his main arguments for intervening in the civil war in Vietnam; namely, the argument that if the U.S. did not shore up the Saigon regime it would fall and that would mean a whole role of dominoes going down. By way of compensation, the victory of the ultrareactionary coup d'etat in Indonesia greatly strengthened the position of the U.S. armed

forces in Southeast Asia and thereby reduced the risk inherent in further escalation of the war in Vietnam.

The ultimate consequences of the defeat in Indonesia can thus be seen in the flow of American casualties from Vietnam and the heightened danger of a nuclear catastrophe.

The most spectacular immediate result of the defeat in Indonesia, however, is to be seen in China. The evidence strongly indicates that it was the precipitating cause for the "cultural revolution" which has so surprised and puzzled the Sinologists.

It is rather broadly understood that Mao's ultraleft extremism led to Peking's isolation among the workers' states and Communist parties. To openly reject a united front against the military aggression of American imperialism in Vietnam with governments, parties and groupings that do not meet with Mao's full approval could obviously end only with the Chinese Communist party standing alone; and with the blame pinned on it, moreover, for making a common front impossible. This in turn had the effect of strengthening Khrushchevism, the pernicious continuation of Stalinism. It is not so widely understood that Mao's opportunism with regard to Sukarno and the Indonesian Communist party had similar results. A major ally, the Indonesian Communist party, was smashed; Indonesia was converted from a friendly country into an enemy power; the aggressive designs of American imperialism were given fresh impetus; and China's defenses were greatly weakened by these shifts on the international scene.

There is considerable evidence to show that these results of Mao's foreign policy caused great concern to a broad spectrum of leaders in the Chinese government and the bureaucracy as a whole. The criticisms that were voiced, even if muffled or made indirectly, undoubtedly resounded throughout the country. The all too evident rise in the war danger demanded immediate consideration of the country's defenses.

Although rather long-standing differences over domestic policies evidently played a major role in the purges and turmoil that took place under the misleading label of a "cultural revolution," the timing as well as other attendant circumstances show that it was Mao's foreign policy, above all the disaster resulting from it in Indonesia, that touched off

the internal conflict that has shaken China.

How the outcome of this conflict will ultimately affect the foreign policy of the Chinese government and how this in turn will enter into new events remains to be seen.

Lest the picture seem too dark, attention should be called to the major differences between the international setting today and the setting of the twenties and thirties.

First, the difference in level between the industrially backward and industrially advanced countries—which is the prime generator of the colonial revolution—continues to deepen. An inflationary process unremittingly cuts into the standard of living of the masses. This is coupled with extreme rigidity among the indigenous oligarchies with regard to concessions and reforms. The combination repeatedly packs fresh explosives into the rotted social structures of the colonial world.

Secondly, the examples provided by Russia, Eastern Europe, China and Cuba in showing a practical alternative to capitalist stagnation are now so deeply engraved in popular consciousness as to be ineradicable among the masses in all the underdeveloped countries.

These two main factors explain one of the new features in world politics today—the quickness with which the masses recover from defeats that formerly would have left them prostrate for decades.

To this must be added the shattering of the Stalinist monolith and the appearance of new revolutionary currents such as Castroism. Both phenomena, which are of course interrelated, greatly facilitate finding a solution to the key problem of building a leadership capable of winning power.

There is thus every reason for taking an optimistic stand and holding out the expectation that the vanguard of the working class will succeed in meeting the great historic challenge. It will create the political mechanism required to assure fresh victories of the socialist revolution. It will do it in time to prevent a third world war.

One of the necessary conditions for reversing the string of defeats and opening up a series of victories is to broaden the vanguard's understanding of the meaning of the defeats, above all the major ones like the debacle in Indonesia. This pamphlet is intended to help in carrying out that task.

On the documents themselves, a word should be added as

to authorship. Ernest Mandel is the editor of the Belgian socialist weekly *La Gauche*. He has written extensively on political and economic subjects of interest to the revolutionary socialist movement. His book *Traité d'Economie Marxiste* won him a firm reputation throughout Europe as a Marxist economist. An English edition of this important work is now in preparation.

The second document is by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. This is the leading body of the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. As a statement of position on an important contemporary event, the document is indicative of how well the Fourth International stands in the tradition established by its founder.

The third document was written by a young member of the Indonesian Communist party who succeeded in making his way into exile. His analysis of Aidit's policies is of the greatest interest not only in the material it provides as a guide for further study but as an indication of the determination of an important sector of the Indonesian Communist party to learn from what happened and to utilize the lessons in such a way as to ensure victory when the masses again surge forward, as they surely will.

November 28, 1966

# LESSONS OF THE DEFEAT IN INDONESIA

by Ernest Mandel

The international workers movement, the colonial revolution, have suffered a terrible defeat in Indonesia. Since October 1965, thousands of militants belonging to the Communist party and other left groupings have been murdered in a veritable white terror. This sweeping massacre has met with hardly a word of disapproval in the Western press, so "humanist" and so sensitive when it comes to defending the "sanctity of the human being" when a victorious revolution eliminates butchers who have committed unspeakable crimes, as occurred at the time of the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

But innumerable victims have fallen in the wave of terror that has swept Indonesia. Sukarno himself has officially admitted 87,000 dead. At the Tricontinental Conference Fidel Castro spoke of 100,000 dead. Western observers in Indonesia have put the figure at 120,000 to 125,000 murdered workers and militants, and certain sources even speak of 150,000 to 200,000 dead.

Journalists of conservative right-wing newspapers like the special correspondents of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the London *Sunday Times* and the Basel *National-Zeitung* have given detailed descriptions of the terror in certain parts of the country. The report of the special correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on the events of Bali, the island formerly considered to be a Communist fortress, is terrifying. He tells about bodies lying along the roads, or heaped in pits, of half-burned villages in which the peasants dare not leave the shells of their

huts. There is likewise a nightmarish account of the hysterical fear that has caught up large numbers, so that people suspected of being Communists have killed their alleged comrades with their own hands in order to show the ferocious army men that "they were not Communists."

In addition to the dead, there are innumerable other victims of the repression. The figure has been given of 250,000 militants or sympathizers of the extreme left in prison. At the beginning of October 1965, certain trade unions tried to react timidly against the counterrevolutionary wave of terror. Every worker who went out on strike was summarily fired. According to the *Sunday Times*, in the north of the island of Sumatra, 4,000 workers and functionaries in the public services were fired on suspicion of being Communists. A monstrous purge has eliminated all the "suspects" in the ministries, the press, enterprises playing a vital role in the country's economy. In a country where endemic unemployment and growing misery reign, the firing of these workers condemns their families to actual famine. One hundred thousand families in mourning, several hundred thousand reduced to desperate straits, this seems to be the provisional balance sheet of the wave of "white terror" that has swept the Indonesian archipelago since October 1, 1965.

In face of such a massacre and such a repression, the first duty of every socialist, of every human being who has a minimum of feeling for humanity, is to protest with all his energy against the collective murder now going on in Indonesia of Communists and other people of the left. The war in Vietnam has begun to stir public opinion because of the atrocities being committed there by the imperialists. But it must be stated that many more victims have fallen in a few weeks in the counterrevolutionary repression in Indonesia than in several years of the civil war in Vietnam.

This shows once again that in face of an enemy determined to resort to all means, including the most barbarous, to maintain class rule, the most rational course is to resort to revolution, including an armed revolution. Even on the purely humanist level this holds true because human lives can be saved (not to mention the fact that in the former case, the victims died for nothing, while their people sink deeper and deeper into misery; while in the latter case, the sacrifices of the people at least make it possible to build a new society and to emerge from centuries of prostration and ferocious exploitation).

Let all the defenders of the rights of man raise their voices vehemently against the massacre of Communists in Indonesia. Let them make a not less vehement denunciation of the perpetrators of these crimes, and those partially guilty, like Sukarno. One notes without much surprise that most of these "humanists" and these "liberals" of the West have remained silent up to now. And one notes, too, that not a few Communist parties are to be found among those who have remained silent up to now.

But our reaction in face of the fearsome terror unleashed on the Indonesian people cannot be limited to denouncing those responsible for the massacre and to demanding that the prisoners be freed (beginning with Njono, the president of the Indonesian trade unions, who has just been tried in Djakarta and given the death sentence) and the murderers given the punishment they deserve. We must also consider the cause of this terrible defeat which the international workers movement has suffered in Indonesia. Because the Indonesian militants and workers will have died in vain if in their own country and in other countries, the workers movement does not draw all the lessons of this defeat and does not alter its tactics, taking into account the lessons of Indonesia.

The first question that comes to mind is how a Communist party having 3,000,000 members and more than 10,000,000 sympathizers organized in all kinds of "mass organizations" (groupings of youth, of women and of peasants, as well as trade unions led by the PKI [Partai Kommunis Indonesia]) could be crushed overnight, in October 1965, by an adversary that was certainly weaker in numbers.

The answer involves essentially two points: the reactionary enemy was able to utilize surprise; that is, *the masses were not systematically prepared for this inevitable confrontation with the reactionary army*. And the initiative was left to the reactionary enemy; that is, the PKI leadership did not utilize the innumerable mass actions during recent years to organize a systematic offensive aiming at the conquest of power by the working class and the poor peasants.

Underlying this erroneous tactic is a false theoretical concept of the conditions for victory in the colonial revolution and of the nature of the state that has arisen in the colonial countries that have won political independence but which are not yet freed from exploitation.

The countries that were formerly colonies, which have

just won their political independence, are the product of a special historical development. While modern industry and a modern proletariat exist there, the classical historical tasks of the bourgeois-national revolution (for example, the revolution in the Netherlands in the sixteenth century, the English revolution in the seventeenth century, the American and French revolutions in the eighteenth century) have not been carried out. There is no genuine national unity, but only a conglomeration of regions, if not tribes, strongly affected by particularism. The land does not belong to the peasants, but is more or less in the hands of foreign plantation companies and indigenous semifeudal or capitalist landlords. A considerable part of the rural population suffers from underemployment and unemployment. Thus there is no domestic market permitting extensive industrialization to be realized. The axis of the country's economy is the export of a few raw materials or agricultural products to the world market, involving a considerable transfer of value (a considerable super exploitation) from the country to the profit of the industrialized countries.

But in these underdeveloped countries, the real master is foreign imperialism and its indigenous agents. There is no "national" bourgeois class capable of leading a resolute struggle to victory against imperialism, of adding economic independence to political independence, of assuring genuine economic growth, of providing full employment. The numerical and economic weakness of the indigenous possessing classes, and their close ties with landed property, makes them incapable of carrying out a genuine agrarian revolution. And without an agrarian revolution, industrialization is impossible.

Without exception, the experience of half a century bears out the following: Either the freedom movement of the former colonial countries remains under the leadership of the indigenous possessing classes, or of petty-bourgeois groups unable to break resolutely with the capitalist economy—and in this case the fundamental tasks of the colonial revolution, above all the agrarian revolution, remain unsolved and the country is condemned to continue stagnating in misery and incessant social crisis; or the freedom movement is conquered by the working class in alliance with the poor peasants, the revolution is continued up to the expropriation of imperialism and the indigenous possessing classes, the agrarian reform is completely carried out—and in this

case the bourgeois state must be replaced by a state based on the toiling masses, and construction of a socialist economy must be begun.

Wherever the leadership of the revolution has remained in the hands of "national fronts," directed in actuality by the "national" bourgeoisie or by petty-bourgeois groups, there has been no radical agrarian revolution, the state has fundamentally remained a bourgeois state, and the reaction was able to break the front at any moment and unleash a ferocious repression against the workers. Wherever the revolution has come under a proletarian leadership basing itself on the poor peasantry, it proved necessary to destroy the bourgeois state and create an entirely new state if only to carry out a genuinely radical agrarian reform (China, Vietnam, Cuba).

The leaders of the PKI did not assimilate these lessons of history. Deeply affected by the "putschist" and "adventurist" errors committed by their predecessors—the PKI leaders of the period of the "Madiun incidents" of 1948—they wished at any cost to "stick with" the Sukarno group representing the national bourgeoisie. Consequently they followed the policy of a "united national front." They accepted Sukarno's partial suspension of democratic freedoms at the beginning of the sixties. They joined the NASAKOM (national front composed of the Sukarno nationalists, the Muslim grouping—a reactionary formation that has been in the vanguard of the anti-Communist terror since October 1965—and the PKI). They joined a coalition government which included in particular the ultrareactionary head of the army.

Their political line for the past five years has been defense of this national front formula and not propaganda for a workers and peasants government. They did not stand for the conquest of power by the masses but for the slow conquest of state power "from within." And this policy was based on a false characterization of the nature of the state apparatus, a characterization formulated as follows by D. N. Aidit, the head of the PKI:

"At present, the state power in the Republic of Indonesia includes two antagonistic sides, one representing the interests of the people (in support of the people) and the other the interests of the enemy of the people (the opposition to the people). The side supporting the people is becoming stronger day by day, the government of the Republic of Indonesia has even adopted revolutionary anti-imperialist



measures." (D. N. Aidit. *The Indonesian Revolution and the Immediate Tasks of the Indonesian Communist Party*. Foreign Languages Edition, Peking, 1965. pp 137-38 of the French edition.)

For a Marxist, every state apparatus, no matter what its antagonistic sides, always serves the fundamental interests of one class ruling over another. The state, said Frederick Engels, in the final analysis is a group of armed men. What class interests did the Indonesian state and the Indonesian army serve? The events of October 1965 do not leave the least doubt as to the answer that must be given this question—the interests of the so-called "national" bourgeoisie.

Naturally there are many contradictions between the "national" bourgeoisie, the newly independent peasants and imperialism. The workers movement is not indifferent to the conflicts arising from this; it engages resolutely in the anti-imperialist struggle. It was correct of the PKI to first support the struggle of the Indonesian people against Dutch imperialism and then against Greater Malaysia. But it was wrong to deduce from these struggles that a permanent united front must be made with the "national" bourgeoisie, involving in actuality subordination to the bourgeois leadership of Sukarno and failure to criticize it at all. It was wrong to abstain for years from any struggle in behalf of the demands of the populace of Indonesia on the domestic economic and social level, deliberately subordinating these to maintenance of the "national front" with those who were responsible for the misery of the masses.

It is a fact that the economic situation has been going from bad to worse, that in industry the means of production are utilized to only thirty per cent of capacity, that public funds are wasted in outlays for "prestige," that the army manages the requisitioned foreign properties as it chooses (that is pillage on a major scale), that the agrarian reform remains on paper, that inflation is raging, that provisions are becoming scarcer and scarcer. With a correct line, the PKI could have stimulated the mass struggle on the basis of their justified immediate demands in order to lead them to the conquest of power. The policy of the "national front" left the initiative up to the enemy until it was too late.

Unquestionably the erroneous views of the PKI leaders were largely inspired by the theories defended by the Soviet leaders

from the time of Stalin to that of Khrushchev. All their concepts about the Indonesian state apparatus, the national front, the need for "unity," are copied from the program of the CPSU [Communist party of the Soviet Union] with its theses on the "national democratic state." Even after the coup d'etat of the reactionary generals, the spokesmen of the pro-Soviet Communist parties continued to woo Sukarno and to advocate re-establishment of NASAKOM and "national unity" (see in particular the October 24, 1965, issue of *Neues Deutschland*). They charged the PKI leaders with "leftist errors" while they were guilty of right opportunist errors.

It should likewise be added that a good part of the arms with which the reactionary army massacred tens upon tens of thousands of Indonesian Communists and workers were of Soviet origin. Was it so difficult to foresee that this bourgeoisie and this army, which "fights" so hard, in words, against imperialism, would in practice utilize the bulk of the aid thus received, not against imperialism, but against the popular masses of their own country?

What is significant, however, is that the PKI with its opportunist line based on collaboration with the "national" bourgeoisie, was not part of the Soviet but of the Chinese camp. But the Chinese Communist leaders covered up all their errors, making no public criticism of them. Together with the Soviet leaders, they thus share responsibility for what happened.

Yet, in numerous articles devoted to the history of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, in numerous criticisms of "Khrushchevist revisionism," of Togliatti's opinions, etc., the Chinese leaders have severely condemned the thesis according to which in our time there could be a state that is neither bourgeois nor socialist. They severely condemned the idea of a bloc with the national bourgeoisie, left under the latter's leadership, the illusion that this bourgeoisie could lead a consistent struggle against imperialism. But the PKI leaders were guilty of all these errors of such fatal import. The leaders of the Chinese CP have maintained silence about this.

Why this unprincipled attitude, in flagrant contradiction with their own ideas?

First of all, because in the struggle within the international Communist movement, the Chinese leaders have sought to get together the maximum number of partisans by applying the principle of abstaining from publicly criticizing those who abstain from criticizing the Chinese CP. Such a "principle" is inadmissible when vital questions of the workers movement,

signifying life or death for millions of human beings, are involved.

Next, because the Chinese government—the same as the Soviet government—has sought to gain Sukarno's support for its diplomatic moves, and because it is applying Stalin's "principle," according to which the Communist movement must line up completely with the diplomatic maneuvers of the so-called socialist state. The "principle" signifies disaster for the workers movement and is contrary to the practices of Lenin's time.

When Soviet Russia signed treaties with German imperialism—at Brest Litovsk in 1918, at Rapallo in 1921—the German Communists did not at all conclude from this, in those days, that they ought to soft-pedal the revolutionary struggle against this bourgeoisie. The Chinese leaders are imitating Stalin in this. The Indonesian Communists have paid heavily for it.

Naturally the struggle has not ended in Indonesia. A part of the Communist cadres have been able to go underground. The discontent of the hungry masses is increasing from day to day; the empty stomachs of the workers and peasants are not filled through massacres. The revolt will widen against the corrupt regime. Sukarno understands this and will resume his eternal balancing act; he has just eliminated the most ferocious of the generals from his cabinet. The people will again have their turn. But the 100,000 dead cannot be resurrected. And a correct policy could have averted these very heavy losses and this heavy defeat.

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## THE LESSON OF INDONESIA

(1) The United Secretariat of the Fourth International vigorously condemns the barbaric repression of the leaders, members and sympathizers of the Indonesian Communist party unleashed by the reactionary Indonesian army, the comprador and "bureaucratic" bourgeoisie and the clerical wing of the petty bourgeoisie. In this repression, the lives of more than 100,000 Communists have been taken and tens of thousands of Communists and other left wingers have been imprisoned or fired from their jobs, which is often equivalent to condemnation to starvation in face of the current mass unemployment. The Communist party press and mass organizations, including the largest trade-union federation in the country (SOBSI), have been officially banned. Many leading Communist party cadres have been murdered, and Njono, the general secretary of the SOBSI and a member of the Political Bureau of the Indonesian Communist party, has been executed after a farcical trial. All this was capped on March 12 with the official banning of the Communist party [PKI] throughout Indonesia.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International asks the working-class organizations in all countries to start a mass protest campaign, demanding the immediate release of all political prisoners, the immediate legalization of all working-class parties, including the PKI, the Partai Acoma and the Partai Murbah. It calls for establishment of an international working-class Commission of Inquiry to investigate the fate of the top PKI leaders, Aidit, Lukman and Njoto, who, according to many sources, have been murdered by the military.

Out of solidarity, the international working class must be mobilized to the fullest extent to stop the dirty war being waged by the reactionary forces against the left in Indonesia!

(2) If it is now an elementary duty to defend the victims of reaction in Indonesia, this by no means signifies that there is less need to analyze the debacle suffered by the biggest Communist party in any capitalist country, a party with three million members and millions of sympathizers in vari-

ous "front" organizations, and to draw the proper lessons from it. The main reasons for the tremendous defeat are as follows:

(a) The leadership of the Indonesian Communist party granted leadership of the Indonesian revolution to Sukarno, questioning that the state apparatus on which he stood was bourgeois in character; and, in contradiction to the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, presented this apparatus as a "people's state," a "national democracy" having "two sides" — "one for the people, one against the people." The PKI accepted the theory of "revolution in stages," limiting the "first stage" in reality to the anti-imperialist and antifeudal struggle; and in practice even abandoning the fight for a proletarian, Communist leadership during this stage although it is declared necessary, in theory at least, by the leaders of the Chinese Communist party and even by Aidit himself in some of his writings.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the leadership of the Indonesian CP went so far as to boast about its close collaboration with the Indonesian bourgeoisie,<sup>2</sup> and to openly express its support for Sukarno's ideology of the "Pantja Sila" (five principles), although one of the five is "belief in a single god." The Aidit leadership stressed its position that the "union" of the ideology of the "revolutionary classes" (including the "national" bourgeoisie!) was needed by the Indonesian revolution as long as Communism was not "eliminated" from the union!<sup>3</sup>

(b) For these reasons, the Indonesian CP, concentrating on "mass recruitment," and failing to provide adequate ideological education and revolutionary training for most of its members, bowed to Sukarno's initiatives for many years, abstaining from any appeal to mass struggles that could decisively change the relationship of social forces in the country. Sukarno arbitrarily suspended the constitution and reduced the Communist party to thirty seats in his new "appointed parliament" of 260 members; when he suspended democratic freedoms and ordered all parties to register for government authorization, the PKI accepted these infringements of its rights and even agreed to participate in the various cabinets which Sukarno subsequently formed. Included in these governments were such reactionaries as General A. H. Nasution, Hamengku Buwono, the sultan of Djokjakarta and the leading bourgeois politician Ruslan Abdulgani. Today they are the main political brains behind the counterrevolution and

members of the counterrevolutionary Suharto cabinet. Yesterday the PKI leadership treated them as "brother revolutionists" and "allies" inside NASAKOM and Sukarno's cabinets. They even tried to use these arbitrary forms of Bonapartist government to eliminate some of their own competitors in the labor movement. But these very same rules and regulations have been used since October 1, 1965, to suppress the PKI itself. Discerning bourgeois observers have noted that the logic of the PKI policy was to leave the initiative with the anti-Communist forces.<sup>4</sup>

(c) At various times in recent years the Indonesian masses moved into action against the declining standard of living due to mass unemployment, inflation, high prices, the plunder of state property by the army high command, rampant corruption in the state administration, etc. Again and again they seized imperialist property, occupied plantations and factories, sought to divide the holdings of the big landowners. Again and again, the Sukarno regime and its stooges, with the help of the army, drove out the masses and placed the administration of the properties in their own corrupt hands. Again and again, the PKI leadership refrained from supporting these mass uprisings, refrained from educating the masses and their vanguard in the spirit of preparing to fight for power. It even refrained from systematically denouncing the dangerous reaction looming not only in the religious organizations but also in the army high command in particular. Aidit referred over and over only to the parties suppressed by Sukarno — the Masjumi and the Social Democratic party — as agents of imperialism and feudal reaction.<sup>5</sup> As a result the military coup of October 1-2, 1965, caught the masses completely by surprise.

It is true that a few months before the counterrevolutionary coup, Aidit shifted his line somewhat to the left. He began to call on Sukarno to arm the workers and peasants (which the Indonesian Bonaparte, of course, carefully refrained from doing). Aidit called on the masses to "seize" the imperialist properties as well as the nationalized properties administered by the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" or the army. (Speech September 25, 1965, at the closing rally of the sixth congress of the plantation workers trade unions, reported in the September 27, 1965, issue of the party's central organ *Harian Rakjat*.) It is true that in the same speech he warned the masses in an obscure and indirect way: "History has compelled the

people and the working class of the entire world to choose between being an anvil and a hammer. If they become an anvil, they will be like the Indonesian working class at present, suffering blow after blow [In his long report to the school of the Chinese CP's Central Committee, mentioned above, not a word is said about these blows!] from the bureaucratic capitalists, embezzlers, grafters, and other exploiters and oppressors. The workers, with back-breaking toil, earn barely enough in a month to last a week, while the bureaucratic capitalists, embezzlers and grafters wallow in luxury, thanks to the blood and sweat of the working class. If they do not want to be an anvil, they should become a hammer; not an ordinary hammer but a huge hammer. Therefore the Indonesian working class should adopt the following attitude: Boldness, boldness and boldness again! Take over, take over and take over again! Act, act and act again!"

But these warnings, voiced on the very eve of the army's counterrevolutionary coup, then already in full preparation, came without any previous or accompanying measures for broad mass mobilizations, without preparation for a general strike, without preparation for arming the masses, without concrete warnings about the impending army coup. The warnings could only heighten the determination of the counter-revolutionaries to strike immediately. They could not create adequate means to prevent or to reply to the counterrevolution. It is not surprising under these conditions that the only concrete response this belated warning evoked was the desperate action of a small group around Lieutenant Colonel Untung and not a mass uprising.

It should be added that while the PKI leadership at first expressed solidarity with this desperate attempt to stop the counterrevolutionary generals from taking over the country,<sup>6</sup> they reversed their stand a few days later—after the counter-revolution won its first decisive battle—and disowned Untung's actions, thereby increasing the general confusion among their own followers.<sup>7</sup> As for the Kremlin, it denounced the September 30 events as a "provocation" without mentioning by a single word the preparations of the reactionary generals to pull a coup d'etat.<sup>8</sup>

According to a dispatch released February 15, 1966, by the Indonesian news agency Antara, the trade-union leader Njono, a member of the Political Bureau of the PKI, stated during his trial that the impending counterrevolutionary coup

of the Indonesian generals was discussed in the Political Bureau as early as July 1965. Njono declared that opinion was divided on whether it would be better to react before the coup or immediately after it took place. In any case it was decided to leave the initiative up to the "progressive officers" who were prepared to act within the army against the generals. While it is possible that Njono's torturers falsified this report before executing him, his courageous and dignified stand during the trial, in which he publicly denounced his torturers and the counterrevolutionary generals, lends credit to this version of the facts.

(d) The strategy of the PKI was not to conquer power by mobilizing the masses, but to slowly "transform" the character of the state and the government by infiltrating sectors of the army and administrative cadre. Under this illusion, they gave completely uncritical support to Sukarno, hoping to take over when he died. This explains why they relied on Sukarno instead of mobilizing the broad masses in defense of the revolution and the PKI, not only before the reactionary coup of October 1-2, but even after the coup.

(3) These grave political mistakes of the PKI leadership were reinforced and magnified by the opportunist policies of the Kremlin and Peking, both governments supporting Sukarno uncritically, presenting him as the prototype of the "non-capitalist" leader of "national democracy," the world leader of the "newly emerging forces" and similar empty, misleading formulas.

For diplomatic reasons—Sukarno's temporary posture against Anglo-Dutch imperialism in the West Irian and Malaysia affairs—the Kremlin gave full uncritical support to the Sukarno regime, not only internationally but even on the domestic level, supplying his army with many of the weapons now being used to kill the cadres and members of the PKI. After the October 1-2 military coup, the Kremlin leaders continued this criminal policy, even trying to blame "putschist" and "adventuristic" elements in the PKI for the defeat and calling repeatedly for the "unity" of the Indonesian "revolution" around NASAKOM; i.e., for "unity" between the butchers and their victims. On October 12, after Sukarno had already called for a thorough purge of those involved in the "September 30 affair" and had permitted PKI leaders to be arrested and murdered in Djakarta, Brezhnev, Mikoyan and Kosygin sent him a special message in which they wrote: "We and our col-

leagues learned with great joy [!] that your health has improved . . . We have with interest heard about your radio appeal to the Indonesian people to remain calm and prevent disorders . . . This appeal will meet with profound understanding [!]" (*Pravda*, October 12, 1965.) Not until December 26 did the Soviet press publish a clear condemnation of the anti-Communist regime in Indonesia. Before then reporting on the events in that country was limited to reproducing short items from the bourgeois press agencies coupled with "regrets" about the "anti-Communist measures." And at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, the Soviet delegation displayed a shameful attitude, trying in every way to block public condemnation of the counterrevolutionary terror raging against the Indonesian Communists, an attitude which won public praise from the counterrevolutionists in Djakarta.<sup>9</sup>

As for the Peking leaders, out of similar diplomatic considerations and maneuvers—such as supporting Sukarno's walkout from the UN and trying to pit the "newly emerging forces" against the "old established forces"—they likewise gave full and uncritical support to the Indonesian regime. Even after the October 1-2 military coup, they went ahead in Djakarta with the World Conference Against Foreign Bases, and without protest stood by as their Indonesian comrades were arrested in the conference hall itself! It is true that they began to denounce the counterrevolutionary activities much sooner than the Kremlin press. But even then they carefully refrained from any open and clear-cut criticism of Sukarno, trying to present things as if Sukarno had systematically opposed the repression of the PKI, whereas in reality he covered up the repression in good part, merely trying to limit it in order to maintain his own Bonapartist position.

Today some "friends of Peking" maintain that the Chinese CP leaders were in fact critical of Aidit's policies, but they did not want to criticize his party publicly in view of the fact that they were for internal discussion among all the Communist parties that refrained from publicly attacking the Chinese CP and its friends. But this is no valid excuse for remaining silent about a problem of outstanding importance to the international Communist movement; it is only additional proof of the basically opportunist attitude of the Chinese leaders towards the Indonesian question.

(4) The events of recent weeks—the elimination of General Nasution from the government, Sukarno's declaration that "the revolution is again embarking on its left-wing course,"

the public collision between Sukarno and the ultraright-wing forces of the Islamic students organizations (more or less passively tolerated by the army)—inspired new illusions in official CP circles that the pre-October 1 situation could somehow be restored. Sukarno, a typical Bonapartist figure, representing the "national" and "bureaucratic" bourgeois forces in Indonesia, balanced between the "left," represented mainly by the PKI and its mass proletarian and peasant organizations, and the "right," represented mainly by the army and the clerical Moslem organizations, spokesmen of the comprador bourgeoisie and semifeudal landowners. The October 1-2 military coup delivered a shattering blow to the left, leaving them leaderless and dispersed (while far from completely destroying them), thereby fundamentally upsetting the equilibrium on which Sukarno depended for his leading position. Naturally he then tried to bolster his position by looking for ways and means to somehow reduce the strength of the army high command and to divide its ranks. These leaders preferred not to take over rule immediately after October 1-2; in the first place because they were not yet sure of the support they could muster in the countryside, where Sukarno remained very popular; and in the second place because they did not want to assume responsibility for the mismanagement of the economy, the complete failure of the so-called "heavy rupiah" and the raging inflation plaguing the country. Therefore they left Sukarno in power for another six months although he retained only the shadow of his previous Bonapartist strength. When he tried in desperation to reestablish the equilibrium by ousting General Nasution from his cabinet, they permitted the students to stage mass demonstrations (paradoxically, the ultraright-wing Islamic student associations could now appear to stand in the forefront of the fight against inflation and corruption due to the extreme weakening of the forces led by the PKI.) In conjunction with the pressure from the army high command, these demonstrations compelled Sukarno to turn over the leading role in the government to the army's "strong man," General Suharto.

(5) It is extremely unlikely, however, that the counterrevolutionists now in power in Djakarta will be able to stabilize the situation for any length of time. The country's economy is stripped; and American imperialism, while able to shore up the new regime with a heavy underpinning of credits, can-

not move in on such a scale as to generate any real momentum in economic growth. The army leaders themselves will not readily give up their nationalist, anti-imperialist verbiage which reflects real conflicts of interest with British imperialism and the ruling comprador bourgeoisie and semifeudal landowners of Malaysia. A large part of the budget will therefore continue to be squandered in maintaining a huge military establishment and in undertaking costly experiments like the attempt to make an Indonesian nuclear bomb. The masses, although leaderless and deeply shaken, have not lost all fighting potential, particularly in the countryside. It will prove impossible to get the thousands of squatters to evacuate the imperialist-owned or "nationalized" plantations managed by corrupt army officers, or to compel the thousands of plantation and oil workers to revert to the "normal" working conditions of colonial times. And without such a shift to "normalcy," the Indonesian economy will not be able to develop in accordance with the neocolonial pattern. The incapacity of the military leaders to achieve some social and economic stability will undermine the counterrevolutionary dictatorship politically. This could even occur in the near future if the military prove unable to cope with the problem of inflation.

The defeat suffered by the PKI is of such depth that certainly no quick change in the situation can be forecast. It will take years to regain revolutionary possibilities as excellent as those lost in 1964-1966 due to the opportunist policies of the PKI leadership. However, what remains of that leadership along with the surviving party cadres—especially the best educated, those steeled by the terrible experiences they went through in the past six months—will have taken the road of guerrilla war, if only out of self-defense. If they succeed in regrouping and in regaining a mass following in some regions of the countryside by calling on the peasants to immediately take over the land held by the landlords, the plantations and army administration, they could gain on a progressive scale due to the inability of Indonesian reaction to solve the country's basic economic plight and due to the divisions in the ranks of the army which that inability will undoubtedly provoke. It will become possible to link this peasant base to the working class when, under pressure of economic necessity, the urban masses overcome the stunning effect of the defeat and once again take the road of action. Such a comeback, involving a renewal of organized influence among the workers, is still possible—provided that all the main lessons of the

terrible defeat are analyzed and assimilated.

(6) The main lessons to be drawn from this tragic defeat, which the Indonesian revolutionary Marxists must continually hammer home while energetically participating in all attempts by revolutionary PKI elements to start armed resistance against the military dictatorship, are as follows:

(a) While it is correct and necessary to support all anti-imperialist mass movements, and even to critically support all concrete anti-imperialist measures taken by representatives of the colonial bourgeoisie like Sukarno, for colonial revolution to be victorious it is absolutely essential to maintain the proletarian organizations strictly independent politically and organizationally from the "national" bourgeoisie, to instill among the masses a spirit of distrust towards this bourgeoisie and a spirit of self-reliance, to lead the masses towards organizing independent organs of power (committees, workers and peasants militia, etc.) as requisites for the victory of the revolution. The Indonesian events have proved once again that the theory of the capacity of the "progressive" forces of the "national bourgeoisie" to lead a "consistent" fight against imperialism as the "embodiment of the whole nation"—the theory of a "national democratic state" and a "bloc of revolutionary classes"—leads only to defeat.

(b) While it is correct and necessary during the first phases of the revolution in backward countries to place the main stress on the problems of winning national independence, unifying the country and solving the agrarian question (i.e., the historical tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution which constitute the most burning tasks in the eyes of eighty to ninety per cent of the population), it is indispensable to understand that the solution of these tasks is only possible when the working class, in alliance with the poor peasantry, has conquered leadership of the revolution, establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry and pushes the revolution through to its socialist phase. The Indonesian events once again confirm that theory of "revolution by stages"—the first stage being a victory under a "national front" led by the "national bourgeoisie"—only paves the way to defeat. Either defeat under "national" bourgeois leaders or victory through the conquest of power and the establishment of a workers state—this is the dilemma that faces all colonial revolutions.

(c) While it is necessary to win the broadest possible mass base in the countryside, a revolutionary party capable of applying that policy must be based upon a hardened proletarian cadre thoroughly trained in Marxist theory and revolutionary practice, without illusions about a "peaceful transition" to socialism or "national democratic states," a party that relies mainly on mass mobilizations and mass struggles instead of intrigues and infiltration for achieving its historical goals.

Only by thoroughly assimilating these lessons can the Indonesian Communists and revolutionists overcome the results of the present defeat and avenge the victims of the counter-revolutionary terror by organizing and leading the workers and poor peasants in their fight for power in Indonesia!

\* \* \* \*

1. "The Indonesian revolution is at the present stage bourgeois-democratic in character and not socialist and proletarian. But the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Indonesia no longer belongs to the old type, and is no longer part of the bourgeois-democratic world revolution, which belongs to the past; it is a revolution of a new type, which is part of the proletarian socialist world revolution, firmly opposed to imperialism . . . Given the fact that the Indonesian revolution is a bourgeois-democratic revolution of a new type, it is the historical duty of the proletariat to struggle to conquer its leadership." (D.N. Aidit: *The Indonesian Revolution and the Immediate Tasks of the Indonesian Communist Party*. pp. 15-16. Peking, 1965.)

2. In a speech at the School of Advanced Studies of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party in Peking, September 2, 1963, D.N. Aidit, chairman of the Indonesian CP made the following quite blunt statement: "The alliance with the national bourgeoisie has also been realized. The national bourgeoisie starts to return [!] to the side of the revolution, particularly since the party formulated a correct policy and overcame sectarianism in its ranks . . . We have now collaborated with the Indonesian bourgeoisie for nearly ten years, and the revolutionary forces have continually developed rather than grown fewer during this time, whereas the reactionary forces have experienced failure after failure. Even the public anti-Communist clamor of five or six years ago is officially condemned today as . . . against unity. President Sukarno has played an important role in the struggle against Communophobia and for national unity." (D.N. Aidit: *ibid.* pp. 82-83.) It would be difficult to find a better example of self-delusory opportunism paving the way for a tragic defeat.

3. "Another concept which also reflects the unity of the nation and the unity of NASAKOM is expressed by the Pantja Sila or five principles: (1) Belief in a single god; (2) humanitarianism or internationalism; (3) nationalism or patriotism; (4) democracy and (5) social justice. The Indonesian Communist party supports and sustains the Pantja Sila, although [!] one of its principles is belief in a single god, in view of the fact that the Pantja Sila, rather than being an attempted substitute for the philosophy of all its supporters, combined [!] all existing ideological tendencies in society. The party is, however, resolutely opposed to those who seek to transform one [!] of the five silas into the leading dominant tendency." (D. N. Aidit: *ibid.* p. 85.)

4. An American liberal bourgeois observer, Donald Hindley, correctly summed up the political situation in Indonesia resulting from Aidit's tactics: "Meanwhile, however, the fate of Indonesia would be determined largely by the action or inaction of the non-Communists." (*The Communist Party of Indonesia 1951-1963*. p. 304. University of California Press, 1964.)

5. D. N. Aidit: *ibid.* p. 85.

6. *Harian Rakjat*, the central organ of the PKI, wrote in its October 2, 1965, issue: "Whatever the pretext may have been, the coup d'etat which the 'Council of Generals' wanted to perpetrate was in any case a counter-revolutionary action which must be condemned . . . The people . . . are convinced that what the September 30 Movement did to save the revolution and the people was a correct action . . . The September 30 Movement will enjoy the support and the sympathy of the people."

7. The October 5, 1965, issue of *Harian Rakjat* disowned the September 30 Movement.

8. "The fact that the Communist party of Indonesia, as early as October 5, published an official declaration in which it dissociated itself from the organizers of the unsuccessful conspiracy and characterized it as 'an internal affair of the army' is being completely ignored. Even if we assume that individual members of left-wing organizations lent themselves to the provocation and had something to do with the events of September 30, nevertheless this can in no way justify repressions against the Communist party of Indonesia." (*Pravda*, October 26, 1965.)

9. In a dispatch from Djakarta February 14, the Indonesian news agency Antara gave the text of three resolutions adopted by the Indonesian parliament February 11. One deals with the Tricontinental Conference. After denouncing the refusal of the Preparatory Commission to seat the official delegation sent by the Indonesian government, the resolution states in point No. 5: "Expresses full appreciation [!] of the efforts of the delegations of Nepal, Mongolia, the Soviet Union and others at the Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, who successfully neutralized [!] the efforts of the counterrevolutionists [!] of the so-called September 30 Movement, and their protectors and leaders, to intervene in the internal affairs of Indonesia and to induce among the other delegations a hostile attitude toward the people and government of Indonesia."

# LESSONS FROM A DEFEAT

by T. Soedarso

"Indonesia's military student action front, KAMI, has appealed for military help in face of what it calls mounting Communist attacks in Central Java. A student delegation from Jogjakarta said here today that 35 KAMI students were wounded in clashes with Communists. A spokesman said a campaign of terror was underway and the KAMI leaders had asked for military help." This item appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune* [European edition] July 20, 1966.

Similar reports have appeared with increasing frequency recently, indicating that armed resistance is being mounted by the Indonesian revolutionary forces against the brutal suppressive measures of the Indonesian military-fascist regime. The armed struggle is occurring not only in Central Java, an area considered to be the stronghold of the revolutionary movement, but also in other islands of the republic.

This armed struggle, however, is still uncoordinated. It is still sporadic and anarchistic in nature. It still lacks leadership, either political or military, capable of organizing an armed uprising. It seems that the Communist party of Indonesia [PKI, the Partai Kommunis Indonesia] has not recovered from its defeat. Is the leadership still intact? Has there been a new regrouping? Where does the leadership stand in relation to this new situation? Do they still support Sukarno, as in the final statement of October 1965? Do they still maintain the old political line or have they drastically changed it?

No answers are to be found in either journals or pam-

phlets. The masses are acting in accordance with their own judgment and initiative, seeking to protect themselves from being massacred by the forces of the Indonesian reaction. Out of loyalty, many in the ranks have drawn the conclusion that the leadership has remained silent due to "security reasons" or as "safety measures."

Most likely we are faced with a vacuum, the leaders having been martyred during the witch-hunt, or the survivors being unable to assess the new situation. The events in Indonesia constitute a catastrophe for the PKI in particular and for the revolutionary movement in Indonesia as a whole.

It is true, of course, that the future of the Indonesian revolutionary movement has not been destroyed—it cannot be. The movement will rise again in a mightier force that will finally end the system of exploitation of man by man in Indonesia. But it is a fact that it has suffered a serious defeat and setback.

Nevertheless there are some to be found who still do not regard it as a defeat but as a "blessing in disguise"; since now the line between friend and foe is very clear and the people really know that "it is not we who resort to violence but the reactionaries." Such people still maintain that the past policies of the party were quite correct, the recent catastrophe being merely a "routine" incident in the revolutionary struggle. "Sacrifices always occur," they say. Thus these people do not consider it necessary to analyze the previous policies, strategy and tactics of the party; they even argue that it is "premature" to attempt this or "it is very dangerous because it can lead to a split in our movement." Their advice is to "just continue the struggle in line with the past policy, only with more caution and vigilance."

This stand is not correct. We should pay tribute to the fallen heroes of the people; we should salute the martyrs of the revolution; we should prepare retribution for the brutality of the reactionary forces; we should express solidarity with all revolutionary forces; we should express solidarity with all who have suffered. But can we just continue "spontaneously," merely pursuing the struggle without seeking a better road, more effective methods?

No! We must recognize that it was a setback, a big setback. We must dare to uncover the mistakes of the past that led to this failure. And we must have the courage to make the necessary corrections so that we won't fall into the same fatal errors



again. Criticism and self-criticism are necessities for a healthy revolutionary movement.

In my opinion, the following mistakes led to the present defeat.

1.

**The Policy of Seeking to Achieve Socialism by Peaceful Means**

This was the most fundamental error. The PKI believed that socialism in Indonesia could be achieved by peaceful means. As stated in the constitution of the PKI: "To achieve its goal, the PKI follows peaceful and democratic ways. This is what is sought by the PKI and what will be consistently pursued."<sup>1</sup> And the second secretary of the Central Committee of the PKI, M. H. Lukman, explained this as follows:

"The constitution now mentions the possibility of a transition to socialism by peaceful means. Theoretically as well as practically, this has an important meaning . . . in face of the propaganda of the reactionaries, we feel it necessary to affirm the possibility of a transition to socialism by peaceful means. By emphasizing that we are going to make this possibility become a reality, we can thereby show the people that if violence does occur, it was not started by the Communists nor was due to them and it is not at all wanted by the Communists.

"From the theoretical point of view, to affirm the possibility of a transition to socialism by peaceful means, signifies affirming the truth that Marxism-Leninism does not point to absolutely the same road for socialism in all countries in different periods and in different international conditions. This also means that we Marxist-Leninists do not bind ourselves to certain forms, methods and roads of completing the revolution, because everything depends on the concrete balance of power among the existing classes, on the quality of the working-class organization and its enemy, on the ability of the working class to attract its allies to its side, especially the peasants, and on taking into account the existence of democratic institutions in each country."<sup>2</sup>

In the same speech, Lukman said further: "In accordance with the teachings of Marx and Lenin; namely, by taking into account the objective conditions of the world balance of power between the socialist and democratic forces on the one hand,

and the imperialist forces on the other, and considering the experiences in the East European countries where the transition to socialism did not occur through a civil war, Comrade Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU stated the conclusion that in the present situation certain countries have a real possibility of reaching socialism in a peaceful way."

It is therefore understandable why the PKI was unprepared for armed struggle when the crisis came last October 1. The PKI concentrated activity only on the "legal" or "parliamentary democratic" platform. It completely ignored preparations for armed struggle by the workers and peasants under the leadership of the working-class party. This was well-known to the reactionary forces; consequently they launched a quick brutal action to liquidate the revolutionary forces. The only hope for the revolutionary forces was to seek safe retreats, but it was already too late. The toll was very high.

Because of this belief in a peaceful way of achieving socialism, and perhaps especially because of the advice of "Comrade" Stalin and later "Comrade" Khrushchev, the leadership of the PKI willingly, if not even faithfully, followed Sukarno's personal leadership and teachings. Sukarno was considered by the party to be a "pro-people's element" and even the "great leader of the revolution." The reactionary forces brutally massacred members of the PKI and other revolutionary forces in the name of Sukarno; yet Second Secretary Njoto still said, "The PKI recognizes only one head of the state, one supreme commander, one great leader of the revolution—President Sukarno." Furthermore, "It is President Sukarno united with the forces of the people who will decide the destiny and future of Indonesia." In accordance with the October 10, 1965, instructions of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PKI, Njoto continued, all party members should "fully support the directives of President Sukarno and pledge themselves to implement these without reserve." (The October 10 instructions have not been withdrawn to this day.) The party was still seeking to maintain the peaceful road. Njoto said, "Our party is making every effort in its power to prevent a civil war."<sup>3</sup>

As for the Indonesian Armed Forces, the PKI held that they constituted forces of the people, since the ranks were made up of the sons of workers and peasants. This viewpoint was maintained even after the "October 1 affair," Njoto saying:

"We do not consider the Indonesian National Forces to be like the armies of imperialist countries or the army of India. When you appraise an army, you should study and take into account the history of its formation, its role in the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, its composition which is mainly made up of former poor peasants or workers. It is true that there are still antipeople's elements within the National Forces of Indonesia. This is also true concerning the republic as a whole." And he stated that "our party has never had its own army."<sup>4</sup>

Let us now examine the arguments and viewpoints indicated above.

It was argued that it was necessary to follow a policy based on the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in order to counteract the propaganda of the reactionary forces; i.e., the propaganda that the Communists are "terrorists," "monsters," etc. But what was the result? The repudiation of the use of armed struggle in achieving revolutionary goals only demonstrated the weakness of the revolutionary forces in the eyes of the reactionaries and created a feeling of insecurity among the masses.

The propaganda of the reactionaries can be counteracted by explanations and by action. Through explanation it is possible to completely expose the real character of the reactionaries. The facts of history constitute the best source to show the people the cruelty and brutality of the reactionaries. For example, the massacre committed by the reactionary Hatta government in 1948; the brutal "August Razzia" committed by the reactionary Sukiman government in 1951; the brutal armed suppression carried out by the reactionary generals against the peasantry in Sumatra, Java, Sulawesi and other islands; the bombings carried out with planes furnished by the imperialist U. S. and the massacre committed by the reactionary rebels in 1958, etc., etc. Past experience provides the best lessons for teaching the people about the brutality of the reactionaries and the necessity to resist such brutality through armed struggle.

And the propaganda of action is still more important. The people will trust the Communists and have real confidence in the party if the Communists genuinely defend their interests and show themselves prepared through sacrifice and armed struggle to safeguard the people from oppression and suppression by the exploiting classes. The Communists must demon-

strate that they are really cadres of the working class and really on the side of the exploited masses; and are not merely pleaders with the "haves" nor collaborators with the "good people." Socialism cannot be achieved by pleading but only through armed struggle by exploited masses under correct leadership provided by the working class! Aidit once said, "The development of the party, besides depending greatly on the united front, also greatly depends on armed struggle. The advance or decline of armed struggle greatly influences the advance or decline of the united front and the party."<sup>5</sup> But why did this remain only words which were not carried out in practice?

Let us consider the "experience in the East European countries." Wasn't the revolution there led by the Soviet Red Army?

The Cuban *Granma* was quite correct when it said editorially: "We are not denying that in a given country, under certain very special conditions, an exception could occur in the future; nevertheless, not one case can be cited of a victorious revolution which has been able to avoid the use of violence, insurrection or armed struggle as fundamental methods. This is a universal experience and the political position of the Communist parties must be developed by taking into account what has been learned in the practical experience of revolution and by probing deeply into it."<sup>6</sup>

In the development of the Indonesian revolution, many opportunities arose for the PKI to mobilize the workers and peasants into revolutionary armed forces and to counteract and liquidate the reactionary elements in the "National Armed Forces of Indonesia." These opportunities were ignored.

For example, during the campaign for the liberation of West Irian from Dutch colonialism, the people were mobilized into voluntary units in anticipation of a clash with the Dutch imperialist forces. This should have been utilized by the party to mobilize the workers and peasants and to set up bases for armed struggle. The party did engage in this, but not with the objective of carrying out a socialist revolution. The movement was limited to liberating West Irian and it was disarmed after this aim was achieved.

Again during the campaign to crush the neocolonialist regime of "Malaysia," the party contributed greatly in mobilizing the masses, but without bringing in the idea of armed struggle for the socialist revolution. Thus the chance slipped by to set up bases for armed revolutionary struggle. Even worse, the

party left the leadership of the voluntary units in the hands of reactionary generals.

Another excellent opportunity came during the campaign for unilateral action to take over the land belonging to the big landowners. This action was led by the PKI. Day by day hundreds of thousands of peasants took part in the action. They faced armed suppression by the feudal forces backed by the reactionary generals. But the party did not organize armed units of the peasants to counterattack. It left it up to the peasants to organize their own defense on the basis of their own courage and initiative. When this developed into a near revolutionary crisis, with many clashes between the peasants and the reactionary forces, the campaign was stopped. The "great leader of the revolution" Sukarno had given the order or "revolutionary command" to stop "any unilateral action." He gave the "command" that "every conflict or difference should be solved by consultation and agreement."

In accordance with the appeal from Sukarno in this situation, Aidit proposed the so-called "NASAKOM Code of Ethics." Among other things this laid down the following: "Among all NASAKOM or MANIPOLIST groups there must be no confrontation. Only consultation to reach agreement."<sup>7</sup> And he specified: "In the present situation, if conflicts arise between the government and the people, the only correct way to solve them is to reach agreement through consultation."<sup>8</sup>

Blood had been shed by the people, but the action was stopped. As the slogan put it, "We should have revolutionary patience."

The PKI's repudiation of the use of armed struggle can be traced back to the beginning of the "August 1945 Revolution."<sup>9</sup>

During the struggle against the Japanese military occupation, the PKI was instructed or "advised," under Stalin's guidance, to cooperate with the Dutch imperialist government, to carry out "joint actions" against Japanese imperialism. (This also applied to all the other Communist parties, who were told to cooperate with their respective bourgeois governments in fighting against the Axis.) Through such cooperation, the PKI hoped to "earn" independence for Indonesia at the end of the war. The program of the PKI as well as the CPN [Communist party of the Netherlands] called for an "independent Indonesia within the Commonwealth of the Dutch Empire" as a step toward full independence. This remained

a utopian dream. At the end of the war, the Dutch with the backing of the British and U.S. imperialists sent their armed divisions to reoccupy Indonesia. What attitude did the PKI take toward this?

A republic had been proclaimed under the leadership of the bourgeois Sukarno. The masses as a whole were completely ready to defend their newly proclaimed republic. But the PKI still clung to the old program of establishing Indonesia "within the Commonwealth of the Dutch Empire." Thus they followed the line of compromise in face of Dutch aggression. They supported the policy of the reactionary Sjahrir government in signing the Linggadjati Agreement, compromising with Dutch imperialism in 1947. Then, still worse, the following government under Amir Sjarifuddin (a PKI leader at the time) signed the so-called "Renville Agreement." Under this catastrophic agreement, all pockets of the guerrilla forces were to withdraw from Dutch-occupied territory. The reactionary forces used this opportunity to send in reactionary armed units (under the command of Nasution, the present co-dictator) to dominate the liberated areas. Realizing his mistake, Amir Sfarifuddin voluntarily surrendered his government back to Sukarno. This was followed by the formation of the most reactionary government; i.e., the Hatta regime. Under instructions from the U.S. and Dutch imperialists, this government introduced a program of "rationalizing" the Indonesian armed forces, which meant liquidating the people's armed units. The Hatta government wanted only "one type of army"; that is, the so-called "Indonesian National Armed Forces."

In 1948, Musso, who was one of the PKI leaders of the twenties and thirties, returned from abroad and called for a "new road" for the PKI. Among other things this demanded renunciation of the old policy of compromise. The correction was accepted by the majority of the PKI leaders. But it was too late. Before the PKI could consolidate itself under the new program, the reactionary Hatta government launched a "white terror" in the so-called "Madiun Affair." Thousands of party members and most of the leaders were killed.

This affair should have been a salutary lesson for the PKI not to abandon the method of armed struggle. Yet it was not.

When a federal republic was established under the so-called "Round Table Conference" agreement, the PKI held it best to continue the struggle by "peaceful democratic" means.

Aidit explained this as follows: "Against this RCT agreement which was signed on November 2, 1949, by Hatta's government under instructions from U. S. imperialism, there were two opposing viewpoints in the party . . . the first group wanted to continue armed struggle against the federal republic of the RTC . . . while the second, who based their position on revolutionary theory . . . wanted to maintain the party's legality"; that is, continue the struggle by "parliamentary democratic" means.<sup>10</sup> Thus was a beginning provided for the repetition of the old errors.

On the question of the "Indonesian National Armed Forces," it is not correct to say that they are not "like the armies of imperialist countries or the army of India." At the beginning of the August 1945 Revolution there were no regular armed forces. Throughout the islands, the people formed their own armed units for defense against the imperialist aggression. There were many kinds of units. "The PKI built a Red Army, and had big influence on the Lasjkar Buruh [Workers Army], Lasjkar Pesindo [Army of the Socialist Youth], Lasjkar Rakyat [People's Army] and Tentara Peladjar [Students Corps]."<sup>11</sup> In the process of struggle, then, a regular army was built. Following the program of "rationalization" under Hatta, most of the irregular armies were liquidated. The most reactionary forces remained. After the RTC Agreement a new "National Armed Forces" was formed. This was an arithmetic combination of the previous Indonesian "National Armed Forces" plus the "Dutch East Indies Troops." These Dutch Troops (of Indonesian nationality) were much better trained. The remnants of the progressive units within the Indonesian National Armed Forces were subsequently liquidated. Of course, there were still some "pro-people's" elements within the Indonesian National Armed Forces. But as a whole they belong to the same classification as the "armies of imperialist countries or the army of India." It is a great error not to treat reactionary forces as reactionary forces.

## 2.

### On the Question of the United Front

The PKI followed the theory of two stages to the revolution; namely, a national democratic stage followed by a socialist stage.

"To confuse the two stages of the Indonesian revolution and to say that we are already building socialism is demagogic, subjective and reactionary. The national democratic stage constitutes preparation for the socialist stage. The socialist stage cannot be achieved without first completing the national democratic stage."<sup>12</sup> This was the stand of the PKI. It was said that this national democratic stage constituted in essence a bourgeois democratic stage, but of a new type; namely, one led by the working class.<sup>13</sup>

According to the party's analysis, Indonesia at present still has a semicolonial and semifeudal system. And there are "three forces within Indonesian society; namely, first the diehards, i.e., the feudalists and compradors who collaborate with the imperialists. This is still a big force, but it is declining. Second, the progressive forces, i.e., the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and revolutionary intellectuals. This force is rather large and is increasing. Third, the middle-of-the-road forces, i.e., the national bourgeoisie and all other patriotic and other anticolonial forces, including the left group of landowners. This force is rather large. It stands between the reactionary and the progressive forces."<sup>14</sup>

"The PKI's political line in dealing with these three forces is: with all its power to tirelessly develop the progressive forces, unite with the middle-of-the-road forces and isolate the diehard forces. The implementation of this line is very important in changing the balance of forces in society."<sup>15</sup>

Thus, striving to achieve socialism along the peaceful road, the PKI sought to form a "United National Front," consisting of the working class, the peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, "based upon an alliance of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class."<sup>16</sup>

About the alleged necessity to build a united front with the national bourgeoisie, Aidit said: ". . . I would like to emphasize once more that although an alliance with the national bourgeoisie is not as important as an alliance with the peasants, *the success and completeness of the leadership of the working class in the revolution will be determined by the success of the alliance between the workers and the national bourgeoisie.* Therefore the Communists must strive with all their power to preserve and further develop the alliance with the national bourgeoisie." (Emphasis added.)<sup>17</sup>

Anyone in the party who opposed the alliance with the national bourgeoisie was branded a "left deviationist." In criti-

cizing the "left deviationist" tendency of the previous period, it was stated that "the party was still completely unaware of the need for uniting with the national bourgeoisie, the party's slogan being 'socialism now,' 'Indonesian Soviets,' and the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' This 'left' deviation of the party was criticized precisely by J. V. Stalin in his speech to the students at the University of the Peoples of the East on May 18, 1925, in which he said that this left deviation contained within it the danger of isolating the party from the masses and converting it into a sect."

What happened in reality? In reality, following the policy of an alliance between the working class and the national bourgeoisie, the party undermined the alliance between the working class and the peasants. The leadership of the "United National Front" was never in the hands of the working class or its party, but always in the hands of the national or comprador bourgeoisie.

In reality this line led to multiclass collaboration under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie, degenerating into compromises in ideology and in action under cover of the so-called "musjawarah for mufakat" (consulting to reach agreement).

Full acceptance of the so-called "Pantja-Sila philosophy"<sup>18</sup> (a product of the "genius-like thinking" of Sukarno) is an example of the open ideological compromise reflecting the "success" of multi-class collaboration. According to Aidit, "Pantja-Sila is a philosophy for unity. . . . In Indonesia one finds Catholic philosophy, Islamic philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, Protestant philosophy, Black Magic philosophy, Mystic philosophy . . . and Pantja-Sila unites what can be united."<sup>19</sup>

In the same speech he said further: "The philosophy of Pantja-Sila cannot be separated from the philosophy of Empu Tantular 'Bhinneka Tuggal Ika' or 'Unity in Diversity.' This is very dialectical. 'Unity in Diversity'—differences, but in unity . . . I do not agree with liquidation of not only these various kinds of philosophy but also political parties. In the second stage of the revolution and the next stages . . . because so long as differences remain among us, 'Unity in Diversity' and also Pantja-Sila will still be applicable. And in my opinion these differences *will exist forever* . . . thus in my opinion Pantja-Sila is also everlasting." (Emphasis added.)

It is very clear that the philosophy of Pantja-Sila is an

idealist philosophy. Perhaps it was considered to be only a means of uniting "the revolutionary groups." But it was not that. Aidit said that "Pantja-Sila is . . . everlasting"; ". . . these differences will exist forever . . ." Does he believe that class differences will exist forever? Does not our class struggle aim at abolishing class society?

Is such a statement from Aidit Marxist? Yet Aidit said, "I accept Pantja-Sila also from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint." (In the same speech.)

Similar conclusions hold for the PKI's acceptance of the "genuine concept" of NASAKOM<sup>20</sup> proposed by the demagogic bourgeois Sukarno. Aidit said, "Besides uniting various kinds of classes and groups, the National Front also unites various kinds of revolutionary ideas . . . namely; Islam, Nationalism and Communism."<sup>21</sup> "In the traditional struggle for national independence in Indonesia, we can find three political streams which were against Dutch colonialism; namely, nationalist, religious and Communist political thought. Thus it is natural to say that there will be national unity in Indonesia if these three political currents unite within the NASAKOM cooperation."<sup>22</sup>

And Aidit said, "This united national front has found its organization; namely the 'National Front.'"<sup>23</sup> At the top it is "headed by President Sukarno himself, who with his vice-presidents reflects the cooperation of NASAKOM . . . showing us how deeply rooted is the idea of the national united front among the masses. Now it is our duty to work hard to foster and consolidate it."<sup>24</sup>

During the struggle against the Dutch colonial power, it is true, there were many political groupings all of which were against the foreign imperialist rulers. But we could also see which were truly revolutionary, which were quasi-revolutionary, and which were opportunist. For example, the PNI [the Indonesian Nationalist party founded by Sukarno] was clearly bourgeois. In the beginning it reflected the national bourgeoisie but then it degenerated into a vehicle of the national bourgeoisie, bureaucrats, compradors and bribers. Thus during the struggle, it always swung opportunistically. And in times of revolutionary crisis, it was always on the side of the reactionary forces. A clear example was provided during the "Mad-iun Affair" in 1948 when it served as the "vanguard" of the reactionary forces that murdered thousands of Communist

cadres and revolutionary rank and filers. Sukarno himself at the time issued the challenge: "Join Sukarno or Musso."<sup>25</sup>

Again in the recent period (1964), during the campaign for unilateral action in taking over the land belonging to the big landowners, the members of this nationalist party joined in suppressing the peasant movement; and the "most progressive" leader of this party issued an order to "stop any unilateral action." Yet the PNI was considered by the PKI to be its true partner in the NASAKOM cooperation as the representative of the nationalist political stream.

Similarly with the Nadhatul Ulama, an Islamic scholars party. The NU was very clearly the party of the feudalists and landowners. They used Islam as a cover for their reactionary activities in preserving their landownership and exploitation of the peasants. By using Islam as protective coloration, the party played a big role and had great influence among the masses that are still strongly under the sway of Islamic teachings. There is no instance in Indonesian history where this party has played a progressive or revolutionary role. It has always stood on the side of the reactionary forces. Yet the PKI sought to preserve unity with the NU within the so-called NASAKOM cooperation.

Besides the nationalist and religious parties in the so-called "National Front" led by Sukarno, there were other reactionary elements, including the generals.

Thus the so-called "National Front" was not a revolutionary front led by the working class. It was not even the united front depicted theoretically in the documents of the PKI; namely, a united front of the working class, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie led by the working class. It was clearly collaboration of all classes under the leadership of the demagogic bourgeois Sukarno.

Of course, the PKI cannot and must not struggle alone; the working class must not struggle alone. It needs allies. It should not isolate itself from the masses; but the masses are not the national bourgeoisie! It should be clear who is really an ally and who is really an enemy. In a country like Indonesia, in which poor peasants constitute more than sixty percent of the population, peasants are the real ally of the working class. The peasants should become the army of the revolutionary movement led by the working class. Poor city dwellers or the petty bourgeoisie are reserves to be drawn upon. Towards the national bourgeoisie there should be a

cautious and vigilant attitude. The revolutionary movement could and should support the progressive attitudes or actions of the national bourgeoisie, but there should be no class collaboration with the national bourgeoisie, since this can undermine the alliance between the working class and the peasants. The Communist party should have its own policy based on the demands and experience of the most revolutionary class.

There is, naturally, the influence of Islamic teachings and nationalist thinking among the masses. This should be considered in propaganda work and in enlightening the masses. But it should never mask the class character of the struggle. The masses should be clear that this struggle is a class struggle and not a religious or racial struggle. The struggle is to overthrow the exploiters, to crush and abolish the system of exploitation of man by man. And the masses should even have a very concrete picture in their minds of the true character of the ruling class—the compradors, the bribers, the usurers, the feudalists, the ruling-class apparatus, the reactionary government apparatus, etc. They must be shown how and trained to overthrow these reactionary agencies. Only by such means can the united front among all the oppressed classes be tempered, strengthened and made militant. Not through pleading with the "national bourgeoisie."

### 3.

#### On the Question of Building the Party

The PKI's program calls for making the party "both a mass party and a cadre party." Aidit said, "The PKI is a mass party but at the same time a cadre party; it has many members and close contacts with the masses."<sup>26</sup>

In 1952 the membership was only 10,000. In the national conference held that year, it was decided "to expand the membership from 10,000 to 100,000 *within six months*." (Emphasis added.)<sup>27</sup> And after the implementation of the first "Three Year Plan" [1956-59], the membership increased to 1,500,000.<sup>28</sup> At the mid year 1965 it was reported in the press to have reached 3,000,000.

It is an amazing growth. A mass production of Communist cadres! Perhaps no precedent exists for this in the history of Communist parties. But is it guaranteed that all of these three million members were good revolutionists? Perhaps the CIA

agents knew the answer to this better than the members themselves, so that the reactionary forces dared to launch a brutal and massive suppression of the PKI. Of course, the rapid recruitment by the PKI frightened the reactionary forces, but apparently they recognized the fatal weakness of the organization better than did the members of the PKI.

Obviously it is not easy to turn out good revolutionists with mass production methods. Aidit himself recognized the inherent weakness in this rapid growth and mass production of members. For example, he said, "In the beginning they become party members because they seek protection from the rising revolutionary tide of the peasants. But their cultural level is higher than that of the agricultural workers and poor peasants, therefore within a short time they occupy the chair of leadership in the party and for the time being the peasants grant them their trust. Besides there are cadres who joined the party during the armed struggle in 1945 or even before then, thus in the days before the party had an agrarian program. At the time they were good cadres; they implemented the party's policy with high spirits against imperialism and took an active part in the campaign to crush the reactionary rebellion. But they are not agrarian cadres." 29

Aidit recognized that in the local leadership of the party, in the villages, many were "under the thumb of rich peasants and this is not in line with the membership of the peasant movement which is mainly poor peasant." 30

Yet the slogan remained, "Both mass party and cadre party." The fact is that the real cadres of the party stood at a distance from the mass members of the party. Thus the structure of the party was more or less like a mass organization. The cadres did not completely trust the mass members and tended to form many tight, secret rings within the party. The bureaucratic character of the party was thus intensified. And in a time of crisis like last October, the party could do nothing. Instead of issuing instructions on what to do to counteract the brutal massacre initiated by the reactionary forces, the top leadership scurried for safe spots (some of them going to President Sukarno's palace) which they knew about in advance, leaving the mass members in the lurch. Even two months after the disaster, there were still many in the rank and file who did not really know what was going on until they were massacred. Some fought back, but only in personal defense. They still did not know whether the leadership was

intact or not, what policy was to be followed, etc. The rank-and-file member was not privileged to know the real policy of the party.

This state of affairs proved to be very dangerous. Experience shows that it is necessary to build a party of real cadres who have a correct political line, who are actively engaged in political work among the workers and peasants, and who dare to conduct an armed struggle to achieve the goals of the revolution. The party must have a program "which reflects the thought and experience of an authentic revolutionary movement, aims at really aiding the highest possible revolutionary activity of the working class, while starting out from its most elementary demands." There can be no secrecy among the members since all are cadres, while democratic centralism must rule. Everything is discussed by all members, but all act in unity!

#### 4.

#### Too Much Stress at the Top

Because of its policy of seeking to achieve socialism by means of a "parliamentary democratic" struggle and building a false "united national front," the party concentrated its struggle at the top instead of the bottom. Collaboration at the top was considered to be the best way to inch towards socialism. Activities centered around the "coalition cabinet" beginning in 1955, then around the "cooperation cabinet" in 1959, the last one being the "NASAKOM cabinet" in 1963.

The party sought to gain power through "working together" with its enemies.

Considerable progress was registered throughout this period. The masses were moving toward a revolutionary crisis. But they were not armed—not armed with a correct political line and not armed with real weapons to crush the reactionary ruling class. The peasants were set in motion to take over the land, to smash the domination of the feudalists. But there was no clear political line. And even the land take-overs were stopped because of the "impending probable" formation of a "NASAKOM cabinet."

The party did not protest the banning of strikes in industry because industry was considered to belong to the government, which was almost "a government of NASAKOM."

The party did not issue instructions to counteract the military-fascist suppression through armed struggle because "Sukarno is still at the top," the "pro-people elements are still in the government."

This line should have been reversed! All forms of struggle must be employed but the stress must be on building a genuine revolutionary working-class party, activating the masses in the revolutionary movement and preparing for armed struggle!

### In Conclusion

The above criticism is not intended to undermine the role of the PKI nor to arouse distrust in Indonesian Communism. But the revolutionary movement in Indonesia will be successful only if it learns from past experience, if it learns not to repeat the same mistakes.

Only true revolutionists have the courage to correct errors. Criticism and self-criticism constitute the best method of reaching a more correct line. Mistakes are bad, but not to understand the mistakes is worse; and the worst is not to correct a mistake, having recognized it.

The situation is now quite favorable for a new line. People in arms are to be found everywhere. The line between friend and foe is very clear. The brutal character of the reactionary forces is very obvious. The opportunistic character of a bourgeois leader like Sukarno is very clear. Whether the leadership of the party likes it or not, the masses cannot wait out the increasing massacre against them any longer. What is needed now is a politically correct, class-conscious and militant leadership, which will lead an armed struggle to abolish the whole system of exploitation of man by man in Indonesia and establish a workers state!

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1. *Constitution of the PKI*. Central Committee of the Partai Komunis Indonesia, Djakarta. 1964. p. 16.
2. M. H. Lukman, *About the Constitution*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1959. pp. 26-27.
3. These statements were made to a Japanese correspondent. See *Asahi Shimbun*, Tokyo. December 2, 1965.
4. *ibid.*
5. D. N. Aidit, *Forty Years of the PKI*, Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1960. p. 61.

6. *Granma*, Havana, Cuba. May 15, 1966. (English edition.)
7. D. N. Aidit, *The Indonesian Revolution, Its Historical Background and Its Future*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta, 1964. p. 73.
8. *ibid.* p. 81.
9. The armed struggle against the Japanese occupation and later the British and Dutch aggressors is called the "August 1945 Revolution." It began with the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945.
10. D. N. Aidit, *Forty Years of the PKI*. p. 59.
11. *ibid.*, p. 47.
12. D. N. Aidit, *The Indonesian Revolution, Its Historical Background and Its Future*. p. 77.
13. *The Constitution of the PKI*. p. 7.
14. D. N. Aidit, *Forty Years of the PKI*. p. 83.
15. D. N. Aidit, *Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1957. p. 50.
16. D. N. Aidit, *The Birth and Growth of the PKI*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1955. p. 9.
17. D. N. Aidit, *Be a Good and a Better Communist*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1964. p. 57.
18. "Penta-Sila" is "Five Principles": belief in a single god, national unity, humanitarianism, democracy and social justice.
19. D. N. Aidit, *In Defense of Pantja-Sila*. Jajasan Pembaruan. 1964. pp. 27-28.
20. NASAKOM is an abbreviation for Nationalism-Religion-Communism.
21. D. N. Aidit, *The Indonesian Revolution, Its Historical Background and Its Future*. p. 65.
22. *ibid.*, p. 72.
23. *ibid.*, p. 67.
24. D. N. Aidit, *The Indonesian Revolution, Its Historical Background and Its Future*. p. 72.
25. Musso, a leader of the PKI in the twenties and thirties, managed to escape abroad when the Dutch suppressed the movement, returning in 1948.
26. D. N. Aidit, *Be a Good and a Better Communist*. p. 49.
27. D. N. Aidit, *Forty Years of the PKI*, p. 72.
28. *ibid.*, p. 89.
29. D. N. Aidit, *The Peasants Crush the Village Devils*. Jajasan Pembaruan, Djakarta. 1964. p. 55.
30. *ibid.*, p. 55.

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