CHAPTER TWO

The Early Signs of Political Schizophrenia:
Caught between Stability and Revolution

It took Masyumi almost four years to build a coherent political position, between its foundation in November 1945 and the party congress in December 1949, which saw the young generation, led by Mohammad Natsir, take over the party leadership. It was caught between two opposing forces: a tendency towards unity, which had arisen both from the struggle against the Dutch colonial power and from the party’s goal of unifying the whole Muslim community, but also a propensity for division which came from Masyumi’s need to carve out a place for itself on the country’s fraught political landscape. It appeared during this period to be Janus-faced. On the one hand, a revolutionary organisation built on a sometimes intransigent spirit of nationalism, whose leaders flirted at times with the limits of the law; on the other, a party of government that produced some of the architects of the new Republic whose painstaking work led to the country’s recognition by the international community.

The Summer of 1945—From an Islamic State to an “Islamisable” State

The refusal by the Japanese authorities to support the creation of an Islamic state in Indonesia meant that the representatives of the Muslim community had to try to convince their fellow countrymen of its
necessity. Over the course of a number of successive forums held between April and August 1945, representatives of various political forces drew up the institutional framework for an independent Indonesia. The Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence (Badan Penjelidik Usaha-Usaha Kemerdekaan Indonesia, BPUKI) was at the forefront of these endeavours, holding two sessions: one from 29 May to 2 June, and another from 10 July to 17 July. It was made up of 62 Indonesian members as well as eight special members who were Japanese, one of whom was a committee vice-chairman, and it was overwhelmingly dominated by the supporters of a secular state led by Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta. Although there were few representatives of political Islam—only 16 members in all—they nonetheless succeeded in putting the question of an Islamic state at the top of the agenda. The choice between an Islamic state and a secular state was at the forefront of the committee’s debates. However, the tenor of these debates is known to us only through the accounts given in later years by some of its participants, the most comprehensive of which was provided by Muhammad Yamin, one of the main nationalist ideologists.

_Pancasila—Sukarno’s Challenge to Political Islam_

On the eve of independence, the leaders of the Muslim community were in a peculiar situation. The vast majority of them considered

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1 The chairman of this committee was Dr. Radjiman Wediodiningrat, one of the founders of the Javanese nationalist movement Budi Utomo in 1908.
2 Taking into account not only those who had been appointed by the Japanese to represent the Muslim community, but also the members on the committee who systematically supported their proposals. The latter group was composed of Abikusno (PSII), K.H. Ahmad Sanoesi (POII Sukabumi), K.H.A. Halim (POI Madjalengka), Ki Bagoes Hadikoesomo (Muhammadiah), K.H. Masjkoer (N.O), K.H.M. Mansoer (Muhammadiah), R. Rooslan Wongsokoesoemo (ancien Parindra puis Masjumi), R. Sjamoeddin (Parindra puis Masjumi), Soekiman (Masjumi), K. Wahid Hasjim (NU), Mme Sunarjo Mangunpuspito (Masjumi), A.R. Baswedan (Partai Arab Indonesia), Abdul Rahim Pratalykrama and Kijahi Abdoel Fattah. These last two figures supported the demands made by the Islamic movement despite the fact that they were not recognised figures within Islam, more often than not distanced himself from Islamic demands. Deliar Noer, “Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology, and Political Role in Indonesia”, Master thesis, Cornell University, 1960, p. 31.
Islam and nationalism to be inseparable. Islam had been the source of their involvement in the struggle for an independent Indonesia, and so they considered that the new state they were about to build should serve their religion. The question of the new state’s constitution did not appear to them to be open to political debate; they saw instead a preordained answer dictated by their faith. The rhetoric used by the nationalist secularists during the summer of 1945 was particularly skilful, then, for the way in which it gradually centred the debate around the question of what type of institutions should be established in the new Indonesian state, while at the same time preserving their own credentials as good Muslims. In the absence of any official records of the committee meetings, it is difficult to assess with any precision the respective roles played by Muhammad Yamin and Sukarno in these delicate political manoeuvres.\(^4\) Both of them stated their desire that

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\(^4\) Assuming that Muhammad Yamin’s transcription in 1959 of the speech he gave on 29 May 1945 was exact (Naskah, I: 83–107), it could be considered as laying the foundations of what was to become the ideology of the Indonesian state, making him the true founder of *Pancasila*. This was confirmed, moreover, by several former Masyumi figures in 1967. B.J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), p. 17. Boland, however, seems convinced that Yamin gives himself credit which he is not due. Four of the five principles of *Pancasila* had already been formulated by Sukarno in July 1933 during a conference organised by Partindo. H. Endang Saifuddin Anshary, *Piagam Jakarta 22 juni 1945 dan sejarah konsensus nasional antara nasionalis islami dan nasionalis “secular” tentang dasar negara republik Indonesia, 1945–1959* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1983), p. 17.

Another tendentious account of the birth of *Pancasila* is that given by Kyai Masykur, one of NU’s leaders. He described how in May 1945 when he was a captain in the Sabilillah militia, a meeting took place between Sukarno, Yamin, Wahid Hasjim, Kahar Muzakkir and himself in order to determine the principal components of the national ideology. This account was recorded by the Indonesia National Archive Services in an interview which took place on 1 October 1988 and is transcribed by Andrée Feillard in his study of NU, *Islam et armée dans l’Indonésie contemporaine: Les pionniers de la tradition*, Cahier d’Archipel 28 (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1995), pp. 39–40. It tries to show how Islam’s representatives, and notably those belonging to NU, contributed equally, along with Sukarno and Yamin, to the emergence of the state ideology. This account by Kyai Masykur has never been corroborated by another source, however, and so needs to be treated with circumspection. It seems above all to reflect the Muslim community’s change in attitude towards *Pancasila* which was now considered to be a permanent cornerstone of national identity.

It could be added that the desire of former Masyumi figures to attribute the conception of *Pancasila* to Yamin can be readily explained by their hope, in the
the future state be built upon religious foundations, but at the same time they proposed an institutional framework for this which would absolve them from having to make any practical commitments to back up these statements. The most developed presentation of this nationalist vision was delivered in a famous speech, later known as “the Birth of Pancasila”, given by Sukarno on 1 June. This long speech, made the day before the end of the first committee session, contained a vast array of references from Jaurès and Sun Yat-sen to Marhaen (a modest peasant who was not afraid to be enterprising, despite his poor background). In the course of his speech, Sukarno laid out “five principles” —Pancasila in Sanskrit—as the cornerstones of the new Indonesian state. They were: nationalism (Kebangsaan); internationalism or humanism (Perikemanusiaan); democracy by consensus (Permyusawaratan); social prosperity (Kesejahteraan sosial); and belief in one God (Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa). Two sections of the speech in particular, setting out the secularists’ ideas on the place that Islam would occupy in an independent Indonesia, were intended for the Muslim group in the committee.

The announcement of the fifth principle, “belief in one God”, was greeted with a sigh of relief by the Muslim representatives, as it ruled out the prospect of a completely secular state. Independent Indonesia would, then, as Muhammad Yamin had proposed a few days earlier, be religious (akan berketuhanan). However, Sukarno, explaining the nature of religion in the new state, said:

...every Indonesian wants to be able to worship his faith in his own way. Christians according to the commands of Jesus, Muslims according to the Prophet Mohammad’s, the Buddhists according to their Holy Books...It is within this fifth principle, my friends,

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5 For a complete French translation and analysis of this speech as well as an examination of the extraordinary political destiny of what still remains today the official ideology of the Republic of Indonesia, see Marcel Bonneff et al., Pancasila, trente années de débats politiques en Indonésie (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1980).

6 A few weeks later, “belief in one God” became the first of Pancasila’s principles.
that all religions which exist in Indonesia at the moment will be able to find their place.\textsuperscript{7}

Islam, then, was simply referred to in the same vein as the country’s other religions. No recognition was given to a particular status which Muslims considered themselves entitled to, given their numerical superiority in the country. In the Sukarnist worldview, Islam was not a source of law, but rather a source of inspiration, a personal matter to be left to each individual’s conscience.

All of us, myself included, are Muslims. My practice of Islam, God forgive me, is far from being perfect, but, my friends, if you were to look into my heart and read my mind, you would find nothing other than the heart of a Muslim. Bung Karno wishes to defend Islam through consensus and consultation… If we are truly a Muslim people, let us do our best to ensure that the majority of the seats we are about to create will be filled by representatives of Islam. If the Indonesian population genuinely contains a majority of Muslims, and if Islam is to be a religion that is alive and well in our country, then we, its leaders, must capture the people’s imagination so that it sends the greatest number of Muslim representatives possible to Parliament. Let us say that there are one hundred seats in Parliament, well then we must strive to ensure that sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety seats are occupied by Muslim figures. It will go without saying, then, that the laws voted by this assembly will be Muslim laws.\textsuperscript{8}

Muslims still had a duty, an special duty even, to assist in the triumph of their religion’s values, but these values would be expressed in Parliament. Islamic values were not a given, they had to be fought for. Sukarno put his finger on one of the major contradictions in the Muslim community’s claim to be democratic. Rather than promising the unilateral creation of a state which recognised Islam as its cornerstone, he preferred to guarantee the Muslim community the prospect of a fair chance of seeing their values prevail in Parliament, values which, as a wily political animal, he claimed to defend. Instead of an Islamic

\textsuperscript{7} Bonneff et al., \textit{Pancasila, trente années de débats politiques en Indonésie}, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{8} Principles which were expounded as an explanation for the third tenet: consensus (\textit{mufakat}) and deliberations amongst representatives (\textit{permusyawaratan}). Bonneff et al., p. 70.
state, Sukarno proposed an “Islamisable” state. His proposals, though, ran into the stubborn opposition of Islam’s representatives who, from the outset, refused to abandon the possibility of a special position for Islam in the new state. However, behind the twists and turns of this debate and the respective stances adopted during June 1945, one could detect at work the forces which led, in November, to the formation of Masyumi. Some members of the Muslim group, who were not only keenly aware of the balance of power within the country and the general mood in the international community but who also no doubt sincerely believed the secularist argument was sound, were already busy responding, on behalf of Islam, to the challenge laid down to them in Sukarno’s speech.

The Jakarta Charter—A Blueprint for Islamic Demands

The 62-member Committee adjourned on 2 June, with the question of the country’s future institutions still unresolved. Discussions continued, however, both within the sub-committee which had been charged with elaborating a programme for a constitution and within the Tyuo Sangi In (the Central Consultative Committee). The Tyuo Sangi In was created in 1943 by the Japanese to allow Indonesians to become involved in government and some of its members also participated in the work of the BPUKI. In response to the significant and persistent disagreements between nationalists and Islam’s representatives, all the members of the BPUKI who were still present in Jakarta met again to nominate a special committee of nine members who were given the task of drawing up a compromise solution to this thorny problem. The committee comprised four representatives from the Islamic movement (Haji Agus Salim, Kiai Wahid Hasjim, Abikusno and Abdul Kahar Muzzakir) and five from the nationalist group (Sukarno, Mohammad Hatta, A.A. Maramis, Achmad Subardjo9 and Muhammad Yamin), and it came up with a compromise on 22 June which Yamin subsequently

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9 Although he later became a member of Masyumi and represented the party at the cabinet table during Soekiman’s time as prime minister, Subardjo, who was close to Sukarno during the 1920s and 1930s, was unknown within the Muslim community in 1945 and could not be considered a representative of political Islam. Cf. Benedict O.G.M, Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944–1946 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1961), pp. 91–3.
called “the Jakarta Charter” (Piagram Jakarta). This document was supposed to be the preamble to the future constitution of an

Indonesian state which is a republic resting upon the people’s sovereignty and founded on the belief in God, with the obligation for adherents of the Islamic faith to abide by Islamic laws, in accordance with the principle of righteous and just humanity, the unity of Indonesia, and a democracy led by wise guidance through consultations, ensuring social justice for the whole Indonesian people.  

The importance of this text which borrowed heavily from the principles announced by Sukarno on 1 June, lies in the assertion of a particular religious obligation for Indonesian citizens of the Muslim faith. These “seven words” were the result of a compromise which had been reached by two of the Muslim representatives, Abikusno and Kahar Muzakkir, and the Christian nationalist, Maramis. In the absence of any specific detail on the nature of the duty owed by Muslims—was it to be a legal duty or simply a moral one?—and given the vagueness surrounding the notion of Islamic laws, the practical implications of this principle for the country’s new institutions were entirely predicated on its interpretation and concrete application by those in power. Nonetheless, as soon as the second session of the BPUKI opened on 10 July, some nationalist representatives expressed their concerns, considering the charter to be a serious attack on the principle of a secular state by allowing a sort of “Islamic state within the state” to exist for an overwhelming majority of the population. These concerns were exacerbated by the attitude among some of the Muslim representatives, who seemed to indicate that they now considered the Jakarta Charter as the starting point for a new series of negotiations.  

Wahid

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10 The complete text of the charter can be found in Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, p. 243.
11 In Indonesian, “dengan kewajiban menjalankan sjari’at Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya” (“with the obligation for Muslims to follow Islamic law”).
13 Now composed of 68 members.
14 Agus Salim, however, refused to follow his fellow Muslims into this dangerous territory.
Hasjim, supported by Soekiman, demanded that Islam be declared the state religion, and that there be an obligation for both the president and the vice president to be Muslim.\textsuperscript{15} Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, leader of Muhammadiyah, highlighted the potential difficulties for the country if two legal systems coexisted, and declared that it would be simpler if the duty to respect Islamic law was extended to the entire population.

In response to the refusal by nationalists to make any new concessions, the Muslim representatives adopted an unusual stance. In a motion tabled by Kahar Muzakkir, they declared that if the new state were not to be Islamic, then its institutions should contain no reference to religion at all. Sukarno considered that the disillusionment contained in this proposal clearly showed that the situation between Muslims and nationalists had become critical. Thus, on 16 July, at the opening of the day’s proceedings, he asked the nationalist group to agree to make a major sacrifice by accepting to include in the future Constitution not just the seven words of the Jakarta Charter, but also the obligation for the president to be Muslim. That evening, as the Committee for Preparatory Work finished what was to be their last day of discussions, it seemed to the Muslim representatives that they had got the upper hand. This impression, however, was short-lived. With defeat imminent, the Japanese high command in Saigon decided, on 7 August, to form an Indonesian Council which was supposed to take over the government of the country from the Japanese armed forces. Chaired by Sukarno (Mohammad Hatta was vice-chairman) and composed of members from all of the country’s regions, the Preparatory Committee for the Independence of Indonesia (Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan, PPKI) was named on 14 August. It comprised 21 members, but, much to the disappointment of the Muslim community, included only two of their representatives: Ki Bagus Hadikusumo and Wahid Hasjim, the leaders of the two main Islamic organisations, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.

On 17 August 1945, Sukarno and Hatta, under pressure from revolutionary youth groups, declared independence. The following day, the Preparatory Committee met again, now acting as a provisional constituent assembly and containing five extra members. These new

\textsuperscript{15} Hasjim’s official biographer, H. Aboebakar (a civil servant in the Ministry of Religions) made no mention of his role in this debate. \textit{Sejarah hidup K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim dan karangan tersiar} (Jakarta: Panitia buku peringatan, 1957).
members had been nominated by Sukarno, with only one of them belonging to the Islamic movement: Kasman Singodimedjo. He was commander of the PETA garrison in Jakarta, and his nomination to the provisional constituent assembly was above all to ensure the support of the militia group he headed. The Preparatory Committee constituent assembly’s first session finally got underway late, after two hours of frenzied chatter amongst the members, and an agreement was quickly reached on certain modifications to be made to the wording of the Constitution. Indonesia was to be founded on a belief in God, but the “seven words” which defined an obligation specific to Muslims were replaced\(^1\) by a much more neutral expression concerning the single nature of the divine being, one of the elements of *Pancasila*—Yang Maha Esa. In addition, the obligation for the president to be Muslim was removed from Article 6, paragraph 1. Thus, in the space of a few hours and with the consent of its representatives, the Muslim community saw all its political gains disappear.

This sudden abandonment of a compromise that had been hard won by political Islam seems difficult to fathom. To understand it, one needs to appreciate the feverish atmosphere that pervaded the Committee on that morning of 18 June. The previous day’s proclamation of independence had dealt a blow to the Japanese occupier, who had promised on 24 June to give Indonesians their independence. With the imminent arrival of the Allied troops, it was obvious that Dutch soldiers would soon return to the country with the intention of restoring the Netherlands’ colonial authority there. The definition of Indonesia’s religious status was therefore no longer the theoretical question it had been during the discussions in the Preparatory Committee in June. It was now an issue that had to be resolved quickly and that could have far-reaching consequences for Indonesia’s aspirations for independence. The day before, on 17 August, Mohammad Hatta had, at the request of Admiral Mayeda, received a visit from a Japanese naval officer who alerted him to the violent opposition of the Christian community on the edges of the archipelago to the “seven words” of the Jakarta Charter:

They recognise that this part of the sentence is not binding on them and concerns only Muslims. Nonetheless, the inclusion of such a

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\(^1\) In the preamble and in Article 29 concerning religion.
statement as part of the foundation of the Constitution amounts to organising discrimination towards minority groups. If this ‘discrimination’ is confirmed, they would prefer to remain outside the Republic of Indonesia.  

This threat of secession was raised by Sukarno and Hatta during their meeting with the representatives of Islam in the provisional constituent assembly in the early hours of the morning of the 18th. It was, therefore, to ensure national unity that Wahid Hasjim, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, Kasman Singodimedjo and Teuku Mohamad Hassan (a representative from Aceh) agreed to sacrifice the demands of their political group.  

The history of the Jakarta Charter and of its “loss” (kehilangan) was a crucial moment for the Muslim cause in Indonesia and, in the years that followed, became a central theme of Masyumi’s political identity. The party made several calls for the Charter to be included in the Constitution, in particular during the debates which preceded the adoption of the Provisional Constitution in 1950 and also during the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly in Bandung between 1956 and 1959. In addition, a number of party members or sympathisers

18 Hasjim’s presence has been challenged by H. Endang Saifuddin Anshari (p. 48) who explains that he was in West Java at the time. Hatta (Boland, The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia, p. 35), Kasman Singodimedjo and others confirmed that he was indeed there. As Andrée Feillard has highlighted (Islam et armée dans l’Indonésie contemporaine, p. 42), had Wahid Hasjim been absent, none of the Islamist signatories of the Jakarta Charter would have approved its abandonment, as it would have discredited the legitimacy of the meeting on 18 August.  
19 The region of Aceh is one of the cradles of Indonesian Islam and enjoyed a considerable amount of prestige within the Muslim community in Indonesia. Mohammad Hassan, then, was very ideally situated, despite his proximity to the secular nationalists, to convince the Muslim representatives to accept the withdrawal of their demands. Indeed, Sukarno and Hatta are said to have charged him with this task. Anderson, Java in a Time of Revolution, p. 87.  
20 A few days later, when speaking at a conference organised by his organisation, Muhammadiyah, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo expressed his discontent concerning the outcome of the Preparatory Committee and pointed out that political Islam’s struggle was still in its infancy. Noer, “Masjumi: Its Organizazion, Ideology, and Political Role in Indonesia”, p. 37.
wrote studies on the Charter. These studies focussed on two themes in particular: first, they looked at the sacrifice made by the Muslim community as a foundational element of the Indonesian nation, with the insinuation that the latter owed a debt to the former. The second theme, linked to the first, was the notion of Islamic patriotism which compared favourably with the patriotism of secular nationalists, who had allowed their actions to be dictated by the Japanese naval high command.

Once the thorny question of Islam’s place in the new Indonesia had been dealt with, the promulgation of the Constitution was able to go ahead the same day without further ado. Sukarno and Hatta were elected president and vice president of the new Republic of Indonesia, and the country's political landscape began to take shape amid its budding institutions.

The Foundation of Masyumi

On 29 August, the BPUKI was dissolved and replaced by a Central Indonesian National Committee (Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat, KNIP). In accordance with the presidential system then in place, a cabinet was formed on 4 September under Sukarno’s leadership. Political Islam was relatively poorly represented in the new provisional institutions with the government comprising only two of its representatives. These were the former president of PSII, Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, who was named minister for public works, and K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim, who did not have a ministerial portfolio as such, but was in charge of religious affairs. Of the 136 members of the KNIP, who were chosen by the president, only 15 could be considered to belong to political Islam. One of these, Kasman Singomdimedjo, was elected to chair

21 Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Pertumbuhan Historis Rumus Dasar Negara dan Sebuah Proyeksi (Surabaya: Facta Documenta, 1966); Pancasila dan Sejarahnya (Jakarta: Lembaga Riset dan Perpustakaan, 1972); H. Endang Saifuddin Anshari, author of Piagam Jakarta 22 juin 1945, is himself a former official of Peladjar Islam Indonesia and the son of Isa Anshary, the very energetic “boss” of Masyumi in West Java.

22 These were Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, Kasman Singomdimedjo, Yusuf Wibisono, Dahan Abdullah, Mohmad Roem, A.R. Baswedan, A. Bajasut, Harsono Tjokroaminoto, Mrs. Sunarjo Mangunpuspito, Wahid Hasjim, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, Zainul Arifin, Hadji Agus Salim, Hadji Ahmad Sanusi and Anwar Tjokroaminoto.
the assembly during its second session, which took place between 15
and 17 October 1945. However, he was taken to task violently by one
of the assembly members who accused him of authorising his troops
to be disarmed by the Japanese when he was head of PETA in Jakarta,
and had to resign. He was replaced by Sjahrir, president of the small
Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) who was one of the few nationalist
leaders not to have collaborated with the Japanese. For the representa-
tives of political Islam, such as Anwar Haryono who witnessed the
ousting of Kasman, the election of Sjahrir confirmed the victory of the
“secular group”. During the same session, the KNIP was given real
legislative power and decided to establish a Working Committee (Badan
Pekerja) composed of 15 members in order to help it with this task.
Two prominent figures of the resistance to the Japanese occupation,
Sjahrir and Amir Sjarrifuddin, were elected chairman and vice-chairman
respectively of this committee, and subsequently chose the 13 other
committee members. Of these, there were only two representatives of
political Islam (Wahid Hasjim and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara) but this
figure increased to three (Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, Mohammad Natsir
and Jusuf Wibisono) when the committee was expanded to 17 mem-
ers, and their number increased to four when they were joined by
Mohammad Zein Djambek in December 1945.

Although political Islam was poorly represented within the
country’s new institutions and its moral authority within the country
had not been constitutionally recognised, it took its time before organ-
sising itself into a political force. Indeed, it did so reluctantly, due to
its opposition to the creation of a party political system which it feared
would bring an end to the spirit of national unity. Although their
primary demand—recognition of Indonesia’s Islamic identity—had not
been satisfied, the country’s Muslims hoped that they could still be
considered as the religious conscience of the nation. The single-party
presidential system established in the summer of 1945 was better suited
to fulfilling this aspiration, and indeed in the lead-up to the vote which

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23 “Kelompok Sekular” Lukman Hakiem, Perjalan mencari keadilan dan persatuan.
Biografi Dr Anwar Harjono, S.H. (Jakarta: Media Da’wah, 1993), p. 79.
24 Inspired by the example of Indian National Congress (George McTurnan Kahin,
Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press,
1952], p. 152), this committee was to meet at least every 10 days and the KNIP
was to assemble at least once a year.
was to give to the KNIP a legislative function and set up a multi-party political system, none of the Islamic members campaigned for these changes. They could no doubt sense the danger, inherent in political battles with their relativist logic, that Islam would be reduced to being just another political doctrine, and so they only entered the political ring when events forced them to do so. Although the mutation of the Islamist movement into a political party was not desired by its members, the groundwork for this transformation had nonetheless already been laid. It was the work of a small group of figures who, for the most part, belonged to the pre-war modernist Muslim organisations and to the Japanese Masyumi: Agus Salim, Abdul Kahar Muzakkir, Abdul Wahid Hasjim, Mohammad Natsir, Mohammad Roem, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Soekiman Wirjosandjojo, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, Mohammad Mawardi and Abu Hanifah.

This generation of Muslim leaders remained uncertain for a long time, however, as to how and when they should enter the political fray, and so they initially focussed on creating a Muslim youth movement. Using the Islamic Higher School (Sekolah Islam Tinggi) as a platform for their ideas, they encouraged a group of students there to found the Movement of Young Muslims (Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia, GPII) on 2 October 1945. Bringing together young Muslims who had attended both religious establishments (pesantren) and non-religious schools, the GPII’s goals were to defend the Indonesian Republic and to spread Islam. The debate within the Islamist movement as to which type of organisation would be the most suitable vehicle (wadah) for their political message quickly led its leaders to the conclusion that the best solution was to transform the powerful Muslim organisation created by the Japanese, which still had most of its organisational infrastructure intact. It was with this in mind that they summoned the Congress of the Indonesian Umma (Kongres Umat Islam Indonesia) to Yogyakarta on 7 and 8 November.

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25 See Chapter 6 for the description of this organisation and its role in the emergence of Masyumi.
26 “Mempertankan Negara Republik Indonesia”. “Menyiarkan Agama Islam”.
Despite the great disorder that reigned in Java at that time, almost 500 delegates from the principal Muslim organisations managed to make it to one of the last remaining cities in the hands of the republican government. After two days of debate, the Congress “representing the entire Indonesian Muslim community, which accounts for 65 million souls” considered “that all forms of colonisation are cruel, violate human rights and are clearly forbidden (diharamkan) by Islam”; it further stated that “in order to eliminate successive imperialist measures in Indonesia, all Muslims must, without fail, fight body and soul for the liberation of their country and of their religion” and decided “to adapt the organisation and the position of Masyumi, the Heart of the Unity of the Indonesian Umma, in order to mobilise and lead the struggle of the entire Indonesian umma”.

The unity which the Congress called for was to be the unity of the entire nation. The gathering was opened by President Sukarno and closed by the Sultan of Yogyakarta. In the minds of the organisers, it was less about organising the creation of a new political organisation and more about making it known that there was a religious duty towards the nation. The fact that this mobilisation of the Muslim community took on the shape of a political party was merely the consequence of the “regrettable” decision by the government to create a multi-party system. Soekiman, the first president of Masyumi, reminded people of that when he presented the decisions of the Congress:

In such a critical moment, which required the people to unite body and soul, we regret the announcement by the government of its proposal to found parties, a move which will only lead to division amongst the people.

By sacrificing their demands for the sake of the struggle to maintain independence, the representatives of the Muslim community had hoped that they were inaugurating a new period of political consensus and leaving party politics behind, an aspiration which still prevailed at the

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foundation of Masyumi. By a small majority, the Congress representa-
tives preferred a transformation (penjelmaan, literally meaning “reincar-
nation”), of Madjelis Sjoero Moeslimin Indonesia over the proposal to
found a Partai Rakjat Islam (Muslim People’s Party) made by a group
of representatives who were firmly resolved to bring about the Muslim
community’s entry into the political arena.\textsuperscript{30} The new organisation only
adopted the acronym, Masjoemi,\textsuperscript{31} rather than the Japanese organisa-
tion’s full name, and it also added the subtitle, Partai Politik Oemmat
Islam Indonesia (the Political Party of the Indonesian Muslim Com-
munity), to its name. Their choice may have been guided mainly by
obvious strategic reasons, not least Masyumi’s organisational network
which the new party would later avail of. Nonetheless, the path chosen
by Islam’s representatives, one which left them open to accusations of
collaboration which had also been aimed at certain members of the
Muslim elite, revealed a certain circumspection towards the new poli-
tical dispensation. There were other examples of this reticence towards
entering the political arena, namely the fact that the Congress not only
created a political party but also spawned a vast and complex web of
social care organisations which revealed a vision of politics that was
still very community-based.\textsuperscript{32}

The other theme, which was developed substantially in the docu-
ments produced by the Congress, was that of a holy war which was
supposed to ensure Indonesia’s independence. Of the final resolutions,
the first two dealt with this issue, while the creation of Masyumi was
not mentioned until the third resolution. These two resolutions called
on Muslims to:

1. Reinforce the Muslim community’s preparation for the struggle in
   the path of Allah
2. Reinforce, by all the efforts that Islam imposes, the troops for the
   defence of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{30} The debate between the two sides was a lively one and the winning margin was
   only one vote (52 to 51).
\textsuperscript{31} This was the original spelling of the party at its foundation in 1945. See
   “Author’s Note”, this volume.
\textsuperscript{32} Cf. infra, Chapter 6.
\textsuperscript{33} Pengoeroes Besar Partai Masjoemi, \textit{Masjoemi, Partai Politik Oemmat Islam
   Indonesia}. 
Shortly afterwards, these decisions gave birth to an organisation charged with mobilising all Muslims, Barisan Sabilillah, which was placed under the authority of Masyumi.\textsuperscript{34} The members of this militia integrated the army as Extraordinary Forces and, in theory, this group was a sort of civil defence force supposed to provide support for Hizboellah, the military organisation inherited from the original Masyumi and which became part of the overall structure created by the Congress. The resolutions stated that “Hizboellah would be the only military organisation” and that “Gerakan Pemoeda Islam Indonesia [Indonesia’s Muslim Youth Movement] constituted the only avenue open to young Muslims’ political struggle.”\textsuperscript{35} The birth of the second Masyumi did not arise, then, from a specific political programme but rather emerged from a defensive community-based attitude which assimilated Islam’s followers and the new Republic’s citizens. It was only once the party entered the Indonesian political fray that it began to evolve slowly towards becoming a party of government.

**Political and Military Divisions within Indonesia**

The day of Masyumi’s foundation, 7 November, was also the day when most of Indonesia’s other political organisations were created. These organisations had three distinct sources of inspiration: nationalism, socialism and Islam, whose sole national representative until 1947 would be Masyumi. The Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) at its creation benefited from the prestige associated with the pre-war nationalist movement and the notoriety of its illustrious predecessors with the same name. Even though it had no direct link with either the organisation founded by Sukarno in 1927 or with the state party, born just after independence, which controlled the single-party system (before being replaced by the KNIP), the PNI remained for the vast majority of the population the president’s party. Likewise, on the left of the political spectrum, the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), led by Mohammed Yussuf, had no close affiliation with its predecessors from the colonial

\textsuperscript{34} “Barisan Sabilillah” literally means “forces in the path of God”.
period. These included the Indonesian Communist Party founded in 1920, an illegal PKI, created in 1935 after the almost complete disappearance of its predecessor following the failed rebellion of 1927, and finally, the clandestine PKI created during the Japanese occupation. Most of the country’s Stalinists did not join the new PKI and instead became members of the Socialist Party, the Labour Party (Partai Buruh Indonesia) or the Pesindo militia. Finally, in December 1945, the merger of Amir Sjarrifuddin’s Partai Sosialis Indonesia and Sutan Sjahri’s Partai Rakjat Sosialis gave birth to the Partai Sosialis. Although its electoral base was a lot smaller than its predecessors, it managed nonetheless to punch far above its weight politically thanks to its excellent organisational capacity and the competence of its leaders. Apart from these four main political parties, a number of other smaller political groups shared the often rather chaotic political landscape. These included the Socialist People’s Party (Paras); a Protestant party, Parkindo, led by Leimena; and a Catholic party.

There gravitated around these organisations an array of armed forces, either left over from the Japanese era or newly created, which had not yet been integrated into the fledgling national army. Most of these groups of young combatants, like Hizboellah and Barisan Sabilllah which were controlled by Masyumi, supported a political party or movement. Barisan Pelonor, which had become Barisan Banteng (the Buffalo Legion), was close to the left wing of the PNI. It was based in Surakarta and gradually became exclusively controlled by Tan Malaka. Laskar Rakjat (the People’s Militia), which was close to the Sultan of Yogyakarta, represented the right wing of the PNI, while the Pesindo militia (Indonesian Socialist Youth Movement) grouped together young Indonesians who supported Sjahri. These militia groups embodied the courage of the pemuda in their struggle against foreign armed forces and provided vital assistance to the political parties they were associated with. However, because they were often poorly armed and lacking in

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36 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 159.
37 Tan Malaka was one of the most prominent figures in Indonesian communism. He was a PKI official in the 1920s before becoming a Comintern representative for Southeast Asia. As a result of the 1926–27 revolts and the subsequent crackdown on communism, he had to flee his country. He returned in 1942 and lived through the war in complete anonymity, only returning to politics after independence. See Anderson, Java in a Time of Revolution, pp. 269–95.
discipline, they had, during the first years of the new Republic, a destabilising effect on politics. They were gradually, but with some difficulty, integrated into the Indonesian army, bringing with them their partisan differences.\(^{38}\)

The struggle for Indonesian independence took place in such a heady atmosphere of extreme confusion that it is not easy to tease out the different political identities it contained. Most of the country’s regions were isolated from one another and the fighting accentuated the administrative division established by the Japanese authorities.\(^{39}\)

This administrative chaos made it difficult for information to be communicated, even within the regions controlled by the new Indonesian government, making the political parties’ task all the more difficult. In the case of Masyumi, these difficulties had a knock-on effect on the content of its official newspaper, *Al-Djihad*. As a result of the unreliability of the postal service, the newspaper abounded with practical information, such as notifications for meetings (sometimes concerning only a few people). In these circumstances, proper political strategy was often replaced by one-upmanship, the exaggeration of minor events and occasional political bluster. Throughout 1946, for example, *Al-Djihad* helped maintain an atmosphere of anxiety in the country to such an extent that one could have been forgiven for thinking that the Third World War was about to break out. The number of armed forces within the country was colossal, according to Abiksuno Tjokrosujoso, one of Masyumi’s vice presidents—no fewer than three million members of Hizboellah and two million members of Barisan Sabilillah—which seemed to presage a confrontation of apocalyptic proportions.\(^{40}\)

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38 The period of sacred union enjoyed by Indonesian youth groups during the struggle for and defence of independence did not last. The Youth Congress, which took place in Yogyakarta on 10 and 11 November 1945, led to the creation of the Pesindo which supported Amir and Sjahrir, thus officialising the politicisation of the pemuda movement.

39 During this period, Sumatra came under the control of the Headquarters of the Seventh Area Army in Singapore which also controlled Malaysia. A special command was created for Java and Madura while Borneo and the East were placed under the authority of the Navy Headquarters for the Southern Seas in Makassar in Sulawesi.

40 *Al-Djihad*, 16 February 1946. According to Kahin, Hizboellah only made up between 20,000 and 25,000 combatants. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. 162.
The exact nature of the transformation that took place in the Indonesian population in the midst of such turmoil has been the source of much debate. For Benedict Anderson, the Indonesian National Revolution was never anything more than a political revolution, and “what it might have been can only be glimpsed in the short-lived, isolated social revolutions in the provinces and in the memories of some of the survivors.” This vision has been shared by Indonesian historians who focus mainly on the struggle for independence, but it has been qualified, and in some cases contested, by Western writers. Peter Carey, for example, claims that “without a doubt, more Indonesians were killed or tortured at the hands of their fellow countrymen during these tragic months than were killed in the whole guerrilla struggle against the Dutch.”

The transformation of Masyumi from an inward-looking organisation into a political party did not happen uniformly across the country. The war of independence, which was beginning at that time, divided the country politically as well as militarily. In August 1945, the entire country became the theatre of operations for British and Australian forces, having previously played host to the Americans. The English landed in Jakarta at the end of September, and first of all entered into dialogue with the new Republic’s authorities, thus awarding them de facto recognition. In response to the total refusal of the Dutch to enter into any discussions with the Sukarno government, which they considered to be a Japanese creation, the British facilitated the appointment of Sjahrir as prime minister on 13 November. Negotiations were then opened between the new prime minister and a Dutch representative, Van Mook. However, these discussions were rapidly broken off because of the Netherlands’ refusal to stop landing their troops in Indonesia. As a result, the confrontations between militia groups and Dutch and British forces, which had been intensifying up until that point, escalated further. In the following months, despite the fact that

42 In the most recent official version of Indonesian history, only a tiny footnote is devoted to the elimination from the country’s regions of both administrative structures and the elite groups who supported the Dutch. Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, eds., *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 6 (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008). See Colin Wild and Peter Carey, eds., *Born in Fire: The Indonesian Struggle for Independence*, BBC Publications (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1988), pp. xxii–xxiv.
Dutch and English diplomats, under pressure from the United States, were attempting to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, Dutch troops reoccupied Borneo, Sulawesi, the Maluku Islands and the Lesser Sunda Islands. They renewed contacts with the traditional leaders of these regions, confirmed the agreements made with them before the war and gradually swept aside the supporters of the new Republic. Faced with this *fait accompli*, the British finally agreed, on 15 July 1946, to hand over the entire Indonesian territory, apart from Java and Sumatra, to the Dutch military command. The former colonial power thus reclaimed complete control over a significant part of the country.

The circumstances of the Masyumi leaders’ experience of the Revolution greatly influenced their political leanings. Three towns were particularly important in the history of the laborious emergence of Masyumi’s political identity. In Jakarta, which was occupied by the Allies from the end of September 1945, there were few opportunities for the pemuda to cause political wrangling or disorder. It was here that diplomacy was carried out, even after the departure of the government in January 1946. For the political officials who lived there, Jakarta was at the centre of international diplomatic proceedings, a place where *realpolitik* prevailed. Yogyakarta, on the other hand, was a bustling hub of militia activity where impending combat loomed, and it had been the spiritual home of the Indonesian National Revolution since August 1945. It was militarily more secure than Jakarta and became the headquarters for the new Republic’s administration in January 1946. Surakarta, also known as Solo, which harboured an old rivalry with Yogyakarta, was the natural headquarters for the opponents to the Sjahrir government. It hosted meetings between some of Masyumi’s leaders and the leaders of Persatuan Perjuangan, the Struggle Union, which brought together the prime minister’s opponents. Between November 1945 and July 1947, the Muslim party, like many other political parties, hesitated—or rather, was divided—as to which path to follow between participation in government and opposition, between revolutionary idealism and diplomatic pragmatism. The causes of this “schizophrenia” have already been touched on earlier: it can be attributed to the different geographic origins of the party’s leaders but also

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43 In 1755, the Kingdom of Mataram split into two principalities: Yogyakarta and Surakarta.
to their different social milieus. The different elective affinities between political figures also played a role, as can be seen in the friendship between Sukarno, Soekiman and Tan Malaka, on the one hand, and the close ties between Sjahrir, Natsir and Agus Salim, on the other. These first two years of the Revolution saw, then, the slow emergence of Masyumi as a party of government, which we will come back to later. It was, however, a mutation brought about by a small group within the party who had no means of communicating their message through propaganda or through spectacular accomplishments. The vast majority of the party faithful only gradually and reluctantly abandoned their revolutionary identity, under the guidance of Masyumi’s most senior leaders.

A Revolutionary Party in Opposition

_Sjahrir’s First Cabinet: The Definition of Masyumi’s Political Line_

The transformation of the political system into a multi-party one led rapidly to the formation of a parliamentary cabinet. The obvious choice to head the cabinet was Sutan Sjahrir, a vanguard member of the intransigent Indonesian resistance to the Japanese. He represented a more favourable alternative to the presidential cabinet, which had been criticised for containing ministers who had collaborated with the Japanese. The first Sjahrir government, which was formed on 14 November 1945, was composed mainly of members of his own political party, the PSI. Sjahrir himself occupied the position of minister for foreign affairs and also minister for home affairs, as well as that of prime minister. Amir Sjarifuddin, the other powerful political figure in the cabinet and also a member of the PSI, was given two portfolios: the Ministry of Security and the Ministry of Information. All those who had collaborated with the Japanese occupier were excluded from power, and only one Masyumi member, Rasjidi, was included in the cabinet.\(^{44}\) Although he did not initially have a portfolio, he was later put in charge of the new Ministry of Religions which was created when the government

\(^{44}\) Rasjidi explained to me in March 1992 in Jakarta that he had never actually formally joined Masyumi but was widely considered to be one of its representatives.
moved to Yogyakarta in January 1946. The transfer of the government to Yogyakarta coincided with the nomination to cabinet of a second Masyumi member, Mohammad Natsir, who replaced Amir Sjarifuddin as minister for information. However, Rasjidi and Natsir's decision to participate in government was a personal one rather than a party one. The Masyumi leadership, influenced by the revolutionary atmosphere that reigned in Yogyakarta, adopted a policy of systematic opposition to the new government. This position was illustrated in a document entitled *The Masyumi Manifesto concerning the Change of the Cabinet of Ministers*, outlining the party’s grievances with the new government, which was published shortly after the nomination of Sjahrir as prime minister.\(^{45}\) The manifesto drew attention to the fact that the Indonesian constitution was only a few months old (“a brief instant in relation to historical time which is measured in years and centuries”), stating that it had not been “created precipitously, particularly concerning its principles” and that it had availed of “the past experiences of several famous countries across the world in relation to systems of government”. It went on to denounce the formation of a parliamentary cabinet as contrary to the provisions of the recently adopted constitution which provided for a presidential system that was much better adapted to the demands of the moment.\(^{46}\) The manifesto also hinted at a certain bitterness amongst the party leadership. Two of its members, Abikusno Tjokrosujoso and Wahid Hasjim, had been passed over for cabinet positions because of implied accusations of collaboration. The manifesto called this a “spurious pretext” given that “a large portion of the cabinet” was composed of “people who collaborated with both the Japanese and the Dutch.” Finally, it put forward another argument that was to be a recurring element of Masyumi’s opposition to Sjahrir, namely that it “was neither the place nor the time for the government to organise negotiations, particularly with the Dutch”.

By the end of November 1945, then, the main points of Masyumi’s political stance had been defined, and its leaders were to defend

\(^ {45}\) *Manifest Masjoemi berhoeboeng dengan pergantian Dewan Kementerian*, published by the party leadership alongside the congress resolutions voted on 7 and 8 November 1945.

\(^ {46}\) “The only general obligation is unity and the rallying together of the forces of the Indonesian people, young and old of all groups, around a government for whom support is as widespread as possible, including all the revolutionary groups and movements (who are not opposed to the way of God)”. Ibid.
them over the following two years. The party called for the reestablishment of a system of national government led by the president, an absolute refusal to enter into negotiations with the Dutch unless they first recognized Indonesian independence, and the removal of the tandem formed by Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin. This policy led Masyumi early in 1946 to join a coalition of opposition set up by Tan Malaka, one of the main figures of the Indonesian Marxist movement. Malaka had already approached Sjahrir in an attempt to convince him to make a move against Sukarno and Hatta, but during a tour of Java, Sjahrir had been able to gauge the level of support enjoyed by the president, and he declined this offer. This refusal, however, did not lead Tan Malaka to rally behind Sukarno. Having abandoned the idea of entering into direct confrontation with Sukarno and Hatta, he asked them to write a sort of “political testament” wherein he would be their successor in the event of their deaths. The two leaders agreed to his proposal but modified its terms when they drafted the document, proposing instead a quadrumvirate representing the new Republic’s main political currents. Power was to be divided between Tan Malaka, representing the left’s Marxist wing; the socialist Sjahrir; Wongsonegoro who defended the interests of the aristocracy and the old line of state functionaries; and Iwa Kusumasumantri, political Islam’s representative. However, Tan Malaka, with the complicity of Subardjo, whom he had grown close to since the latter’s removal from government, fabricated a fake will in which Sukarno and Hatta designated him as the sole beneficiary of their powers. He then travelled across Java brandishing this document and claiming that as Sukarno and Hatta had been imprisoned by the British, he was to inherit all their powers. This manoeuvre, which obliged Sukarno to leave the capital and go on a tour of the republican territories to deny the rumour, was, according to Kahin, one of the reasons for the government’s transfer to Yogyakarta.

A few weeks after the failure of his ruse, Tan Malaka created, on 15 January 1946, Persatuan Perjuangan (Struggle Union), a coalition which was soon to contain 137 organisations and which received the support of General Sudirman, chief of staff of the armed forces. Masyumi, through its representative Wali al-Fatah, occupied a prominent

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47 Kusumasumantri was Subardjo’s candidate and was preferred over Soekiman, who was, at the time, in Central Java.

place in the new organisation’s governing body. Persatuan Perjuangan united the country’s opposition and it quickly adopted a programme entitled “the Seven Pillars of the Indonesian Revolution.” It called for negotiations on the basis of total independence, popular government, a citizen army, disarmament of the Japanese, confiscation of property held by Europeans and, finally, the requisition and management of plantations and factories. This programme was approved by the Working Committee in the KNIP, which called upon the people to adopt its objectives. During its first party congress in Solo from 10 to 13 February 1946, Masyumi adopted the main aspects of these demands, though no direct mention was made of Persatuan Perjuangan. It added a particular demand of its own concerning regions inhabited by a majority of Muslims, declaring its wish to see Muslims appointed as heads of local government there.49

The conference in Solo established Masyumi as a party directly opposed to the cabinet. Most of the conference speeches developed the themes laid out a few months earlier in the Manifesto. They also demonstrated a certain conviction that the leaders of political Islam had a greater natural legitimacy to lead the nation’s struggle for independence than the government, which they judged to be unrepresentative of the people. Although the party never went as far as to call for open rebellion against Sjahrir’s cabinet, nor indeed for the withdrawal of the two Masyumi members from government, it constantly highlighted the legitimacy and reasonableness of their demands as those of the Muslim community, the overwhelmingly largest community in the country. Nonetheless, the insistence with which these demands were made did lead one to think that in the minds of at least a section of the Masyumi leadership, failure to meet these demands could open the door to much more radical means of political expression.50

The Second Sjahrir Cabinet—The Political Realignment of Masyumi towards the Centre Ground

Faced with such strong opposition to his cabinet, Sjahrir resigned on 28 February 1946. Sukarno subsequently invited Persatuan Perjuangan

49 Al-Djihad, 15 February 1946.
50 Abikoesno Tjokrosudjoso, for example, declared that “although Masyumi had five million armed men behind it, it did not wish to abuse this power and so had called for a coalition cabinet in Parliament.” Al-Djihad, 16 February 1946.
to form a new government, but when it proved unable to do so, he offered the position of prime minister once again to Sjahrir. Shortly after his reappointment, a new cabinet was announced. It was a bit more diverse this time round and included Masyumi members. Mohammad Natsir kept his position as minister for information, Rasjidi officially became minister for religions, while Arudji Kartawinata was named deputy minister for defence and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara became deputy minister for finance. Like in Sjahrir’s first cabinet, these ministers’ participation in the government was an individual decision rather than a party one. After 10 days of indecisiveness, the party leadership finally decided to adopt the same position as the Persatuan Perjuangan not to support the new government. However, no measures were taken to demand the Masyumi ministers to act in accordance with the party’s decision.

On 17 March 1946, the government took firm action to provisionally put an end to the machinations of Persatuan Perjuangan. During a rally organised in protest at the formation of the new Sjahrir cabinet, Tan Malaka and six members of the organisation’s leadership were arrested. Of these, two were members of Masyumi: Abikusno Tjokrosujoso and Wondoamisen.\(^{51}\) The setback that this inflicted on the Persatuan Perjuangan leadership, particularly the arrest of Abikusno, led Masyumi to tone down its demands towards the government and realign itself politically towards the middle ground. On 11 May 1946, the Muslim party took part in the birth of a new organisation, named Konsentrasi Nasional (National Concentration), which for the most part took on board the policies of Persatuan Perjuangan, but did away with its systematic opposition to the government in favour of a more constructive form of criticism.\(^{52}\) It consisted of 31 political organisations, some of which were favourable towards Sjahrir, and was presided over by Sardjono, the new leader of the PKI.

Masyumi’s participation in this new organisation did not signify, however, that it had now aligned itself politically with Sjahrir’s new cabinet. The Muslim party maintained close links with its former partners in Pesatuan Perjuangan, and at the end of May, shortly after the

\(^{51}\) They were sent to the rally as observers, according to Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. 178.

\(^{52}\) The somewhat ambiguous attitude of this new coalition has led George McTournal Kahin (Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. 183) to conclude that it was initiated by the government. This seems unlikely to me.
foundation of National Concentration, it signed a “Joint Proclamation” (
*Maklumat Bersama*) with the Indonesian Labour Party (Partai Buruh
Indonesia) and the Indonesian Labour Front (Barisan Buruh Indonesia). This proclamation declared that the government’s
diplomatic efforts were at an impasse (*jalan buntu*) because of the
obvious desire on the part of the Dutch to restore their control over the
country. It also called for the formation of a “government composed of
representatives of all political parties, which is the only way to obtain the consensus
necessary for the nation’s fighting power.”

The bleak outlook described in the proclamation concerning the
future prospects of negotiations with the Netherlands was to be con-
firmed in the following weeks. The Dutch elections of 17 May brought
to power a coalition, led by the Catholic right wing, which was against
making any concessions to the Republic’s government and who walked
back on some of its predecessor’s promises. By the beginning of June 1946, the
negotiations had, unsurprisingly, reached an impasse, and
towards the end of the month the political situation also worsened.
On the 27th, a commando group led by General Sudarsono freed
Tan Malaka and the other leaders of Persatuan Perjuangan from their
prison in Surakarta. The same evening, Prime Minister Sjahrir and
several members of his inner circle were taken hostage. The goal of
the operation was to force President Sukarno to replace the government
with a supreme political council made up of 10 members and led by
Tan Malaka, and also to hand over military power to General Sudirman
(under the Constitution, the president was the commander-in-chief
of the armed forces). The president reacted quickly to this attempt
to destabilise him by declaring a state of siege. On 3 July, General
Sudarsono and Muhammad Yamin went to meet Sukarno at the presi-
dential palace, but the president refused point blank to give in to their
demands and had the two men arrested. Meanwhile, although senior
military staff, in particular Sudirman, had refused to intervene in the
situation, the Siliwangi Division, assisted by members of the Pesindo,
occupied Madiun and Surakarta and marched on Yogyakarta to demand
the liberation of the prime minister. Faced with the risk of a civil war,
Sudirman finally allowed Sukarno to convince him to do something

53 *Al-Djihad*, 28 May 1946.
about the situation: he declared his support for Sjahrir and ordered the arrest of those responsible for the operation.\(^{54}\)

The ambivalence of Mayumi’s political stance was manifest in its attitude towards this attempted coup d’état. One of the vice-chairmen of its religious council was a member of the political council chaired by Tan Malaka,\(^{55}\) but conflicting testimony has been given concerning the position adopted by Masyumi’s president, Soekiman. He was among the political representatives who turned up at the presidential palace to demand the dissolution of Sjahrir’s cabinet, and he allegedly declared, according to one of the organisers of the operation, Muhammad Yamin, that by making these demands they were merely exercising their right to petition (implementasi hak petisi).\(^{56}\) However, according to Hatta, who was also present at the meeting on 3 July, Soekiman had been duped into going to the presidential palace. General Sudarsono allegedly asked him to come along to listen to a presidential announcement of great importance, and then presented his attendance there as a sign of his support for the group’s demands. Soekiman, who had been waiting in an adjoining room, is said to have left the palace immediately once he had been informed by Hatta of Sudarsono’s real intentions.\(^{57}\)

Masyumi’s official reaction to these events was adopted on 7 July. The party’s communiqué reaffirmed their loyalty towards President Sukarno, but it nonetheless stopped short of formally denouncing the rebels’ actions. Condemning Sjahrir’s policies, it reiterated the party’s demands: the formation of a coalition government and the breaking off of all negotiations with the Dutch. Above all, the party denounced the tendentious account of the events given by the government, which presented the operation as a plot designed to undermine the authority of the state, and called for all political prisoners, with the exception of spies, to be either released or given a speedy trial in accordance with the laws of the Republic.\(^{58}\)

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\(^{54}\) Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, pp. 188–92. Curiously enough, Kahin gives the date of the attempted coup d’état as 2 July, when in fact it took place the following day.


\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 161.


\(^{58}\) *Al-Djihad*, 9 July 1946.
The Third Sjahrir Cabinet: Masyumi’s Opposition to the Linggadjati Agreement

On 2 October 1946, the Republic’s institutions were back in proper functioning order with a presidential decree entrusting executive power to Sjahrir’s recently formed third cabinet. The new government was more diverse than its predecessors, and among it were eight Masyumi members or sympathisers. Mohamad Roem was named as minister for home affairs, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara was appointed minister for finance, Faturrachman was in charge of the Ministry of Religion, Natsir was deputy minister to A.R. Baswedan in the Ministry of Information, Jusuf Wibisono became deputy minister for prosperity, H. Agus Salim deputy minister for foreign affairs, Harsono Tjokroaminoto deputy minister for defence, and finally K.H. Wahid Hasjim became a minister without portfolio.

Although the Muslim party was very well-represented in cabinet, this did not prevent Masyumi from having another falling out with the government. On 24 November, having consulted with the representatives of GPII, Muslimaat, the Hizboellah and Sabilillah militias as well as its main constituent organisations, the party leadership refused to support the agreement reached between the Republic of Indonesia and the Netherlands which had been signed on 17 October in the mountain health resort of Linggadjati, near Cirebon. The agreement provided for the immediate recognition by the Dutch of the de facto power of the Republic in Java and Sumatra, the creation by 1 January 1949 of a federal democratic state, the United States of Indonesia, and finally the establishment of a Netherlands-Indonesian Union. Masyumi’s main reservation with the agreement was that it did not formally recognise Indonesian independence. Given that the Republic was considered to be legitimate only in Java and Sumatra, this implied that the resistance struggle on the other islands had to be abandoned. It was difficult for them to accept that, especially since the Dutch, only a few weeks beforehand, had established, unilaterally and in violation

59 Hadji Agus Salim was often named either as a Masyumi member or as a member of PSII. He had been one of PSII’s leaders before the war and was very close to the modernists in Masyumi, but in actual fact he was a member of neither party after the war.

60 *Al-Djihad*, 27 October 1946.
of previous agreements, the State of East Indonesia. On 12 December 1946, on the initiative of Masyumi, a federation of all the organisations and militias opposed to the agreement was formed. It was symbolically christened Benteng Republik (Republican Fortress) and it adopted precise organisational rules, and a four-point programme which aimed at:

…making the entire population aware of the necessity to refuse the Dutch-Indonesian agreement; demanding the formation of an assembly which had the confidence of all the people; preparing for the aftermath of the agreement’s rejection; demanding the immediate commencement of trials for political prisoners with a view to the immediate release of those who were innocent.

It was in this context of violent opposition to the diplomatic policy of Sjahrir’s third cabinet that Sukarno decided to adjust the balance of power in favour of his prime minister. A presidential decree issued on 29 December 1946 increased the number of seats in the KNIP from 200 to 514. Of the 314 new members, only 93 held seats as representatives of a political party, the other 221 had been chosen as representatives either of the various interest groups such as peasants or industrial workers, or of regions outside Java. This new composition was at first refused by the KNIP’s Working Committee who saw in it a manoeuvre by Sukarno in favour of Sajap Kiri, a left-wing coalition which supported the prime minister. It was finally accepted on 5 March 1947 after a forceful speech by Vice President Mohammad Hatta, who warned that both he and the president would resign if the new composition was not approved. Masyumi and the PNI left the plenary session in protest. The Muslim party, despite its number of representatives going from 35 to 65, suffered an overall loss of power.

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61 It contained an executive council, a political council and a defence council, and motions were to be carried by a qualified majority.
62 Al-Djihad, 13 December 1946.
63 Sajap Kiri, meaning “left wing”, was composed of the Socialist Party, the PKI, the Pesindo, the Partai Buruh and the Christian parties.
64 Noer, Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional, p. 167.
65 This loss of power was somewhat attenuated by the fact that the new Working Committee comprised five Masyumi members (S.M. Kartosuwirjo, Mahmud L. Latjuba, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Mr Samsuddin and Mohammad Sardjan) as well as a representative of Sarekat Tani Islam Indonesia, Abu Umar.
During a plenary conference held by the party between 19 and 20 March in Yogyakarta, Masyumi set out in a document entitled “Urgency Programme”, all its grievances and demands concerning the Sjahrir government. This relatively short text containing the resolutions made by the party was published shortly afterwards by the leadership, accompanied by a 40-page commentary, which mainly attempted to impugn the government’s legitimacy to rule. The principal demand made was for a democratic government, which was a direct response to the president’s new nominations. Masyumi called for the repeal of the government’s decree that applied the president’s decision and demanded the election, within four months, of an assembly based on genuine popular sovereignty. The commentary concerning the first point implicitly developed the notion, which we have already seen, that Indonesia’s institutions lacked legitimacy. It affirmed that in a country under the control either of a single man—a raja, a king or a dictator—or of a “little group of feudal aristocrats”, “the people were given no other choice but to follow the law without being able to participate in the elaboration of those laws or without being entitled to either control or oversee how the country was being run, and thus [they could] not feel responsible for the destiny of their country.” The leadership sent out a warning to the government:

For this reason, when this government, which is not supported by the people, suffers at some stage or other some ill fate, it will be overturned and destroyed by its own people because it is not a government in accordance with the wishes of the people, who for their part are convinced that all their misfortunes are due to the fact that it is governed arbitrarily.

While the nomination of deputies to the KNIP was justified at the outset of the new Republic, in the eyes of the senior members of

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67 It is interesting to note that most of the party’s direct criticisms of and threats towards the government were contained in this official commentary (published with the approval of the party’s executive committee) and not in the Urgency Programme. It reveals the internal debates which were going on within the party on which opposition strategy to adopt towards the government.


69 Ibid., p. 5.
the Muslim party, they considered that the absence of elections and the expansion of the Assembly through nominations were “in persistent opposition to democratic principles”. According to them, the two arguments advanced by the “undemocratic” side, which were the illiteracy and the political immaturity of the people as well as the impossibility of organising elections, did not stand up to analysis: “you cannot raise the spectre of the people’s lack of political intelligence, for there exists no country in the world where the entire population has this political intelligence”. The party recognised the logistical difficulties surrounding the organisation of an election, and pointed out that although it should in principle be a general election, it could, for the moment at least, be an indirect election. However, Masyumi demanded the establishment of an electoral college (one elector for every 250 citizens) and objected to allowing parliamentary deputies to be appointed by the existing local and regional assemblies who, “for the most part, had not been democratically elected”.

The second point developed by the programme was a plea for the army to remain revolutionary. The resolutions concerning questions of national defence and the commentaries that accompanied them revealed the party’s apprehension about the government’s plan to professionalise the army. This plan was termed “rationalisation” and aimed at progressively integrating militia groups into the regular army. The Masyumi position on this plan was based on two somewhat contradictory concerns. The first of these was a suspicion that the army would be politicised, and that this would be to the advantage of one of the factions within the army which supported the government. The party leadership demanded the dissolution of the “Inspection Offices for the Armed Struggle” (Inspektorat-inspektorat Bureau Perdjoeangan), which they opposed as organisations that were “clearly acting as the zealots of a political party’s ideology”. The target of this attack was the PSI and particularly those members of it who were close to Amir Sjarifuddin, the minister for defence. These inspection offices were accused of having set up parallel military organisations that were controlled by the minister’s henchmen. All of Masyumi’s constituent organisations were

70 Ibid., p. 6.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid., p. 9.
73 Ibid., p. 3.
therefore asked not to participate in any of these bodies’ activities. This boycott had already been voted by the Barisan Sabilillah during its conference on 13 and 14 April 1947, and the GPII refused to allow the Barisan Republik Muda and the Asrama Republik, both of which had been created by the Inspection Office, to join their organisation.\(^7^4\)

Masyumi was also opposed, however, to the creation of a professional army cut off from its roots among the people. It laid heavy emphasis on the importance of the mobilisation of the people after the proclamation of independence, contrasting the heroic struggle of the masses “unparalleled in the entire history of Indonesia” with “the partisan politicians who arrived on the scene late in the day with the sole aim of leading and showing the way”.\(^7^5\) The mobilisation of the people had taken place from a very early stage, guaranteeing the army a place of precedence in revolutionary mythology. The armed struggle had revealed the people’s worth; they had

…found in it a new spirit, a heroic spirit which allowed them to defeat the Japanese army easily, to confront, with ease also, the English army…to contain and resist against the Dutch colonial military force, which is the size of an international army. […] It was neither diplomatic skill nor political perseverance nor the intellectual experts nor the crafty politicians who won independence, but rather the heroes covered in blood.\(^7^6\)

Maintaining popular militia groups also served the interests of national security, of course, which it would have been “reactionary and dangerous” to weaken, given that a threat still existed: “the enemy of independence […] has perhaps laid down his arms” but he “has not yet been destroyed”. Above all, the existence of this revolutionary army had a political justification:

The militia groups constituted a guarantee of the people’s aspirations, so that the government would maintain the confidence of the Revolution; a guarantee which an official army, which would be completely under the control of the government and would thus become its instrument, could not provide.\(^7^7\)

\(^7^4\) Ibid., p. 14.
\(^7^5\) Ibid., p. 12.
\(^7^6\) Ibid., p. 13.
\(^7^7\) Ibid., p. 20.
The same analysis of the Revolution can be found in the criticisms which were outlined in the third resolution of the plenary congress, entitled “In Response to the Linggadjati Document”. Masyumi challenged the government’s outlook for the future, which considered that the armed conflict was finished and that a new stage of the Revolution was about to begin. It criticized the Ministry of Information, despite the fact that it was run by Natsir, for having co-authored with the Dutch authorities a joint communiqué which expressed the hope “that between the Indonesian nation and the Dutch nation, a spirit of real comprehension would appear, and that feelings of bitterness and vengeance would be rejected”. The joint reduction in arms provided for in the Linggadjati Agreement left the Netherlands with a significant strategic advantage, due to the superiority of their equipment, and, more importantly, sanctioned the Dutch occupation of part of the Republic’s territory. These were all concessions that the Muslim party refused to endorse. The resolution referred to the fact that during the parliamentary session which ratified the agreement, the party had clearly indicated that it would not consider itself bound by the agreement if it came to be signed. Naturally, the party called for the struggle to be continued and also to be broadened to include all areas of society:

The battlefields, which today contain more traps and dangers due to the coming into force of the agreement, have become more and more vast. There is a military struggle, a political struggle, a social struggle, an economic struggle, a spiritual struggle (in the areas of religion, upbringing, education and science) and many others.

The need to continue the struggle in all areas gave the authors of the commentaries on the Urgency Programme the opportunity to call to order party members participating in the government. The document also reveals certain disagreements within the party, which we will come back to later: “Masyumi has supported its leadership and called for greater respect for party discipline from some of its representatives who are part of the government, the KNIP and the parliamentary committees.”

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78 Ibid., p. 23.
79 Ibid., p. 25.
80 Ibid., p. 27.
81 Ibid.
The last section of the Urgency Programme stipulated that the struggle against the occupied forces should not be confined to Java. The party leadership called on its members to “intensify their spiritual and material efforts which will strengthen the union and the unity of all the regions of Indonesia which some today would like to like to see broken up.” These efforts, the commentary specified, should notably take the form of infiltration operations on Kalimantan, Sulawesi, the Maluku Islands and the Lesser Sunda Islands. In these regions, “small groups with money and a plan must provide, by peaceful means or otherwise, anything which could help those regional Muslim communities in their struggle.”

Masyumi’s firm commitment to the continuation of an armed struggle against Holland heightened tensions further in the country. Under pressure from some sections of the Catholic party, as well as the conservative right, to be more intransigent towards the republicans, the Dutch government finalised, on 27 May 1947, the terms of an ultimatum which amounted to placing the Republic under Dutch federal control. The Sjahrir government was caught between a desire to resist Dutch pressure and an urge to nonetheless maintain dialogue with the former colonial power. Sjahrir was abandoned by his own majority coalition, Sajap Kiri, and resigned on 27 June.

The End of the Myth of Unity

Since the end of 1946, there had been increasing tensions within the Masyumi leadership. Although the party was somewhat compromised by the increasing number of “individual” participants in the government, it continued to criticise the pursuance of negotiations with Holland, one of the main planks of the government’s policy. However, the prospect of entering government began to whet people’s appetites for power. The different wings within the party, which up until now had been united around a clear policy and the simple watchwords dictated by the Revolution, began to assert themselves. Former leaders of Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia had for some time been convinced

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82 Resolution 4a of the Urgency Programme.
that they had not been given the position they deserved within the party and they seized the opportunity offered by the formation of a new government.

Amir Sjarifuddin, who was appointed prime minister by the president, was far more hostile towards Masyumi than Sjahrir had been. The former defence minister had not forgotten the virulent attacks on his defence policy made by the Muslim party. Politically, however, he could not do without the approval of the representatives of Islam, and so he looked favourably on the proposal made by Wondoamiseno and Arudji Kartawinata to reform PSII in exchange for seats at the cabinet table. The newly re-formed party received six seats in the cabinet, which was formed on 3 July 1947. Wondoamiseno was named minister for home affairs, Sjahbudin Latif deputy minister for information, Arudji Kartawinata deputy minister of defence, Sukoso Wirjosaputro deputy minister for social affairs, and H. Anwaruddin minister for religions. Feelings ran high in Masyumi after this. The re-emergence of the PSII had destroyed what, until then, was the almost sacred principle of the Muslim community’s political unity. With Soekiman’s party no longer the sole representative of the umma, its position was clearly weakened. In the medium term, this no doubt encouraged the party to adopt a more realistic and less intransigent stance, but in the short term, it meant that Masyumi, for the first time since the proclamation of independence, was simply another opposition party without any real leverage over the government.

This latest discord between the Muslim party and the government was short-lived, however. The Indonesian government’s refusal to give in to Dutch demands led the Netherlands to launch their first “police action” against the Republic’s territories on the 21 July 1947. In less

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84 According to George McTurnan Kahin, the revival of PSII took place against the wishes of its former president Abikusno Tjokrosujoso who, at the time, was in prison for his involvement in the events which took place during the summer of 1946. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 210. Moreover, two other PSII leaders, Kartosuwirjo and Anwar Tjokroaminoto, also disapproved of this initiative. Kartosuwirjo refused the position of deputy minister for defence and both of them remained part of Masyumi’s executive committee. Susan Finch and Daniel Lev, Republic of Indonesia Cabinets, 1945–1965 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 11; Noer, Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional, p. 170.

85 It was K. Achmad Asj’ari, also a member of PSII, who had initially been nominated to this position but he was not able to leave Sumatra to take up office.

86 To use the term employed by the Dutch authorities.
than two weeks, Dutch armoured columns, backed up by strong aerial support, made deep inroads into republican territory. Most of the towns and ports of East Java and West Java, as well as the richest areas of Sumatra, were occupied. For the most part, the Indonesian armed forces did not engage directly with the advancing forces, preferring instead to take refuge, according to a pre-established plan, in remote areas which were difficult to access. However, the speed of the Dutch advancement prevented their adversaries from stowing away the planned amount of food and military equipment. The Dutch troops had managed to get their hands on most of the means of food production in republican territory and since the beginning of the blockade had cut off production.

This “first Dutch aggression”, to employ the term used in Indonesian historiography, can be considered a turning point in the constitution of Masyumi’s political identity. The increased republican unity that it provoked helped the Muslim party to take a decisive step towards committing itself to taking part in running the country’s affairs. This gradual mutation from being a revolutionary party and an intransigent advocate of total independence to becoming a party of government had been prepared, as we will see, by a small group of men. It did not come about smoothly, however, and the party’s period in opposition left a permanent mark on the burgeoning political consciousness of the Muslim community.

The theme of the arithmetic legitimacy of an Islamic majority which trumped the government’s illegitimacy was a recurrent one in Masyumi’s propaganda. It no doubt contributed to the emergence of some of the arguments used to justify the rebellions carried out by Darul Islam and, to a certain extent, by the PRRI, the revolutionary government in Sumatra that certain Masyumi leaders were associated with from 1958 onwards. In short, at the same time as the conditions for Masyumi’s political success were appearing, the seeds of contestation which would lead to its downfall were being sown.

The Emergence of a Party of Government

Between autumn 1945 and summer 1947, Masyumi was more than just the revolutionary party and standard-bearer for unconditional independence which we have just described. A few men, who were not yet very influential within the party, were already preparing it for government. On the occasion of the transferral of the Republic’s capital from
Jakarta to Yogyakarta on 3 January 1946, Mohammad Natsir was appointed minister for information. He became a focal point for the political forces within Masyumi which were prepared to support Sjahrir’s policies. A few weeks after Natsir’s appointment, one of his close allies, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, secretary of the KNIP’s Working Committee, formulated their political credo:

Japanese flattery has exaggerated the importance of semangat [enthusiasm] beyond all limits and has derided and aroused hatred for akal [reason] as though akal were simply a Western invention—an invention of the imperialists and capitalists, which has had an evil influence upon our people.\(^{87}\)

According to Sjafruddin, this revolutionary spirit had led to the formulation of unrealistic demands by otherwise well-intentioned young people. He recalled the examples provided by Lenin and Stalin (examples which no doubt were not chosen randomly), whom he described as “great realists, often attacked by their own less clear-sighted juniors”,\(^{88}\) and denounced Indonesian socialists’ incomprehension of their own ideology. The popular enthusiasm that sent out young people armed only with bamboo spears to fight the allied forces with their firearms was, according to him, “stupid if not criminal”.\(^{89}\) He denounced the ignorance of a large part of the population concerning Indonesia’s military and diplomatic weakness, and encouraged his fellow countrymen to support Sjahrir’s realpolitik. The influence of this small group of men grew rapidly in the months that followed. At the next cabinet reshuffle in March 1946, Natsir was joined in government by Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, Arudji Kartawinata and Agus Salim. Agus Salim, who was on the fringes of the Muslim party due to his falling out with Soekiman, was something of a spiritual mentor to the other two.\(^{90}\)

Shortly after the creation of the new government, Natsir was sent to Sumatra, which was in the throes of a social revolution, in order to

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\(^{89}\) Ibid.

re-establish the central government’s authority. His skill in managing this difficult task led him to acquire, in the corridors of power, a new stature and allowed him to work at bringing his party and the government closer together.

The relationship between the Masyumi leadership and the government was not devoid of ambiguity. Although the party was officially in opposition, it tolerated, as we have already seen, the individual decisions of some of its members to join Sjahrir’s cabinet. During the summer of 1946, however, there were increasing signs that the government and the party were finding more and more common ground. At the end of June, the Muslim party used its propaganda machine to help promote the sale of government bonds which the government had just launched. The abduction of the prime minister and the fallout from this event, which became known as “the Affair of 3 July”, only gave rise to a minor disagreement between Masyumi and the government; later that year in the autumn, during discussions concerning the formation of a new cabinet, the Masyumi leadership submitted to Sjahrir a list of party figures likely to accept a seat in his cabinet, eight of whom ended up joining the government. Two of those eight members were close to Soekiman: Jusuf Wibisono and Wahid Hasjim, the leader of Nahdatul Islam and president of Masyumi’s Majelis Sjuro.

The signing of the Linggadjati Agreement put an end to this rapprochement and led to a direct clash between the party leadership and those party members who were part of the cabinet. Up until that point, in the various resolutions condemning Sjahrir’s policies, Masyumi had always limited itself to calling for the formation of a coalition government. Before the Surakarta Conference on 4 and 5 December 1946, the resignation of Masyumi’s ministers had never been called for. On 24 November, Mohamad Roem had made a speech on the radio in defence of the draft agreement that had just been signed. He asked the Masyumi leadership to defer any vote on the issue in order to give him the time to return to Yogyakarta and defend the government’s position before the party’s governing body. However, on his arrival in the Republic’s capital, he discovered that Masyumi had just announced its rejection of the Linggadjati compromise. In a letter to the leadership, he denounced this decision which was taken without giving the

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92 *Al-Djihad*, 21 June 1946.
Caught between Stability and Revolution

party members sitting in cabinet an opportunity to express themselves, and which was thus in complete contradiction with the principles of democracy and consultation (musjawarah) defended by the party. On 4 and 5 December 1946, a joint congress organised by Masyumi and GPII in Surakarta confirmed the rejection of the agreement. In a joint statement made by the two organisations, they declared that they “counted on the members of Masyumi sitting in the current cabinet to abide loyally by their party’s decision to reject the Dutch-Indonesian agreement”. On 28 December 1946, in response to this warning, the Masyumi ministers meeting in Purwokerto signed the following clarification:

1. The current cabinet is a national cabinet and not a coalition cabinet. Consequently, in accordance with parliamentary rules and political custom, it is not necessary for a party to decide what political position should be adopted by ministers who are its members.

2. For this reason, the Masyumi ministers will settle directly with its leadership problems concerning the decisions taken in the Masyumi congress in Solo.

This dismissal of the party’s injunction was signed by all of the ministers concerned, and it is interesting in more than one respect. Firstly, it demonstrates the signatories’ capacity for independent thought; they were convinced of the legitimacy of their position even when faced with the opposition of their own party. Furthermore, and most significantly, it reveals something very important about the political culture of those concerned. Although they had only been ministers for a few months and despite the fact that the Republic was less than two years old, they referred nonetheless to “parliamentary rules” and to “political custom”. They replied to the religiously inspired dictates of the party leadership by using references to what, in their eyes, was

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95 Kementerian Penerangan Republik Indonesia, Daerah Istimewa Jogjakarta, p. 173.
another norm, namely that of a parliamentary regime inspired by the West. It is here that we can see the first signs of what was to characterise Masyumi under Natsir's leadership.

The Dutch attack, in July 1947, against the Republic’s territories initially boosted political unity within the fledgling state. Masyumi, which had up until that point been opposed to Amir Sjarifuddin's government, agreed to join it and on 11 November 1947, a new cabinet was formed. The Muslim party was given a prominent place at the cabinet table, to the detriment mainly of PSII. Masyumi received five cabinet seats on top of Agus Salim's portfolio as minister for foreign affairs. Samsuddin became the first deputy prime minister, Kasman Singodimedjo was named deputy justice minister, Mohammed Roem became minister for home affairs, K.H. Masjkur was appointed minister for religions, while Anwar Tjokroaminoto became a minister without portfolio. This participation in government, the first to be really organised and assumed by the party, did not last long, however. Masyumi was opposed to the diplomatic concessions made by Amir Sjarifuddin, and withdrew its support for the government. On 16 January, on the eve of the signing of the Renville Agreement, its ministers resigned. On 23 January 1948, in Yogyakarta, a demonstration led by Anwar Haryono of the GPII called for the resignation of the entire cabinet, which was duly announced that evening. This created a problematic situation, however, as any new cabinet would have to ensure the execution of an agreement that most political parties rejected. The solution to this problem came in the form of a presidential cabinet led by Mohammad Hatta and made up mainly of a PNI-Masyumi coalition. Masyumi members were given the Ministry of Home Affairs (Soekiman Wirjosandjojo), the Ministry of Information (Mohammad Natsir), the Ministry of Prosperity (Sjafruddin Prawiranegara) and the Ministry of Religion (K.H. Masjkur), while H. Agus Salim remained minister for foreign affairs. It was to this government that the arduous task of dealing with the crisis fell, one which would eventually lead the country towards internationally recognised independence.

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96 H. Agus Salim, however, remained a cabinet member.
98 Shortly beforehand, the PNI had also denounced the agreement and withdrawn its support from Amir Sjarifuddin's government.
On 30 July 1947, India and Australia referred the Indonesian conflict to the UN Security Council. After a period of shuttle diplomacy, the Council decided to form a Good Offices Committee which was to arrive in Indonesia at the end of October. Its members managed to convince the Republic that it had everything to win by transferring their struggle into the political field. Their army's military capacity was limited to guerrilla warfare, and economically the population could not put up with the hardships caused by the Dutch blockade for very much longer. In addition, it became easy for the former colonial authorities, in the areas where they had regained control, to present themselves as the solution to the problems they had created. On 17 and 19 January 1948, the Renville Agreement was signed, which required both sides to respect a border known as the “Van Mook Line”, and which provided for the Republic to become one of the states of a future federal Indonesia. This agreement was more than favourable towards the Dutch and it triggered further machinations by them: in violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the agreement, they encouraged the creation of new political entities, thus further weakening the influence of the Republic in the future federation. In January, the State of Madura was created, followed at the end of February by Pasundan, also known as the State of West Java. Finally, on 9 March 1948, Van Mook announced the establishment of an interim federal government which, in the absence of republican representatives, was entirely composed of Dutch members, and which was to remain in place until the creation of the United States of Indonesia. As George Kahin wrote, it was “merely the old Netherlands Indies regime in new dress and was run by the personnel of the colonial regime with a few anti-Republican Indonesians included to present a better façade.”

In the summer of 1948, the operation, launched almost a year before by the Netherlands, seemed to be on course for success, while the future prospects of the Republic were looking increasingly bleak. The Dutch exploited the emerging Cold War climate in Europe and managed to obtain a certain amount of leniency from the United States. The Americans’ objections remained moderate, and much to the

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99 Named after the Lieutenant Governor General of the time. This line, drawn a few months earlier by the Dutch, gave them control over certain zones into which their troops had not yet entered.

100 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 245.
republicans’ despair, they seemed ready to believe in the Dutch fiction of a federal Indonesia. In the spring of 1948, the Netherlands received 506 million dollars as part of the Marshall Plan, 84 million of which were to be used for the Dutch administration in Indonesia. The Republic was isolated on the international scene, economically stifled and hampered by a domestic situation that was worsening by the day. It only remained for the Dutch, then, to wait until it crumbled, and the last major obstacle to their return to the colony they had abandoned six years earlier would be removed.

Towards Political Coherence

Retrospectively, 1948 appears as the year when things became somewhat clearer, not just for Masyumi but for Indonesian political life in general. Up until that point, public debate was dominated by questions of diplomacy, creating a division in Indonesian politics between pragmatists, who were convinced of the necessity to negotiate with the former colonial power, and idealists, who were opposed to any concession made concerning absolute independence. This division was itself mirrored within Masyumi. Three events, however, contributed to a profound transformation of the Indonesian political landscape: the communist rebellion in Madiun, the emergence of Darul Islam and the second Dutch “police action”. The extent of the threat which the combination of these three crises posed to the young Republic favoured the appearance of a lasting consensus between the main Indonesian political parties by allowing the Republic’s opponents to be clearly identified and subsequently marginalised. This consensus concerned not only the strategy to be adopted in countering the Dutch political manoeuvres, but also the rules necessary for the efficient running of political life.

Madiun or the Emergence of Anti-Communism

As a member of the Indonesian delegation, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara participated in the discussions in the Economic Council for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) which were held in Manilla in 1947. His discussions with other delegates led him to understand that he and his Indonesian colleagues were perceived by many to be communist. He was bothered by this association and on his return to Indonesia, he

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101 Ibid., p. 254.
started writing a booklet entitled Politik dan Demokrasi Kita (Our Politics and Democracy), which was published in mid-1948 and which clarified the relationship between communism and Islam. In it, he recognised the disorderly nature of Indonesian politics, which had led Masyumi, for example, to collaborate with the Communist Party within Persatuan Perjuangan. He also argued for some party discipline to be imposed within political parties so that every party member might be completely in agreement with the party line. He acknowledged, moreover, the necessity for a social doctrine:

Our National Revolution needs an ideology which can guarantee the realisation of social justice. However, I believe that Marxism cannot fulfil that need; in addition, Marxism is contrary to the Constitution. The ideology which is suitable to our society is Religious Socialism, an ideology which is in harmony with the Constitution. Religious Socialism does not abolish individualism, individual initiative and individual responsibility.\textsuperscript{102}

The desire on the part of Masyumi’s leaders to distinguish themselves clearly from communism appeared during the course of 1947.\textsuperscript{103} Up until that point, the actions of the PKI, which did not have any significant political influence, had attracted very little of the party’s attention. In its accounts of communist meetings, Al-Djihad, one of Masyumi’s mouthpieces, never risked making negative comments.\textsuperscript{104} However, in the spring of 1947, relations turned sour between GPII and the Marxist youth movements, testifying yet again to the vanguard role of the pemuda. In May, at the Second Council of the Youth Congress of the Republic of Indonesia (Badan Kongres Pemuda Republik Indonesia, BKPRI), GPII denounced the domination of the Pesindo in the council, and announced that it was withdrawing from the organisation. In August, it—along with other youth organisations, namely Pemuda Demokrat and Pemuda Kristen—formed a Front Nasional Pemuda (FNP) that elected as its president Anwar Haryono, a party

\textsuperscript{102} Quoted by Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 310. We will look at this notion of religious socialism later in Chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{103} The political divisions which existed during the first months of the revolution can nonetheless be analysed from a religious perspective. Further reading on this topic can be found in Merle C. Ricklefs, Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java, c. 1930 to the Present (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), pp. 69–79.

\textsuperscript{104} See, for example, Al-Djihad, 12 February 1946.
This radicalisation of the opposition between communists and non-communists was, naturally, not specific to Indonesia and was due, in large part, to the evolution of the international situation. The emergence of two blocs, encapsulated in the words of the Zhdanov Doctrine in autumn 1947, led to a number of schisms on the fringes of the communist bloc, which were similar to those taking place in Indonesia. Before the year was out, a powerful wing favourable to Moscow had formed within the Indonesian left, and within the Socialist Party differences of opinion were deepening. Amir Sjarifuddin aligned his position increasingly with Moscow’s, and he persuaded Sajap Kiri to adopt a position of systematic opposition to Hatta’s government. This led Sjahrir’s supporters to withdraw from the Partai Sosialis and Sajap Kiri and to found, on 13 February 1948, their own party, the Partai Sosialis Indonesia, which supported Hatta’s cabinet. Shortly after 26 February, Sajap Kiri became the Front Demokrasi Rakjat (FDR), whose main bastions of support were the army (especially the auxiliary forces of the TNI-Masjarakat), and the large trade union federation, SOBSI. Benefitting from the Dutch blockade, which prevented the exchange of books and newspapers with the outside world, communist publications, no doubt heavily subsidised by Moscow, were able to spread their ideas and allow them take a foothold in the towns within the narrow area of republican territory. To counter the growing influence of these political forces close to Moscow, the government released the leaders of Persatuan Perjuangan, who immediately created the Gerakan Revolusi Rakjat (GRR) under the leadership of Tan Malaka. This new organisation was hostile to the FDR, and Hatta backed its programme, declaring it to be “a national programme of resistance and union”. In addition, the cabinet initiated a rationalisation programme for the army which gradually removed its auxiliary units, thus depriving the FDR of its armed wing.

In one sense, this policy served the interests of Masyumi, who had for several months denounced the systematic infiltration of the armed forces carried out by Amir Sjarifuddin’s supporters. At the same time, however, the Muslim party feared that its own militia would come under threat. At its third party congress held in the Javanese town

106 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 253.
of Madiun from 27 to 31 March, it adopted a resolution asking the government to recognise the legality of the Hizboellah and Sabilillah militia groups.\textsuperscript{107} In August 1948, Musso, one of communism’s prestigious leaders, returned from Prague and took over the leadership of the PKI. Under his leadership, the Proletarian Party, Murba, and Amir Sjarifuddin’s Socialist Party decided to join with the Communist Party, thus ensuring it the control of the FDR, which subsequently became known as the PKI-Musso.\textsuperscript{108} During the summer of 1948, there was an increasing number of clashes between the military wings of different factions, and then at the beginning of September, large-scale confrontations took place between, on the one hand, FDR troops—namely the Pesindo and AMRI\textsuperscript{109}—and on the other, pro-government armed forces—in particular the Barisan Banteng militia controlled by Tan Malaka and the Siliwangi Division. In Surakarta, the pro-government forces began to gain the upper hand, and the communist troops were ejected from the town on 17 September. This setback, according to Kahin, was no doubt what encouraged certain militia commanders to take action without deferring to the PKI’s leaders, and to undertake on 18 December the military phase of a plan which had already been hatched within the FDR in June, consisting in taking control of Madiun.\textsuperscript{110}

On 20 September, a revolutionary government with Amir Sjarifuddin at its head was formed in Madiun. However, the rebellion was ill-prepared and did not win over the popular support it had hoped for. By 30 September, forces loyal to the government, notably the Siliwangi Division which distinguished itself during the fighting, had regained control of the city. Abandoning Madiun, the rebel forces hoped to find refuge in the surrounding mountains where they would be able to wait for the next Dutch attack which, they felt, was imminent. As they were fleeing Madiun, pursued by government forces, they executed numerous government officials, symbols of the administration they despised, and Masyumi members in particular were victims of these attacks.\textsuperscript{111}

\begin{footnotesize}
109 \textit{Angkatan Muda Republik Indonesia}, Young Generation of the Republic of Indonesia.
110 Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia}, p. 290.
111 Ibid., p. 300.
\end{footnotesize}
7 December 1948, the military staff of the TNI announced the end of the rebellion; the death of its leaders, in particular Musso and Amir Sjarifuddin, meant that the Indonesian communist movement was to remain rudderless for the foreseeable future.

The Madiun uprising was a traumatic episode in the Republic’s history which gave rise to a virulent form of anti-communism amongst the leaders of political Islam. Throughout the period of liberal democracy, it was referred to constantly in their speeches and was an essential element in the party’s pro-coalition policy.112

**Darul Islam—The Temptation of Radicalism**

While the communist groups’ growing opposition to the government contributed to Masyumi’s rapprochement with the coalition in power,

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112 Even if some sections of the communist movement did not take part in the uprising, the FDR branches in Sumatra and Bantam, for example, remained loyal to the government. Ibid., p. 300.
the emergence of a radical Islamic movement in West Java also obliged it to break with the populist intransigence which had heretofore inspired much of its policy. In accordance with the Renville Agreement signed in January 1948, republican forces, including militia groups, were to withdraw from the territory controlled by the Dutch, situated to the west of the “Van Mook Line”. Close to 4,000 men refused to comply with this directive, most of whom were members of Hizboellah and Sabilillah hailing from villages in the region. These combatants had taken up arms to defend their land and their religion, and at each break in hostilities, they returned to their homes. It was thus very difficult for them to leave their families and to abandon a struggle for the sake of political considerations, when up until that point, their struggle had been successful. One of Masyumi’s founders, Kartosuwirjo, held a certain sway over the youth organisations in West Java.\(^{113}\) In the years leading up to the war, he used the “Suffa Institute” in Garut to instil dozens of young people with an anti-Dutch, and indeed an anti-West, attitude.\(^{114}\) Within Masyumi, Kartosuwirjo had been one of those who adopted a hard-line stance towards the Dutch. His disappointment with what he saw as his party’s lack of firmness towards the Sjahrir government led him to distance himself from it somewhat and give up his seat on the party’s executive committee. He remained, however, its representative in West Java, and in 1947, he had refused to participate in the reconstruction of PSII, explaining that he “still felt a sense of duty towards Masyumi”.\(^{115}\) It was on behalf of Masyumi that he founded, in November 1947, two new organisations: the Defence Council of the Islamic Community (Dewan Pertahanan Ummat Islam) in Garut, and the Council of the Indonesian Islamic Community (Majelis Ummat Islam Indonesia) in Tasikmalaya.

After the signing of the Renville Agreement, however, a split with Masyumi became inevitable. Although the Muslim party was opposed

\(^{113}\) Sekarmaji Marjan Kartosuwiryo was born in 1905 in East Java. His family belonged to what in the early 20th century was called the “low-priyayi” class and he was himself educated in the Dutch school system, at least until his expulsion from Surabaya medical school in 1927. On his life and political activity before the outbreak of the rebellion, see Chiara Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in 20th Century Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), pp. 15–77.


to the solution envisaged by the agreement, it had gradually become one of the parties of government and, as such, it had to bear responsibility for the agreement’s execution. In March 1948, Kartosuwisirjo organised a gathering of all the Hizboellah militia regiments in the region of Priangan in West Java during which the participants denounced the “suicidal” policy of the republican government and, disregarding the orders they had received from their military command, decided to continue their combat against Dutch troops. An organisation was created under the leadership of Kartosuwisirjo called Darul Islam (the Abode of Islam). It did not initially assert itself as an opponent to the republican government, but in December 1948, following the “second police action”, when the Siliwanggi Division was forced to retreat to West Java, the republican armed forces were not very well received and clashed with Darul Islam troops. After the signing of the Roem-Van Royen Agreement, the situation rapidly worsened, and on 7 August 1949, having deemed that the Republic had capitulated to the former colonial power, Kartosuwisirjo declared an Indonesian Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia).

Although Darul Islam did not have any official ties with Masyumi, it did make use of the Muslim party’s local organisational structures, and also adopted many of the themes the Muslim party had developed up until 1948, namely the question of a holy war and the ruling elite’s illegitimacy to govern. The new organisation’s rebellion against the government’s legitimacy forced the party to distance itself more and more from Darul Islam’s radical policies and simplistic rallying cries and thus contributed to the political realignment of the party towards the centre ground.

The Emergence of a Generation of Statesmen and the Advent of Independence

The failure of the communist rebellion in Madiun put paid to Dutch speculation about the republican government’s collapse, and also removed their trump card for maintaining the support, or at least the goodwill, of the Americans. The Dutch were keen to put an end to the republican government rapidly, and so they issued a new set of demands. On 19 December 1948, following the refusal of the Republic,
which comprised 40% of Indonesia’s population, to enter into the federation on the same basis as the 15 states controlled by the Netherlands, Dutch troops initiated their second “police action” and took over Yogyakarta. The majority of the cabinet were captured and deported to Bangka. The Dutch took control of the entire Javanese part of the republican territory and also launched an offensive against the Sumatran regions controlled by the government. Despite the resounding success of these initial military operations, this manoeuvre was to be the swansong of the Dutch colonial presence in Indonesia. Firstly, the Dutch troops encountered much stronger military resistance from the Indonesians than expected. Although they had taken the republican leaders by surprise, their offensives did not succeed in disorganising the Republic’s army completely. The Siliwangi Division, for example, in its retreat from Central Java to West Java, inflicted heavy losses on Dutch troops. In January 1949, the 145,000 Dutch soldiers stationed in the country were on the defensive in Java and Sumatra; in March, republican troops regained control of a large part of Yogyakarta. In addition, Dutch machinations had attracted a considerable amount of disapproval from the international community. At the end of January 1949, Amsterdam was forced to consent to reopen negotiations with republican representatives, having come under pressure both from the United Nations Security Council, which passed a resolution calling for such a course of action, and the United States, which threatened to suspend Marshall Aid. Above all, the political and military brutality of the Netherlands had the effect of awakening a deep nationalist sentiment throughout Indonesia, and in particular in the areas where the former colonial power felt sure it was in control. Some of the governments which controlled the “negara”, such as Adil Puradiredja’s government in Pasundan and Anak Agung’s in East Indonesia, resigned in protest, sensing that their fellow countrymen’s sympathies lay very much with the Republic. This “about-turn in the federalists’ mindset” destroyed the influence which the Dutch, through a system combining a subtle mix of genuine paternalism and a much more prosaic form of imperialism, had managed to regain in the country. The Netherlands’ new colonial policy, which was summed up in Kahin’s words as: “(1) a new and elaborate formula of indirect rule wherein the ultimate Dutch control was much more skilfully camouflage than previously; (2) more

Indonesians holding middle and upper administrative posts and having in a few of the constituent states a small measure of governmental initiative subject to supervision and control from Batavia; (3) more Dutch military and police power standing in the back of this structure; and (4) more Indonesian nationalists in jail\(^{118}\) began to show its limitations.

This dramatic final phase of the struggle for independence confirmed the stature of a small group of leaders within Masyumi (particularly Natsir, Roem and Sjafruddin) as statesmen, and placed them in the inside track for future promotion to positions of government responsibility. A few weeks before the “second police action”, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, minister for finance in Hatta’s government, left for Bukittinggi, the republican capital of Sumatra. When he learned of the fall of Yogyakarta and the arrest of the government, he formed and led an Emergency Government of the Republic of Indonesia (Pemerintah Darurat Republik Indonesia, PDRI), which for seven months ensured the continuous existence of the Indonesian state.\(^{119}\) This preservation of a republican government through a provisional cabinet based in West Sumatra and pursued by Dutch troops left a lasting impression on the public consciousness.\(^{120}\) Bolstered by the prestige it had gained from having avoided capture by the Dutch, thanks to the loyal support of the local population, it was with a certain reluctance that the PDRI handed back its power to the newly released government on 13 July 1949. Although Sjafruddin denied contesting the legitimacy of the reinstalled government, he publicly expressed his disappointment with the Roem-Van Royen Agreement. According to him, “its contents were

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\(^{118}\) Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. 351.

\(^{119}\) According to Kahin in *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. 394, Hatta was worried about possible Dutch manoeuvres, and so before leaving for Sumatra he handed over to Sjafruddin an authorisation to take control of the government if ever he or Sukarno were prevented from exercising their office. In his different writings about this period, Sjafruddin does not mention this authorisation and, according to Noer (*Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional*, p. 188), he never even received the message which the government sent him after the capture of Yogyakarta enjoining him to continue the struggle. Mohammad Roem, in his memoirs, gives the same version of events. *Diplomasi ujung tombak perjuangan RI* (Jakarta: Pt Gramedia, 1989), p. 60.

\(^{120}\) This memory was reawakened a little over 10 years later when the same Sjafruddin Prawiranegara led the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, PRRI) in the same region against the government in Jakarta. See infra, Chapter 4.
too weak and didn’t reflect the strength of the PDRI struggle, because we really were far stronger than people on Bangka (where Sukarno and Hatta were held by the Dutch) suspected.”

In response to Sjafruddin’s misgivings and in order to convince the leaders of the PDRI to return to Yogyakarta, Mohammad Hatta sent Mohammad Natsir to Sumatra at the beginning of July 1949. Natsir’s delegation met the PDRI in the village of Padang Japang where they had taken refuge. Following “marathon negotiations” (secara marathon), Natsir managed to convince his friend to hand executive power back to the government in Yogyakarta. Although Natsir himself was opposed to the agreement with the Dutch, he defended it in a speech made to the local population. He said that the compromise, though unsatisfactory, was merely a necessary step towards a united and sovereign Indonesia, explaining to his fellow countrymen that they should not “feel ashamed when looking at the map” (“jangan kita berkecil hati melihat kaart”). Responding to Natsir’s speech, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara echoed the disappointment of the local population but agreed, however, in the name of national unity, to respect the commitments that had already been made:

We are convinced, and we repeat here that the president and the vice president are our leaders, that they are sure that we will obey them like a child obeys his parents. However, what surprises us is why the president and the vice president made such a decision [to sign this agreement with the Dutch]? Earlier, Bung Natsir explained that the government of the Republic had returned to Yogyakarta, but who then actually fought the battle? Was it the men who remained inactive in Yogya, or was it us, who were pursued over hill and vale? What is to happen now to the leaders who are happily enjoying cheese and butter and other pleasant foods in Bangka? That is the question that comes to mind. I am not opposed to the whole world knowing about Roem, but what is important is to know if all the aspects of the agreement were really considered, before it was signed. The agreement has not yet been ratified by the government, the cabinet and the Parliament, and yet the president and vice president have already given guarantees to the Dutch. In such cases, we must remember the necessity to obey our leaders.

Let us not create a split because we are unhappy with the agreement, but let us rather make sure that we remain united both internally and externally... If we are to be destroyed, better it were together, if we sink, we will do so together, though I am convinced that if we remain united, we will not founder.\textsuperscript{122}

Mohammad Natsir’s role in this affair no doubt contributed to his star rising both on the national political scene and within his own party. Even though the minister for information had himself resigned from the delegation led by Roem in protest over the concessions made in the agreement, the fact that he managed to convince one of his close allies to accept it illustrated the discipline and the legalism which typified the future head of Masyumi.

The third party figure to distinguish himself during this critical period, Minister for Home Affairs Mohamad Roem, did so as the head of the delegation that entered into negotiations with representatives of the Dutch government on 14 April 1949, under the aegis of the United Nations Commission for Indonesia. The talks concluded on 7 May 1949 with the signing of what was called the Roem-Van Royen Agreement. It provided, as a pre-condition for the Republic’s entry into the United States of Indonesia, that the republican government would be released and reinstated in Yogyakarta with a view to preparing roundtable talks in the Hague, which would prepare the transfer of sovereignty. Despite open hostility to the agreement amongst certain senior Masyumi party figures, the fact that it was one of its own members who had led this final round of shuttle diplomacy convinced the party that the compromise obtained was the best possible one available, and this contributed to their acceptance of it, after a long and arduous debate.\textsuperscript{123}

The prominence of the roles played by this triumvirate of Masyumi leaders—one of them saved the Republic, one led the diplomatic


\textsuperscript{123} Deliar Noer draws this conclusion from the numerous interviews he was able to carry out with Masyumi leaders in Java and Sumatra between 1955 and 1958. Noer, “Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology, and Political Role in Indonesia”, p. 125.
battle, while the third enabled the first two to get on—had two major consequences on the Muslim party. The first of these was to allow this trio to enhance their stature within the party. Up until that point, they had been the low-key advocates of a policy that was more in tune with certain political realities. They now, however, became for the general Muslim populace the prestigious representatives of a generation who had just demonstrated in spectacular fashion their ability, in the face of adversity, to take charge of the country’s destiny, and so naturally the party’s destiny also. Secondly, the deeds of these three senior party figures gave Masyumi a clear advantage in the race for power that had just begun, now that a sovereign state had become a very real prospect.

On 23 August, a conference opened in the Hague under the auspices of the United Nations Commission for Indonesia, which brought together delegations from the Netherlands, the Republic and the Federal Consultative Assembly (Bijeenkomst voor Federal Overleg, BFO). At the end of two months of negotiations, an agreement was signed on 2 November 1949 providing for a complete transfer of sovereignty to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia, which would be composed of the Republic and the 15 political entities created by the Dutch. Two major concessions by the republican delegates had allowed the agreement to be concluded. First, the new Republic would assume most of the debts incurred by the former Dutch East Indies, and furthermore, Dutch New Guinea was to remain under the control of the Netherlands pending new negotiations. In accordance with the agreement, Dutch sovereignty was transferred to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia on 27 December 1949. The two legislative chambers of the new federal state had just elected Sukarno as president and approved the formation of a new cabinet led by Mohammad Hatta. The new government, which was composed in total of five federalists and 11 republicans, included four members of Masyumi, making it the main government party.124

The new cabinet was not answerable to the parliament, and so, in theory, it was destined to last until the election of a new assembly. Masyumi had full confidence in Mohammad Hatta, and so was prepared to accept this temporary state of affairs. However, it intended to

124 Sjafruddin Prawiranegara was minister for finance, Abu Hanifah minister for education, Wahid Hasjim minister for religions and Mohammad Roem minister of state.
tackle without delay the task of transforming Indonesian political life. The party’s fourth congress, which took place in Yogyakarta between 15 and 19 December, was to pave the way for its undertakings in the newly independent country. The decisions of the congress covered three aspects of the country’s future reorganisation, namely its institutional, political and social reconstruction. Apart from those decisions, an outline programme was drawn up dealing with economic and social issues, and an appeal was made to hold discussions with the Darul Islam movement, both of which will be examined later on.

The first part of the “Urgency Programme” adopted by the party insisted on the necessity to establish a new consensus on what form the new Indonesian state would take. Masyumi set out

…to examine the content of the Constitution of the RUSI and to prepare a new constitution, in accordance with the people’s aspirations which will be made clear by the Constituent Assembly…due to be established over the course of 1950.125

Thus, without rejecting the current Constitution outright or coming out in favour of a unitary or federal model for the new state, Masyumi indicated that it considered the institutional situation merely as an intermediary stage at that point. In addition to calling for immediate general elections, it also demanded the “organisation, as soon as possible, of referendums that would determine the status of the member states and of the regions” of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia.

The second theme which the delegates at the congress focussed on was the rebuilding of a society that had been deeply affected by four years of conflict. They were particularly concerned about the fate of members of the militia groups controlled by Masyumi. Masyumi decided to dissolve its armed groups in accordance with Presidential Decree Number 3 of 1947, which banned any armed forces besides the National Army (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, TNI). In reality, a part of the Hizboellah and Sabilillah had already been integrated into the TNI. In his commentary on the resolutions made at the congress, Mohammad Natsir drew attention to the necessity to strive for the social “rehabilitation” of those who now found themselves unemployed. For the new chairman of the executive board of Masyumi, all the

125 Urgency Programme 1949, Section I, article B1.
party’s efforts should be focused on making every individual responsible as part of the democratisation of Indonesia’s unstable society (masyarakat yang goyang):

If we were to content ourselves with waiting for government measures, if we were merely spectators…it would be proof that we were not aware of our status as citizens of an independent country. I have high hopes, then, my brothers, that we, members of Masyumi and leaders of the most important group in Indonesian society, will be able to focus the people’s attention and lead their efforts in the areas mentioned above.126

The ambition was a lofty one but on a par with the influence which the party’s leaders considered they held in Indonesian society. In short, it consisted of anticipating government plans, such as the reconstruction of housing or the regeneration of the country’s agricultural sector, which would require long periods before being implemented. Such an undertaking required a reorganisation of Masyumi, which was the third objective established by the congress. The second police action carried out by the Dutch authorities had severely weakened the party’s organisational network. With the Revolution now finished, it was necessary also to adapt its organisational structure and to regain control over the party machinery, which in many regions was operating completely independently. In order to allow the new leadership to concentrate entirely on this task, it was decided that the party head could not participate in government.127 Finally, the congress decided to transfer the party headquarters from Yogyakarta to the new capital of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia, Jakarta.

Masyumi’s demands concerning the holding of referendums in the different federal states, was soon to become a moot issue. Scarcely six weeks after the transfer of sovereignty, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia began to disintegrate. In less than eight months, the entire edifice which the Dutch had patiently constructed in order to maintain their influence in the country had collapsed. The process was hastened by the prestige which the Republic benefitted from among

126 Berita Partai Masjumi, February 1950.
127 Noer, “Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology, and Political Role in Indonesia”, p. 213. This decision is contained, however, neither in the congress resolutions nor in the reports on the congress which I was able to consult.
the population of the other states in the federation as well as the manoeuvres attempted by certain federalist leaders, such as the attempted coup d'état by Captain Westerling in which Sultan Hamid II of West Borneo was involved. By 10 February, the State of South Sumatra had dissolved itself, and it was soon to be followed by others. The Christian community in the Maluku Islands, who had long provided significant numbers of soldiers to the Dutch army, created the Republic of South Maluku, which was also swept aside. In the east of the country, however, it took longer to overcome the resistance of former federalists, now turned separatists. The final stage came on 19 May 1950, with the signing of an agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the State of East Indonesia, designed to create a unitary state. For two months, delegates from the RUSI's representative chamber and from the KNIP gathered to draw up the provisional constitution of the unitary state, pending elections to be held at a later date. After ratification by the chambers of both states, it was promulgated on 15 August 1950, and two days later on 17 August, the anniversary of the proclamation of independence, the Republic of Indonesia was officially born.

At its foundation in November 1945, Masyumi had a simple programme that appealed to a large audience. It was easy to recognise its followers; they included those who did not differentiate their identity as citizens from their identity as Muslims and who thus saw the struggle for independence as a religious duty. However, between the ideal of Masyumi's objectives and the reality of its actions, a contradiction was soon to appear which would plague the party in the early years of its existence.

The supporters of the Marxist wing had at their disposal a clearly identified ideological corpus, and those who aligned themselves with

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128 Masyumi activists like to highlight the role played by Mohammad Natsir in the finalisation of this agreement. At the end of April, he presented a proposal entitled *Mosi Integral*, which would allow a resolution of the thorny issue of whether East Indonesia should be incorporated into the Republic or whether both states should disappear and be replaced by the RIS. This simple issue, which touched on both sides' sensitivities, has received very little attention from English-speaking historians—notably George McTurnan Kahin—but is nonetheless sometimes presented as one of the major episodes in the history of the Indonesian state. See in particular Anwar Harjono, ed., *Pemikiran dan perjuangan Mohammad Natsir* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1996), p. 160, notably Yusril Ihza Mahendra's prologue.
Moscow also received clear guidelines. The supporters of secular nationalism had their guide in the person of Sukarno. The Muslims, on the other hand, had neither a clearly defined doctrine nor an uncontested leader. Some found both of these by rowing in behind Kartosuwirjo, but others were aware of the gap between the simplicity of a demand for an Islamic state and the complexity of actually accomplishing it. In the second half of the 1940s, this dilemma resulted in the participation of the Masyumi leadership in motley coalitions assembling momentarily over the course of the negotiations with forces opposed to the former colonial power.
It was only in reaction to events that Masyumi eventually decided to choose the tortuous path which would lead it from a religious ideal to a political programme. Darul Islam and Kartosuwirjo showed that a radical political message would lead to an impasse ending in secession, thus converting most party members to a more moderate position, while the events of 1948 in Madiun helped to forge their aversion to communism.