CHAPTER THREE

Confronting Reality: Masyumi and the Exercise of Power

The period from September 1950 to April 1957 was Indonesia’s only experience of parliamentary democracy in its history prior to the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998. During this period, six different governments held power, but despite the remarkable similarity between the different parties’ programmes (with the exception of the communists and the dissident Muslims), none of them enjoyed the time and stability necessary to implement meaningful reforms.¹ All were in favour of promoting a mixed economy based on cooperatives which were partially exposed to market forces as well as a Western-style republican model of government. However, as they had never really been schooled by their colonial masters in the art of democracy, the elite group placed at the head of their country following the Revolution put in place a parliamentary system which was not really suited to Indonesian realities. The notion of a majority and an opposition inherent in Western institutions were transferred en bloc to an Indonesian system where authority and social harmony were traditionally the prevailing values, illustrated by a system of long consultations (musjawarah) designed to arrive at a consensus (mufakat) which would be acceptable to all.²

During this period, Masyumi was the main party of government. Of the five governments formed in the Provisional Assembly between September 1950 and March 1956, three were led by Masyumi members—Natsir, Seokiman and Harahap, with a fourth one also jointly led by a party member, Wilopo. The chronic instability of the coalition governments and the fragmentation of Indonesian party politics forced the party to take sides for or against various political forces, thus obliging it to clarify further its political identity.

Masyumi—A Participant in and a Fierce Opponent of “Partocracy”

Although it was hastily drafted and supposed to be replaced within a few months, the Provisional Constitution of August 1950 remained in force until 1959, when the 1945 text was restored. The centrepiece of the institutions established by the 1950 Constitution was the unicameral parliament which, pending elections, was to be composed of
representatives from the assemblies of the two states which had just merged: the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. The cabinet, which was accountable before the Provisional Assembly, had at its disposal a wide range of powers, notably the power to issue emergency decrees which would be valid as long as Parliament did not expressly voice its opposition to them. The president, on the other hand, held relatively limited powers: all his decrees had to be countersigned by the relevant minister.

From the outset, the 1950 document had two key flaws: it provided no solutions in the event of repeated ministerial crises and it established a form of presidential office which was ill-fitted for its incumbent, Sukarno, who held a considerable degree of political power. The only mechanism provided by the Constitution for breaking institutional gridlock was Article 84, which authorised the president to dissolve the Assembly on condition that new elections would be organised within 30 days. This clause was interpreted such that a dissolution of Parliament would only be possible if an election could be held in the month that followed. In a country whose first general election took five years to organise, such a provision remained a dead letter. The authors of the Constitution, including a number of Masyumi members, showed, not for the last time, their penchant for being excessively optimistic.

The other source of the new state’s institutional imbalance was the lack of presidential power provided for by the 1950 Constitution. A whole section of the political class, led within Masyumi by Mohamad Natsir, intended to limit Sukarno to a narrow interpretation of his constitutional authority. During his time as prime minister between

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3 The Republic was to have 46 deputies in the KNIP and 13 in the High Council, while the Republic of the United States of Indonesia obtained 147 members in the People’s Representative Council (Bijeenkomst voor Federal Overleg, BFO) and 31 in the Senate. The entire Provisional Assembly therefore had a total of 237 seats.


5 Pending the establishment of a real presidential regime in which the head of state would be accountable to Parliament. Masyumi had been calling for such a regime since 1949.
September 1950 and April 1951, the president of the Muslim party reminded Sukarno on several occasions that it was the government, accountable before the Parliament, that was responsible for making policy decisions for the country; this attitude earned Natsir longstanding resentment from the head of state. Soekiman, who succeeded Natsir as prime minister but was his predecessor as head of the party, adopted a much more compliant attitude, however. He maintained that the president should not limit himself to his constitutional role, thus allowing Sukarno the political room to manoeuvre in accordance with his ambitions. This difference in interpretation by two important party figures was due in large part to their respective personal relationships with Sukarno before the outbreak of the Second World War. It was a difference which, during the 1950s, was to weigh considerably on the division between their respective factions within Masyumi.

The Splintering of Political Forces and Governmental Instability

The Indonesian political landscape was made up of almost 40 political parties. In August 1950, 16 of them were able to constitute parliamentary groups within the Assembly appointed by the president. The parties were organised along three different lines: religion, nationalism and Marxism.

The revival of the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia in April 1947 seemed to have put an end to Masyumi’s hegemony over political Islam. However, the newly re-established party became discredited after the support provided by its president, Wondoamiseno, for Amir Sjarifuddin during the Madiun rebellion, never managed to regain a prominent position on the political landscape. The PSII held eight seats in Parliament while Masyumi, on the strength of their significant contribution during the closing stages of the Revolution, established itself as the strongest political party in the new regime with 50 deputies. The Christian parties in the Assembly—Partai Katolik with nine seats and the Protestant Parkindo (the Christian Indonesian Party) with five seats—enjoyed a disproportionate amount of political influence given the number of Indonesian Christians they represented: in total, only

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6 Cf. Supra, Chapter 1.
7 In 1954, the number rose to 17.
three million Protestants and one million Catholics. This was due in part to the presence of a Christian majority in some of the country’s outlying regions, which gave their representatives an essential role in the preservation of Indonesian unity, but also to the over-representation of Catholics and Protestants in the army and civil service.\textsuperscript{8}

Political nationalism was mainly represented by the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) with 41 seats. Heir to the great pre-war nationalist tradition and to the state party created after the proclamation of independence, it benefitted from a misconception in public opinion which led it to be considered as President Sukarno’s party. Its members were mainly recruited from national and regional civil servants, and it advocated a sort of proletarian nationalism called Marhaenism, claiming to defend the interests of the ordinary man. The party was very badly organised, and several wings had developed within it because of personality clashes between individuals. These divisions had given rise to several dissident organisations, including the Greater Indonesia Unity Party (Partai Persatuan Indonesia Raja, PIR) with 18 seats in the Assembly, and the National People’s Party (Partai Rakjat Nasional, PRN) with six seats.

On the Marxist side of the political spectrum, the events in Madiun had led to a reorganisation marked by the marginalisation of those who were close to Moscow. The Democratic People’s Front (Front Demokrasi Rakjat, FDR) was dissolved and the PKI, although it was not dissolved, went through a protracted slump and was never allowed to participate in government. In the months following the Madiun rebellion, it faced competition with the arrival of a new movement also claiming to be Marxist-Leninist, the Proletarian Party (Partai Murba). The announcement of this new party’s foundation was made on 3 October 1949 by the main constituent organisations of the People’s Revolutionary Movement, the organisation founded by Tan Malaka, who had died in February 1949. This new organisation based on “religion, nationalism and socialism” differentiated itself from the PKI by declaring that the interests of Indonesia should come before the interests of the Soviet Union, and it accused the PKI of being infiltrated by Dutch agents. The Partai Murba only counted four seats in Parliament, but had numerous sympathisers amongst the PNI and

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The Partai Sosialis Indonesia (PSI), which held 15 seats in the Assembly, also claimed to be a Marxist party. However, its president, Sjahrir, was convinced that the Marxist doctrine of class struggle could not be applied to Indonesia given the social conditions present in the country, and so he did not try to turn his party into a mass movement by attracting those who were disenchanted with the PKI. He busied himself with building a party of well-trained individuals who were convinced of the dangers of communist totalitarianism and were capable of fostering in the general public political critical faculties and an ability to think independently. The calibre of the PSI’s leaders allowed the party to play a prominent role on the Indonesian political scene; meanwhile, its political rival, Amir Sjarifuddin’s Partai Sosialis, with only two seats, now merely constituted a grouplet in Parliament.

The dispersal of parliamentary seats across the Indonesian political landscape was a legacy of the revolutionary period. In the absence of elections since 1945, successive Indonesian governments had followed a certain principle which consisted in allowing a political movement deemed to be any way significant a place at the cabinet table. The formation in 1950 of the new Provisional Assembly which included representatives from both the Republic and the federal state inherited from the Dutch added to this confusion, with the addition of two new parliamentary groups, SKI and Fraksi Demokrat, and the almost twofold increase of independent representatives from 13 to 25. This multiplication of the number of parties was not only recognised but even encouraged—the composition of parliamentary committees and various government bodies, as well as the legislative councils formed in the provinces, regencies and municipalities, was to be established on the basis of one representative per party. The unstable political coalitions which marked the beginnings of the unitary state increased the influence of the party executive committees over the government’s actions. Consequently, the decisions taken during cabinet meetings were often limited to those which had already been approved in the meetings of party leaders beforehand. All five governments formed according to the balance of power in the Provisional Assembly reflected this fragmentation of political power, and this can be seen clearly when comparing the distribution of seats in the Assembly with the number

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of places at the cabinet table. Of the 16 parliamentary groups formed in 1950 (including the independent deputies), 13 obtained positions in government.\textsuperscript{10} The two largest parties in the Assembly, and so the two parties most able to bring a certain amount of institutional stability, were slightly under-represented, which benefitted the smaller groupings who were thus able to bring all their political influence to bear on the government of the country.

Masyumi was, naturally, strongly critical of this state of affairs as they were convinced that they were one of the few political groups in the country to have a broad electoral base. In February 1952, an editorial in \textit{Abadi} highlighted the limits of the debate which opposed the supporters of a “business cabinet” (\textit{zaken kabinet}), on the one hand composed of experts supposed to be independent of their political parties, and the advocates of a “coalition government” (\textit{kabinet koalisi}), on the other.\textsuperscript{11} The Muslim daily newspaper explained that these notions corresponded to political realities in European democracies, but could not be applied to Indonesia where the party structure was still “unclear” (\textit{katjau balau}) and where the Parliament was far from being representative. In November 1954, Boerhanoeddin Harahap developed this thesis further in an article which was included in the preparatory documents for the seventh Masyumi congress. In it, he lamented the splintering of the parliamentary groupings, which weakened the executive, and he denounced the presence in Parliament of groups whose existence was based on “neither a party nor any other mass organisation”.\textsuperscript{12} However, apart from proposing the rapid organisation of elections, Masyumi never put forward a concrete solution to the problems it lamented. It rejected, for example, an original proposal made by Mukarto, one of the \textit{formateurs} named after the fall of Wilopo’s cabinet, which consisted of obliging the government to take decisions based on a majority, with minority factions forbidden from withdrawing their ministers from government.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{10} Nahdlatul Ulama’s parliamentary group was only created in April 1952, following the formation of the party.

\textsuperscript{11} “\textit{Kabinet Apa?”} (Which Cabinet?), \textit{Abadi}, 27 February 1952.


\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Abadi}, 29 June 1953.
To understand the chronic ministerial instability of the day, one needs to look beyond the country's political and institutional system and examine Indonesian political culture in its entirety. First of all, the fact that political leaders came from a relatively select milieu posed a problem. Unlike the West or Japan, there did not exist in 1950s Indonesia a bourgeoisie, i.e., a class involved in business who had the means to exert influence on government policy. Only a tiny minority of those who held a seat in cabinet (three in total, between 1945 and 1955) had a background in trade. Most public representatives had been government employees in the Dutch East Indies, but had generally worked as engineers in technical departments, or as doctors or teachers rather than in general administration departments. The remaining politicians were journalists, teachers in private schools or members of the liberal professions.\footnote{Malcom R. Willison, “Leaders of Revolution: The Social Origins of the Republican Cabinets Members in Indonesia 1945–55”, MA Thesis, Cornell University, 1958. Quoted in Feith, \textit{The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia}, p. 101.} This governing elite was a very uniform category:

\textbf{The Weakness of Indonesian Democracy’s Cultural and Social Foundations}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Plate 3.2} The Government Parties in Indonesia 1950–56 (by percentage of ministerial positions).
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its members had received the same type of education and had been involved in similar political causes in their youth during the colonial period; they lived in the same neighbourhoods, met one another very often and often married within their closed circle. Certain relationships, as we shall see later in the case of Masyumi, transcended political divides in a most surprising fashion.

Beyond this little core of Indonesia’s elite, which all too often operated in a vacuum, a politically aware audience began to appear, which we could define as the newspaper-reading public. Given that each copy of a daily newspaper was read by three people on average, this politically literate audience was estimated to stand at around 1.5 million, making up three per cent of the country’s adult population.\footnote{At the end of 1950, the diffusion of daily newspapers stood at 499,150. 338,300 of these were made up of publications written in Indonesian (167 different newspapers in total), 87,200 were published in Dutch (totalling 11 publications) and 73,600 were in Chinese (with 15 different daily newspapers). Their content was largely given over to political issues. Jayasan Lembaga Pres dan Pendapat Umum, \textit{Almanak Pers Indonesia 1954–1955} (Djakarta: JLPPU, 1955), p. 36.} However, this educated social group which had direct access to information remained too modest in size to be able to set up the kind of representative bodies which its Western counterparts could. Most people’s understanding of politics, therefore, came through charismatic leaders whose sphere of political influence was generally confined to a regional level. This situation was encapsulated in the dichotomy established by Herbert Feith between, on the one hand, a qualified and uniform elite without any real support in society (“administrators”), and on the other, popular political figures who had no governmental responsibility (“solidarity makers”).\footnote{Feith, \textit{The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia}, pp. 113 ff. Feith highlights the fact that unlike in India, the members of the Indonesian executive at the beginning of the 1950s—almost all of whom were “administrators”—only represented a small section of the political elite. Most of the “solidarity makers” were to be found outside the government.} It contributed to a large extent to the frailty of successive governments and to the discrediting of the young parliamentary democracy in the eyes of the Indonesian population.

Their ability to provide access to positions of power meant that the political parties had an essential role to play in social mobility. Ministerial positions were of course enormously prestigious, and the system also extended to civil service positions and even to the world of
business. At the highest levels of government and in the civil service, belonging to a political party could enable you to obtain houses, holidays and business opportunities, and at lower levels in society it was the best way to guarantee you a job. Almost all civil servants were members of a party and even when they were not formally registered with any particular organisation, they were almost always attached to a powerful clique who helped them to guarantee a future career. Masyumi was no exception to this rule. The nominations handed out to party members were of course never published in the pro-Masyumi press, but the extent of this “partocratic” system could be seen in the articles written during the Ali government protesting at the removal of its members from important positions.

In this context, it is easy to see how political parties found it difficult to explain to their supporters what role they played during their time in opposition. After 1950, once independence had been achieved and the exercise of governmental power had completely regained its prestige, opponents to this power now went from being intransigent revolutionaries to becoming obstacles to the national unity necessary for the reconstruction of the country. The parties outside of government now had to justify their existence in a political system where legitimacy was traditionally considered to lie only with those who held power. It was to this task that the Masyumi leadership turned its efforts between August 1953 and August 1955 when the government led by Ali Sastroamidjojo kept them out of office for the first time since 1945. A few days after the formation of the Sastroamidjojo cabinet,

17 The first three governments of the unitary republic benefitted nonetheless from a small core of senior civil servants. Of the 18 departmental secretaries (or their equivalents), all but three of them had already occupied their positions before August 1950. This changed with the arrival of the Ali government in August 1953, however, when six of the secretaries were replaced in favour of government party candidates. Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, p. 367.

18 When Masyumi found itself in opposition, its head of the West Java branch, Isa Anshary, complained that “democracy has changed, it has become partocracy” (*Abadi*, 30 December 1953). The Masyumi newspaper listed on 2 February 1954 all of the civil servants close to Masyumi “who were being evicted”.

19 For an analysis of the Muslim perspective on being in the opposition, the reader should refer to Luthfi Assyaukanie, *Islam and the Secular State in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009), pp. 74–6, which offers, in particular, an interesting study of the writings of Zainal Abidin Ahmad.
Natsir launched an appeal to the entire “Masyumi family” which affirmed that being in opposition was an integral part of both democracy and Islam. His message was a simple one: Masyumi’s situation was a normal one, as being in opposition was “a role and a duty whose foundations can be located in the teachings of Islam”; an opposition party was not a “quantity negligible [sic] which you can ignore because it does not sit in government.” In the weeks following this declaration, the party organised visits by its leaders to different provinces in the country in an attempt to spell out this message. Despite their best efforts, the public at large still misunderstood the status of an opposition party, as if, as a disconsolate Sjafruddin Prawiranegara noted in November 1953, “the goal of being in opposition was to bring down the government or to hinder it and so prevent it from achieving its goals.”

This misapprehension of an opposition party’s role was also common in the corridors of power, and Masyumi’s press did not hesitate to let it be known when the party was a victim of this attitude. In September 1953, for example, four daily newspapers deemed hostile to the government—Abadi, Sumber, Pedoman and Indonesia Raya—were banned from prisons. Even more surprising was the decision by the public prosecutor in January 1954 to question Jusuf Wibisono for two hours after he had declared that certain members of the government did not possess the abilities necessary to overcome the difficulties which the country was going through. These violations of the freedom of expression, which the party’s newspapers created a huge furore

20 *Keluarga Masyumi* was the expression used to refer to the entire collection of the party’s satellite organisations.
23 See, for example, the account of the trip made by Mohamad Roem and Zainal Abidin Ahmad to Western Sumatra, *Abadi*, 14 and 27 August, 1953.
24 “Seolah-olah tudjuan opposisi ialah menggulingkan pemerintah atau merintangi dan menghalangi keberhasilan pemerintahan”, *Abadi*, 16 November 1953.
25 The SOB camps (*Staats van Oorlog Beleg*, meaning state of emergency and war).
26 *Abadi*, 6 January 1954.
over, did not stop the party from providing firm opposition to the Ali government, using means such as the boycotting of parliamentary sessions and the moving of no-confidence motions. It was nonetheless with great relief that Masyumi returned to government in August 1955. With the general election approaching (it was set to take place in September), it became vitally important to regain once again the political legitimacy mentioned above.

Masyumi: Its “Friends and Enemies”

The Highs and Lows of the Party’s Cooperation with the Nationalists

As the two largest political parties in Parliament, the PNI and Masyumi appeared to be the two natural pillars upon which the unstable institutional edifice established by the 1950 Constitution could repose. However, the distribution of political power between the various parties in the Provisional Assembly meant that not only would their alliance not permit them to obtain the majority required to govern, but in addition, as the Natsir and Sastroamidjojo cabinets demonstrated, an agreement between the two parties was not a sine qua non for the formation of a government. The two parties agreed to temporarily put to one side their main bone of contention, pending the election of a Constituent Assembly which, in theory, would settle definitively the

27 In particular, in July 1955, during the debates on the ratification of the protocol to dissolve the Netherlands-Indonesian Union, despite the fact that the Round Table Conference Agreement establishing this union had been signed by the previous government, which Masyumi had participated in. Abadi, 6 July 1955, cf. infra, Chapter 3 “Foreign Policy”.
28 In April 1955 against the minister for justice, Djody Gondokusomo, accused of having received money from a Chinese person in exchange for a naturalisation certificate. A motion of no confidence in the government had already been moved in December 1954.
29 To such an extent that during the election campaign, several of the PNI’s regional figures, now in opposition, declared that their party was still in power. Herbert Feith, The Indonesian Elections of 1955 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1957), p. 14.
30 From the Indonesian “Lawan den kawan”, the title of a section in the weekly publication, Hikmah, devoted to different political movements in Indonesia and throughout the world.
question of what sort of state, secular or Muslim, the new Republic should have. A certain number of disagreements remained between the two parties, however, which could be observed at the formation of each new government, when the possibility of a coalition between Masyumi and the PNI inevitably arose. More often than not, the two sides came to the conclusion that these differences of opinion, whether they were on the date of future elections, the question of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union, or the opening of an embassy in Moscow, concerned questions of form as opposed to questions of principle. There was no single issue which constituted, in itself, an insurmountable obstacle to cooperation between the two sides.

However, the distribution of ministerial portfolios, which was both a cause and a consequence of ministerial instability, seemed to be a constant source of discord between the parties. Following a procedure which gradually became an established ritual, the formation of a government began with a consultation between the leaders of the various political parties. An overview of the problems of the day was chaired by President Sukarno or, in his absence, by Vice President Hatta. At the end of this first stage, the president designated a formateur charged with submitting a proposal for a new government to him. It was only at this point that negotiations between the parties really began. The talks which preceded the formation of the five governments linked to the Provisional Assembly always examined first of all the possibility of a coalition between Masyumi and the PNI. Once the items on the programme for government were finalised, the focus then turned to the thorny issue of ministerial portfolios. There was generally a broad consensus on the number of government positions to be given to the two largest parties in the Assembly, with each party generally receiving four or five cabinet seats. The main stumbling blocks were, first of all, the allocation of the more prestigious ministries, and second, the specific candidates put forward for each position. The most sought-after positions, apart from that of prime minister of course, were minister for home affairs (it was he who nominated the regions’ governors and most senior civil servants—positions of great importance in light of the

31 See, for example, Abadi, 25 February 1952, two days after the break-up of the Soekiman government.
32 See the editorial in Abadi published on 4 March 1953, “The Co-operation between Masyumi and the PNI”.
upcoming general election) minister for defence; minister for economics (who was in charge of the country’s lucrative import licences); and the minister for education (which Masyumi wanted so as to promote its religious policy, a move which the PNI attempted to prevent).

An examination of the prolonged negotiations which preceded the formation of the Soekiman government reveals another element which is important in the understanding of the relations between the two parties, namely the existence within each party of factions with differing opinions about entering into coalition with their main rival. On 26 March 1951, the day after the resignation of the Natsir government, Sukarno designated a member of the PNI, Sartono, as formateur. Sartono spent 18 days trying to find an agreement with the Masyumi leadership, but contrary to a parliamentary convention which they were themselves to invoke at a later date, they demanded to be given the position of prime minister and proposed Natsir as a candidate to succeed himself.33 A compromise was finally reached, but only after Sukarno had named two new formateurs, the president of the PNI, Sidik Djojosukarto, and the president of Masyumi’s leadership council, Soekiman. They managed to strike an agreement, and the PNI agreed to allow Masyumi to occupy the role of prime minister, on condition that Natsir should not be reappointed to the position. Within Masyumi, there existed two groups, which we will examine further at a later stage, opposing the “young generation” led by Natsir and the “old generation” who supported Soekiman and who, like him, had maintained a certain proximity with the secular nationalist group which had developed during the pre-war years as a result of their common struggle for independence.34 The PNI, on the other hand, had been dominated since its party congress in May 1950 by a group led by Sidik Djojosukarto composed of revolutionary leaders who were fiercely opposed to the pragmatic policies which Hatta had proposed. Their

33 There was an unwritten rule that the prime minister should come from the same party as the formateur. In the negotiations which finally led to the formation of the Ali cabinet, for example, Burhanuddin Harahap occupied, for a time, the role of formateur. When the PNI called for the position of prime minister to be given to one of its members, objections were raised in Abadi (18 July 1953).

34 This generation gap was not only a question of age. Jusuf Wibisono, who was a loyal supporter of Soekiman’s, was born in the same year as Natsir. The difference between the two was more a question of sensibilities: the “older generation” continued to be guided by the principle of national unity irrespective of religious differences.
form of nationalism was intransigent and it was impossible for them to get along with Natsir. They did manage to cooperate, however, with Soekiman. The other important group within the PNI was led by Sartono and Surwirjo, who recognised the capabilities of those in Natsir’s inner circle.\(^{35}\)

The existence of these different groups within the two main parties could facilitate the creation of coalitions by allowing their differences to be put to one side, but at the same time they could also weaken those very same governments. On 26 April 1951, on the eve of the announcement of Soekiman’s new cabinet, the tensions within Masyumi were clear to see: the executive committee, at a meeting chaired by Natsir, refused to approve Soekiman’s nomination as prime minister.\(^{36}\) The official reason for this decision was that Soekiman had only been invested by the party to be \textit{formateur}, but this should not let us be distracted from the real issue. What Natsir wanted to punish Soekiman’s supporters for was a recently signed agreement with the PNI and, more importantly, their lack of support when he was prime minister. Despite statements to the contrary by the different protagonists, this was a serious crisis for the party.\(^{37}\) It was only after three weeks of prevarication that Masyumi decided, on 19 May, “to give a chance to the Soekiman cabinet to implement its programme”.\(^{38}\) Naturally, this crisis did not augur well for the new government, and throughout its time in office support from Masyumi was never forthright with the party’s executive committee threatening to withdraw its support on several occasions. In the end, it was their refusal to sanction Subardjo’s risky foreign policy, coupled with a similar refusal shortly afterwards by the PNI, which finally led to the resignation of the government on 23 February 1952.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{35}\) For more on these, and other factions within the PNI, see Feith, \textit{The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia}, pp. 139–42. Feith includes the first group in his group of “solidarity makers” and the second one in his group of “administrators” (supra. p. 127).


\(^{37}\) In \textit{Abadi} on 28 April 1951, Natsir wrote that he was convinced of the stability of Masyumi’s unity.

\(^{38}\) “Kesempatan kepada Kabinet Soekiman untuk melaksanakan programnya”, \textit{Abadi}, 21 May 1951.

\(^{39}\) Cf. infra pp. 186–8.
Having successfully toppled the Natsir and Soekiman governments, the rival wings within the Muslim party handed the job of taking down the Wilopo cabinet over to their nationalist allies. After Soekiman's resignation, the president entrusted the task of drawing up a new government to two *formateurs*: Sidik Djojosukarto from the PNI and Prawoto Mangkusasmito from Masyumi. It was an undertaking, however, which was doomed to failure given the open hostility between the PNI's president and the Natsir wing of Masyumi to which Prawoto belonged. The two men managed to draw up a programme for government, but they could not agree on the distribution of ministerial portfolios. Sidik notably refused to accept the army's preferred candidate for the position of minister for defence: the Sultan of Yogyakarta, who was backed by Prawoto.\(^{40}\) On 19 March 1952, they handed in their resignation letters to the president, who subsequently designated Prawoto once again as a *formateur*, but this time Wilopo, representing the PNI, was named as the other half of the tandem. Wilopo, who was close to Natsir, was a lot more flexible in his dealings with Masyumi, and on 3 April a government was formed. Wilopo was named the head of the executive, while Prawoto was appointed deputy prime minister. However, the PNI now took up the mantle worn previously by Masyumi, and its attitude towards the government was one of barely concealed opposition, despite the fact that it was led by one of its own members. At the beginning of June 1953, after an announcement by the leadership of the nationalist party that it would vote in favour of a motion of no confidence tabled by a member of Sarekat Tani Indonesia, a party close to the PKI, the Wilopo government resigned before the vote even took place.

Three factors led to the instability of governments built on an alliance between the PNI and Masyumi: policy differences, disagreements over ministerial appointments and the role played by party factions, with the latter being the most preponderant. Certain analysts have laid great emphasis on the PNI's alleged fear of Masyumi's Islamic ideology based on a belief that Darul Islam was an illegal branch of the party.\(^{41}\) This reading of the situation has been largely confounded by the examination of the different phases of negotiation between the


two parties, which shows that such considerations never constituted for the PNI an obstacle to collaboration with Masyumi. The two sides always managed to come to an agreement on a programme for government, and there was a general consensus within both parties that the important question of Islam’s role in the state could only be resolved by an elected assembly. However, during the transition period which we are concerned with here, however, cracks began to appear in Indonesian politics, which had up until that point been papered over by the need for unity imposed by the revolutionary period. As a result, a large amount of political energy was taken up with the necessary reorganisation of the country’s parties. It is in this context that one needs to look at the skilful manoeuvring involved in the distribution of ministerial portfolios, with every political movement wanting to use them to gain some political advantage over their rivals.

Although the clashes between Natsir’s wing and Soekiman’s group weakened the party’s position as well as the governments it headed, these disagreements, which the party’s leadership always made a point of minimising, were invariably patched up. However, another storm was brewing within Masyumi in the shape of Nahdlatul Ulama, a large traditionalist Muslim organisation which was one of Masyumi’s constituent groups and whose leaders had already been complaining for a number of years about its position within the party. The formation of the Wilopo cabinet brought about NU’s break from the party, and the Ali government led to its entry onto the Indonesian political landscape.

*Masyumi and Its “Muslim Brothers”*42

Before the revival of Nahdlatul Ulama as a political party in 1952, Masyumi held, to all intents and purposes, a monopoly over the representation of Indonesian Muslims. The two other existing Muslim parties were not able to provide a credible alternative to the role it played on the political scene. Perti possessed no representative in Parliament and the PSII had never managed to regain its prestige and recover its pre-war organisational network. The Masyumi leadership’s conviction that they were the only ones to possess the ability, and perhaps also

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42 We will only look here at the circumstances of the schism which took place in 1952. Analysis of the deeper reasons for this split can be found in Chapter 6.
the legitimacy to govern meant that they received the news of NU’s decision with a certain amount of insouciance. The revival of Nahdlatul Ulama was announced at the beginning of April 1952, the day after the formation of the Wilopo government. It was confirmed by the organisation of the party’s first congress, which opened a few weeks later in Palembang. By a very large majority (61 votes to 11), Nahdlatul Ulama decided to establish itself as an independent party and invited Masyumi to form an alliance with it within a federation. The Masyumi leadership did not seem to measure the significance of this event, treating the traditionalists’ decision with disdain and scepticism. In the eyes of Masyumi’s leaders, NU had painted itself into a corner over the previous few months by laying down a set of demands during the protracted negotiations which had preceded the formation of the new government. Early in the negotiations, on 15 March, K.H. Abdul Wahb Hasbullah, the Rais Am of NU, had informed the PNI's formateur, Wilopo, that he wished to see Soekiman reappointed as prime minister, with, by his side in cabinet, Abu Hanifah as minister for foreign affairs, Zainal Arifin as minister for defence and Wahid Hasjim as minister for religions. The request concerning the Ministry of Religions became, on 20 March, a demand: if it was not given to NU, the organisation would leave Masyumi. Muhammadiyah, through one of its senior leaders, HAMKA, protested vociferously against this manoeuvre, which he judged to be contrary to party procedure. He also referred to the fact that questions concerning the composition of a new government came within the remit of Masyumi’s central executive and not of its constituent organisations. The reformist organisation wanted its own candidate, Faqih Usman, to get the position, which it had only ever occupied once, and it was eventually he who was appointed, following an internal vote organised to choose which party member would get the portfolio.

43 Hikmah, 10 May 1952.
44 The Rais Am, also known as the Rois Aam, is the title of the highest office within Nahdlatul Ulama. He is the president of the Supreme Council, also known as Syuriah, which runs the organisation and lays out its general policy.
45 These last two were members of NU.
46 Membership of Masyumi was made of individuals, known as ordinary members, but also religious organisations. The traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama and the modernist Muhammadiyah were by far the biggest religious groups in the party.
47 By H. Rasjadi in the second Sjahrir government in 1946.
Although the position of minister for religions was a relatively minor one, ranked 16th overall in the cabinet hierarchy, it was of capital importance to the large Muslim organisations. Occupying this position not only meant that an organisation could weigh upon government policy, but also, more importantly, it allowed them to assign people to a significant number of positions. They could appoint teachers, administrative officers for mosques, as well as religious judges, which enabled whatever organisation that occupied the ministry to reward part of its support base and also to spread its doctrine, be it traditionalist or modernist, throughout Indonesia. In the eyes of the modernist members of the Masyumi leadership, NU, by addressing its demands directly to the formateur, had violated the procedures in place and furthermore, its decision to found its own party had broken the unity of the umma, and had done so for base political motives. They reacted scornfully to the traditionalists’ decision and refused to even debate NU’s invitation to Masyumi to become a federation. One of the few reactions by the Masyumi leadership to the foundation of NU came from Prawoto Mangkusasmito, who described, in a declaration to the press, what he considered would be the sombre political destiny which now awaited NU following its departure from Masyumi:

If one accepts the point of view which maintains that Masyumi is a right-wing party, then all the objective evidence which we have at our disposal today indicates that NU will be an extreme right-wing party. History has taught us a lesson, however, which is that it is the nature of extremist parties, on the left or on the right, to always be in opposition, and so if ever they take over the reins of power, the government will gradually adopt a dictatorial system.

These comments are worthy of our attention not only for the fact that they contain an unprecedented admission that Masyumi was a right-wing party, but also because they reveal the bitterness of modernist leaders as well as their scornful attitude towards the ulama whenever these religious legal scholars became involved in secular issues.

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48 See Mohammad Natsir’s editorial in Hikmah, 16 April 1952.
50 Hikmah, 10 May 1952.
However, this appraisal of the threat posed by NU was soon shown to be flawed and the modernists were shortly to pay the political price for it. The other Muslim parties, who had up until that point been marginalised, could now join with Nahdlatul Ulama and constitute a fairly significant political force. This is what they duly did, creating the League of Muslims a few months after the foundation of the traditionalist party. This structure was loose enough to be able to preserve each of the three parties’ desire to remain independent, but owing to a lack of unity, it never managed to become a serious long-term rival to Masyumi. However, it did rapidly present itself to the PNI leadership who were tired of having to find an agreement with Masyumi in an effort to guarantee to the public its Muslim credentials.

After the fall of the Wilopo cabinet, on 3 June 1953, the usual long-drawn-out negotiations between the PNI and Masyumi started once again. Having received assurances from NU that it would not take part in any government which excluded the Muslim party from the cabinet table, Masyumi’s leaders refused to back down from certain positions they had adopted, notably refusing to accept certain candidates for ministerial positions whom they suspected of having Marxist leanings.

On 1 August, when the Ali cabinet was formed, it contained no Masyumi member and five members of the League of Muslims.

The modernist party was, in equal measure, surprised and disappointed by this move. NU’s split had heretofore not worried it unduly, but it now revealed its devastating effects as Masyumi was no longer the vital Muslim pillar of political stability, and found itself relegated to the opposition benches. A few days later, Abadi devoted its editorial to the new coalition, and behind the high-flown rhetoric of its declarations, which were somewhat contemptuous of its new political

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52 Liga Muslimin Indonesia.
54 In particular, Ong Eng Die, the PNI’s candidate for finance minister, and Arudji Kartawinatat, the PSI’s candidate for defence minister.
55 For NU: Zainul Arifin (second deputy prime minister), K.H. Masjkur (minister for religions) and Mohammad Hanafia (minister for agriculture); for the PSI: Abikusno Tjokrosujoso (minister for communications) and Subidjo (social affairs). Perti only entered government in November, when Sirjajuddin Abbas replaced Subidjo.
opponent, Masyumi’s justified concern was plain to see. Its status was changing from being the political incarnation of Islam within the state’s institutions to becoming a simple Muslim party amongst others.

Masyumi is not a political party in the common sense of the term, it is a political movement supported by a large majority of the Indonesian people. Ninety percent of the population is Muslim, and so the Ali government will be faced with an opposition which includes not only Masyumi but also the Indonesian people, who hold the Muslim religion in very high regard. In exchange for giving NU and PSII five cabinet seats (of which only two are important), the Ali government has received in Parliament only seven votes from NU and four from PSII. This support does not hold much weight in society. Without wishing to denigrate the influence of NU and PSII, we think that Wongsonegoro [the formateur] has not only pulled the wool over his own eyes, but has also pulled the wool over the eyes of the country’s Islamic community as well. It will not be long before the Islamic community asks NU and PSII why they preferred, for the sake of secondary seats in cabinet, to cooperate with non-Muslim parties rather than with Masyumi. We hope that they will get a sincere and appropriate answer to this question. If not, they [NU] will have to face not only the opposition of Masyumi, but also the opposition of the entire Muslim community.

The surprising longevity of the Ali government, in power for almost two years, condemned Masyumi to a long period of exile in opposition. They responded to the legitimacy of their Islamic rivals by portraying themselves as the champions of Islamic unity. A few weeks before the formation of the Ali cabinet, the modernist party had already tried to gain the upper hand over its rivals. In the first months of 1953, ulamas close to Masyumi attempted to set up a new body grouping together all Muslim organisations. A gathering of all the ulamas of Indonesia was held at the beginning of March 1953 on the initiative of an organisation known as the Front of Muslim Preachers of Medan (Front Muballigh Islam di Medan). Its goal was to try to

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56 Published on 7 August 1953, almost one week after the formation of the government, it was clearly not an ill-tempered reaction, but rather an interpretation of events which had no doubt been discussed at length by the newspaper’s management.
solve the thorny issue of the unity of the *umma*. To this end, it was proposed to unite the two existing federations: the Committee of the Indonesian Muslim Congress (Badan Kongres Muslimin Indonesia BKMI) and the League of Muslims, in a vast organisation called the Front for the Combat and Defence of Islam (Front Perdjoangan dan Pertahanan Islam). This initiative, which was strongly supported by Masyumi,\(^57\) failed when the League of Muslims refused to participate in it, fearing, with some justification, that their voice would be drowned out in an organisation dominated by Masyumi.\(^58\)

After the formation of Ali’s cabinet, calls for unity became increasingly insistent, though they generally came from Masyumi’s constituent organisations, or even from its readership, rather than its leadership.\(^59\) These appeals were relayed by the party’s press, and indeed hardly a week went by without *Abadi* or *Hikmah* devoting an article to it or publishing a letter about it. This abundance of pleas gave the impression that there was a strong degree of pressure coming from the party’s grassroots. Most declarations called on NU and the PSII to withdraw from Ali’s cabinet, for the all-important sake of unity amongst Islam’s political representatives. They were advised not to content themselves with listing the advantages which their participation in government bestowed upon them, such as “important positions” or “special [import] licences”, but to take stock also of the “losses” and “affronts” suffered by the Muslim community.\(^60\) Based on the notion that unity was a divine command, these pleas sometimes used methods which were slightly unorthodox but capable of capturing the public imagination. On 22 August 1954, for example, Little Aisyah, a nine-year-old mystic who toured Java for several months delivering inspired sermons

\(^{57}\) See Mohammad Saleh Suaidy’s declaration of support for the new organisation in *Abadi*, 28 February 1953.

\(^{58}\) *Abadi*, 25 February 1953.

\(^{59}\) In an article published in *Hikmah* on 26 September 1953, HAMKA explained that in numerous towns across the country, organisations calling for the Muslim community to unite were springing up. In Medan, the Islamic Preachers Front (Front Mubaligh Islam), in Jakarta the Contact Committee for Muslim Organisations (Badan Kontak Organisasi Islam) and in Yogyakarta the Union of Action of the Umma (Kesatuan Aksi Ummat Islam). See also the call for unity made by the leadership of Badan Serun Islam, *Abadi*, 12 November 1953.

\(^{60}\) See, for example, the editorial published in *Abadi* on 8 September 1954, about the NU congress which was just about to open.
to enthralled audiences, devoted part of her address to the issue, encouraging harmony and cooperation between the three Muslim parties.\textsuperscript{61}

The deleterious atmosphere which marked the final months of the Ali government finally put an end to the collaboration between the PNI and the parties of the League of Muslims. Already weakened by the increasing number of hostile declarations by the nationalist camp,\textsuperscript{62} government cohesion did not survive the rebellion of a part of the army chiefs of staff which took place during the months of May and June in protest against new nominations to the army which the cabinet had tried to impose. On 20 July, Nahdlatul Ulama declared that it wished to see the cabinet resign, and a mere three days later the government fell. The approaching elections had precipitated its collapse; the different leaders of the various Muslim parties could no longer turn a deaf ear to the calls for unity coming from their electoral base. On 15 June, a declaration of unity was signed by Mohammad Natsir for Masyumi, Arudji Kartawinata for the PSII, K.H. Dahlan for NU and H. Rusli Abdulwahid for Perti.\textsuperscript{63} Formed on 11 August 1955, the Boerhanoeddin government marked a moment of reconciliation between the different Muslim parties. Masyumi held three ministries in the new government while Nahdlatul Ulama and the PSII obtained two portfolios each. The greatest task facing the new government was the organisation of elections for the Constituent Assembly and the Parliament which were to take place in September and December 1955. In the run-up to the elections, no serious attempt was made to agree on an electoral alliance between the Muslim parties, and indeed Masyumi itself, despite the lip service it paid to the necessity for unity between

\textsuperscript{61}Abadi, 23 August 1954. The importance which Masyumi’s press placed on such accounts seems quite surprising, given that the modernists, who at that point comprised a significant majority of the party, were generally quite sceptical towards any reports of paranormal phenomena.

\textsuperscript{62}In September 1953, Kartawinata, the president of a small nationalist organisation PERMAI, allegedly said that the Prophet was a liar and the Koran empty of meaning. These reports caused outrage in the Muslim community. The head of Masyumi’s branch in West Java, Isa Anshary, asked for an enquiry to be opened (\textit{Abadi}, 18 November 1953). In January 1954, a huge demonstration was organised in Makassar by PSII (\textit{Abadi}, 5 January 1954). There were other similar controversies, one of which involved the leader of a local PNI branch, a certain Hardi (\textit{Abadi}, 2 February 1954).

\textsuperscript{63}Abadi, 16 June 1955.
the parties, was not particularly keen on the idea, convinced that it would win single-handedly. The election campaign did not really threaten the government’s cohesion, but once the campaign had ended, however, the first signs of tension between the parties soon appeared. In early December, NU and the PSII aired their misgivings in relation to the government’s policy on negotiations with the Netherlands. Unwilling to share the responsibility for these talks, they refused to participate in the delegation sent to Geneva. Following Boerhanoeddin Harahap’s decision to continue the negotiations, they withdrew their ministers from cabinet and called on the government to resign.

The inability of the Muslim parties to unite their efforts within the same government was a good illustration of the volatile nature of the young Republic’s provisional institutions. Differences in approach to the various challenges the successive governments had to face unquestionably existed, on questions such as diplomatic or domestic policy, for example. Nevertheless, these differences, much like the disagreements between Masyumi and the PNI, were ones of form rather than of substance. NU and Masyumi’s respective programmes show no fundamental difference between the two parties at this stage in their history. The prospect of an Islamic state was at this point too remote to create a clash over what exact Muslim doctrine it would be founded on. The dispute between NU and Masyumi was above all a question of power and personalities, much like the older quarrel between the PSII and Masyumi, which opposed the two parties despite the fact that they were both part of the modernist movement. If the PSII and NU left Masyumi in 1947 and 1952 respectively, it was because their leaders felt hampered by the party and poorly represented in its ruling body, but, above all, because the period lent itself to launching new political ventures. The successive ministerial crises constituted for every political party, irrespective of size, an opportunity to be grasped, and in the absence of a reliable means for accurately predicting the outcome of a nationwide vote, the prospect of a general election allowed all

64 Abadi, 7 December 1955.
65 The PSII on 18 January and NU on 19 January (Abadi, 19 and 20 January 1956). The Harahap government finally resigned on 3 March.
66 It is significant that the two major splits within Masyumi (the PSII in 1947 and NU in 1952) took place during negotiations for the formation of a new government.
parties to nurture wild dreams of electoral success. To achieve this, it was essential for parties, first of all, to make themselves known to the general public; following that, the next step was to differentiate themselves from rivals who had turned down coalition alliances, thus opening the door to ministerial office for a few months, which would pave the way for electoral success. It was precisely because Masyumi was unable to fulfil this role for the different branches of Islam and provide them with positions of power that PSII and NU broke away. The same interpretation of events was voiced by HAMKA, a member of the party’s executive committee, who formulated it in the shape of a self-assessment of the party in September 1953.67

Once it had regained its independence, NU’s great strength was to be able to collaborate with left-wing parties on the Indonesian political landscape and more importantly with the president. By doing this, they were able to outflank Masyumi, whose certainty about their own policies meant that they were less inclined to make concessions. Sukarno, who desired to go beyond the bounds of the limited institutional role given to him by the 1950 Constitution, benefitted from the support of the traditionalist party. In April 1954, a congress of ulamas close to NU gathered in Ciapanas in West Java, on the initiative of the minister for religions, K.H. Masjkur. It awarded the president the title of Ulil-Amri (meaning “those who are in command”), which gave Sukarno legitimacy as the Muslim leader of a country which did not fulfil all the criteria of an Islamic state. Although this move was no doubt motivated by considerations concerning Islamic law,68 in the context of the time it took on an important political dimension. It provoked reactions of indignation from Masyumi leaders as well as from the ulamas who had refused to participate in the congress.69

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67 “One of the points of contention within Masyumi which explains the departure of NU, the PSII and Perti (H. Siradjuddin Abbas [leader of Perti] was one of the founding members of Masyumi) was the fact that there was not yet any concrete guarantee of power-sharing.” Hikmah, 26 September 1953.


69 An editorial published in Abadi on 13 March 1954 contested the legitimacy of the conference, citing the names of several ulamas who had refused to attend it.
response to these objections, a senior civil servant in the Ministry of Religions explained that the decision concerned not only the president but also the Republic’s institutions, and that it would have no consequence on the president’s power, which was in any case very limited by the Constitution. The alliances between NU and left-wing parties, on the other hand, were a different issue. The modernist party could not really speak out against these as long as they only involved the PNI, but when the spectre arose of an unacceptably indulgent attitude on the part of NU towards the PKI, relations between the two Muslim parties became much more rancorous.

During the Ali government, NU leaders had made declarations concerning the attitude to adopt towards communism, which were, to say the least, contradictory. Part of the leadership adopted an attitude identical to that of Masyumi, consistently denouncing the danger which communism represented for Indonesia in general and for Islam in particular. K.H. Abdul Wahab Hasbullah, the rais am of Nahdlatul Ulama, was amongst those opposed to communism, and in a declaration made on 16 December 1954, he argued that there was a great danger that the communists would come to power in Indonesia, which would lead to a severe restriction of Muslims’ room for manoeuvre. He added that his organisation had “for some time” (semenjak dulu) been favourable towards banning the PKI. A few weeks later, the vice-president of NU’s leadership, K.H. Dahlan, declared in Abadi, that his party considered communism as “infidel” (kafir) and that during the Palembang congress, a resolution was voted banning party members who were not versed (awam) in communism’s doctrines from reading books on the subject. Another anti-communist crusader was Imron Rosjadi, the president of NU’s youth movement, Anshor, who regularly denounced the threats made by the PKI towards Masyumi. In an interview given to the daily newspaper Keng Po in June 1955, he promised that the members of his organisation would not for a moment hesitate to come to Masyumi’s help if the PKI carried out these threats. Later in 1960 when Masyumi was outlawed, Imron Rosjadi was one of the few NU figures to come to its defence.

70 Abadi, 10 March 1954.
71 Abadi, 17 December 1954.
72 Abadi, 17 December 1954.
73 A declaration which Abadi lost no time in publishing on 21 June 1955.
However, much to Masyumi’s concern, Nahdlatul Ulama’s call for toughness towards the PKI was not unanimous. NU’s participation in Ali’s cabinet, which was supported by the PKI, was severely criticised.74 What was more worrying still for the Masyumi leadership was the fact that certain figures within NU went as far as to evoke the possibility of cooperating with the communists. On 24 October 1954, the leader of the NU parliamentary group, A.S. Bachmid, declared that the importance which the PKI had acquired under the Ali government was greatly exaggerated, adding that the PKI was perfectly entitled to support the government if it wished to do so. For him, the cooperation between NU and the PKI was founded on a “common understanding of desired goals”.75 In January 1955, Nahdlatul Ulama’s leader in East Java, Murtadji Bisri, adopted a similar stance, declaring in *Keng Po* that he did not agree with the dichotomy generally put forward between Islamic law and communism. According to him, such an attitude was in danger of leading to a clash which would be damaging for the unity of the country. Here again, much ado was made of this declaration and it provoked horrified reactions in the Masyumi press.76

NU was not the only Islamic party Masyumi clashed with over the issue of cooperation with the communists. During the Ali government, the PSII also revealed an attitude of openness towards the PKI—in December 1954, PSII’s president, Arudji Kartawinata even went so far as to affirm that the alliance of nationalists, communists and Islam in Indonesia “was based on obvious reasons”.77 This stance earned him a sharp rebuke from Isa Anshary who, in a speech given in Palembang, regretted that PSII had abandoned the founding values of its pre-war predecessor.78

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74 See, for example, *Hikmah*’s editorial of 10 April 1954, criticising the Ali government, and by extension NU, for having “given to the PKI an opportunity to spread propaganda in favour of its campaign for the creation of a ‘Popular Republic of Indonesia’, akin to Moscow and Beijing.”


76 See *Abadi*, 10 January 1955. Masyumi’s press also echoed concerns voiced by NU figures worried about the rapprochement with the communists. *Hikmah*, 29 January 1955.

77 “...berdasarkan kenjataan2”, *Abadi*, 6 December 1954.

78 Ibid. In 1923, Sarekat Islam suddenly split from the Marxist movements which it had previously been quite close to.
Masyumi’s intransigent anti-communism constituted one of the party’s essential traits in the political battle that pitted it against its Muslim rivals. In their desire to be seen as the representatives of the entire Muslim community, its leaders avoided engaging in debates with their opponents in the PSII, NU and Perti on the topic of religious doctrine. By exploiting the ambivalent attitude of these three rivals towards the PKI, however, it became easy for them to claim to be the only party capable of building a solid rampart against communism.

Plate 3.3 Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo torn between his two wives, the PKI and Nahdlatul Ulama (Abadi, 21 January 1955).
**Intimate Enemies**

Up until 1950, the Indonesian Communist Party, which had very nearly been banned following the Madiun rebellion, existed both clandestinely and officially. An illegal PKI pulled the strings of the legal version of the party and also secretly controlled two puppet political parties: the Indonesian Labour Party (Partai Buruh Indonesia) and what was left of Amir Sjarifuddin’s party, the Socialist Party (Partai Soisalis). In January 1951, a group within the PKI led by three young party figures, D.N. Aidit, M.H. Lukman and Njoto, took over the party’s politburo. These three men remained at the head of the party until 1965 and they changed party policy to promote the development of both mass membership of the party and strategic alliances with other anti-imperialist political movements.\(^79\) From 1951, the party, whose membership until that point had only amounted to a couple of thousand, grew rapidly, and this became a real source of concern for Masyumi. Despite the fact that strikes were illegal, a significant number of them took place between January and August 1951, bringing the country to a halt. There were reports of the existence of pro-communist armed groups in the mountainous areas of Central Java.\(^80\) Following an armed attack in the port of Tandjung Priok in Jakarta, the Soekiman government, claiming that there was a plot to undermine national security, suddenly ordered the arrest of several thousand communist activists. The inability to produce sufficient evidence meant that the majority of those arrested were soon released, but the PKI remained a semi-clandestine party for several months afterwards and the incident embittered the rivalry between the Communist Party and Masyumi. During this forced exile from the political landscape, the communist leadership came to an awareness of the necessity to create an alliance with the country’s progressivist forces, which would be able to protect them against the attacks of their main enemies, Masyumi and the PSI.\(^81\) The PNI, President Sukarno and, to a lesser extent NU, soon appeared to them as possible allies in this enterprise. In order to counter the accusations of atheism that were aimed at the party, and which could

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\(^81\) Cayrac-Blanchard, *Le parti communiste indonésien*, p. 104.
constitute a stumbling block for the creation of such an alliance, the 
PKI strived to present the image of a party which was tolerant towards 
religions. D.N. Aidit, for example, declared that Indonesia should be 
“a garden where all religions and all political convictions would live in 
harmony and struggle together to crush imperialism.”

Masyumi’s anti-communist propaganda consisted in presenting 
what it considered to be the real face of communism. The party leaders 
unrelentingly called on people to return to the very sources of their 
political enemies’ doctrine. Natsir recalled Lenin’s teachings concerning 
the elimination of the Revolution’s opponents. In a speech made in 
Tandjung Priok in March 1954, Jusuf Wibisono referred to what he 
had experienced in a trip to Moscow to “the centre of communism”, 
which led him to the conclusion that a compromise between religion 
and communism was impossible. Masyumi’s leaders also warned their 
fellow countrymen about the PKI’s proposal to replace the reference to 
a single God in Pancasila with a simple affirmation of a principle of 
religious freedom, which would be the first step in a programme aimed 
at establishing a “freedom of anti-religious propaganda”.

The Masyumi leaders’ attacks on the PKI were not confined to 
the question of religion, however. At a rally in Yogyakarta in July 1954, 
Jusuf Wibisono was also eager to convince his audience of the “dicta-
torial character” of the Soviet regime. He denounced the repression of 
any opposition to the regime and the lack of a free press, which was 
reflected in the fact that Izvestia and Pravda were the only newspapers.

Having convinced the Indonesian public of the dangers of the Soviet 
system, Masyumi went on to explain why it appealed to the PKI. The 
Muslim party needed to show that behind the old tune which the 
Indonesian communists banged out about offering an original path for

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82 Ibid., p. 121. As a sign of his sincerity, Aidit explained that for the Muslim 
feast day Lebaran, which marks the end of Ramadan, communist leaders would 
visit Muslim authorities, adding that he personally spent Christmas in the com-
pany of Protestants.
83 Abadi, 1 March 1952.
84 Abadi, 30 March 1954.
85 See the declarations made by the Co-ordination Committee for Muslim Orga-
nisations (Badan Koordinasi Organisasi Islam, BKOI), close to Masyumi. Abadi, 
18 January 1955.
86 Abadi, 6 July 1954.
their country to follow, the face of totalitarianism lurked menacingly. One of the most commonly used arguments was to refer to the portraits of international communist figures which could be seen at PKI rallies. During a Masyumi rally in Jember on 21 July 1954, for example, Muchtar Chazaly, addressing the audience directly, asked them:

87 On 10 November 1955, Abadi published the declarations made by D.N. Aidit, stating that the PKI did not want the Republic of the Proclamation (Republik Proklomasi) to be transformed into an Islamic state or a state of Darul Islam (Negara Islam atau Negara Darul Islam), and that he had no intention either of declaring a communist state (Negara komunis). The newspaper added: “it is the same old tune played by communist leaders, but the people know exactly what the PKI wants in reality.”

Plate 3.4 The PKI separating the principle of a unique God from the rest of Pancasila (Hikmah, 26 June 1954).
“Is there anybody here who has a portrait of Eisenhower?” to which the “tens of thousands of people present” all replied in the negative. Chazaly logically concluded that Masyumi was not an American agent “as the communists claim”. The PKI, on the other hand, who often installed “portraits of foreign communist leaders, such as Malenkov, Mao Tse Tsung and others” was in the pocket of “foreign countries”.  

The confrontations between the two parties sometimes went further than the usual polemics. From 1954, the Masyumi press regularly reported on violent clashes, and one of the most enlightening of these happened on 28 April 1954, at a PKI rally held in Malang which was also attended by Masyumi supporters.  

In front of the rostrum from which the PKI’s first secretary made his speech, a banner was unrolled which read: “Woe upon the terrorist-bandits of the BKOOI and Masyumi.” According to the account given of D.N. Aidit’s speech in *Abadi*, he explained that the PKI was anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist, and also refuted any accusations presenting him as anti-religious. He declared, on the contrary, that it was Masyumi who was harming religion:

The Prophet was not a man whose ideas were like Masyumi’s, his Islam was better than Masyumi’s Islam. To vote for Masyumi is to wish for the world to go to hell. To join Masyumi is *haram*, whereas to join the PKI is *halal*.

This was a direct provocation and all hell broke loose in the audience. Neither the organisers of the rally nor the police force were able to restore order. One part of the audience shouted: “Lies! Not true! Remember Madiun!” The rostrum which Aidit was standing on was surrounded, but “representatives of Islam” intervened at this point, notably Hasan Aidid, the PKI president’s namesake who was in charge of the Surabaya branch of Masyumi. They attempted to calm everybody down, but the crowd demanded that D.N. Aidit withdraw his statement, which he finally did, returning to the rostrum to say:

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88 *Abadi*, 22 July 1954.
90 “Kutuk teroor-perampok Masjumi-BKOI.” A photo of the banner was published by *Abadi* on 17 May 1954.
If there are people among you who feel offended by what I said, I apologize to them, but I want to say that the PKI is not anti-religious.

Tempers in the room flared again, with cries of “Lies! It’s not true!” Aidit apologised a second time and a third, but the audience then demanded that the portraits of Marx, Engels and Aidit which were hanging proudly over the rostrum be replaced by those of Sukarno and Hatta. The hammer and sickle emblem was also taken off the wall, and it was only thanks to a police escort that Aidit was finally able to leave the venue.

This was Masyumi’s version of events, and naturally enough the PKI’s version was much different. In a statement made on 30 May 1954, D.N. Aidit declared that he had been the victim of an attempted assassination during the rally “the first time [this had happened] in Indonesian politics.” The first secretary of the Communist Party accused “a group of agitators led by Hasan Aidid of the Surabaya branch of Masyumi”.91 Far from being isolated cases, these clashes between

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communists and Masyumi during political rallies maintained a climate of violence which was exacerbated by the regular publication of two types of rumours: one concerning blasphemous acts and another about communist threats towards Muslim figures. The cases deemed to be the most serious were the insults to religious symbols. On 22 April 1955, for example, Abadi reported that on 27 March of that year a group of Muslim scouts from the village of Sutomujo, in the district of Tuban, were given a page of the Koran by an ice-cream street vendor bearing the emblem of the PKI and the inscription “Masyumi is a dog.” The Muslim daily was a bit sceptical about the veracity of these events and so remained prudent in its treatment of them, merely echoing the emotional reactions the affair provoked in the Muslim circles in the region. Concerning threats made against Masyumi, the party’s press often incriminated the communists whenever its members were beaten up by unknown individuals. On 11 April 1954, Abadi even drew attention to a report by the leadership of the Union of Indonesian Muslim War Veterans (Persatuan Bekas Pedjuang Islam Indonesia) confirming the existence of a secret instruction by the PKI ordering its members to “keep an eye on and eliminate” (mengawasi dan membasm) the leaders of Masyumi.

Nonetheless, numerous figures of the Muslim party, both locally and nationally, endeavoured to minimise the risk of direct confrontations between their supporters and those of the PKI. They made a clear distinction between an ideological battle and their struggle against communists, and often maintained cordial relations with their counterparts in the PKI. In Bandung, one of the local party figures, Umar Suriatmadja, regularly invited members of the local branch of the PKI

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92 On 22 July 1954, Abadi reported on a meeting held by the PKI in the village of Balung Kidul in Jember, which was “overrun by crowds”. A member of the audience asked one of the speakers why the portrait of the president but not of the vice president appeared behind the stage and was told by the communist officials that Sukarno was a friend of the PKI, whereas Mohammad Hatta was not “because his character is not good” (“karena pribadinya tidak baik”). As had happened many times before, the crowd flared up, shouted, “Lies! Lies!”, and attempted to climb onto the rostrum. Once again, the PKI officials owed their safety to the intervention of a group of young Muslims and, according to the newspaper, “no incident took place.”

93 “Masjumi seperti Asu”.

94 This was the case, for example, when Udin Sjamsuddin, the president of the Masyumi branch in North Sumatra, was assaulted. Abadi, 1 March 1955.
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to family events and religious events, and indeed he was often invited to their houses in return.\(^{95}\) Multiple testimonies have also shown that it was not unusual for Natsir himself to have tea at the Assembly’s cafeteria in the company of D.N. Aidit.\(^{96}\) On several occasions, these leaders intervened to avoid clashes between their supporters spilling over into violence. In June 1955, for example, a Masyumi member in Badung was found dead in suspicious circumstances, and the rumour quickly spread that he had died following an assault by communist sympathisers. In response to the seriousness of the accusations, the PKI sent a delegation to meet with Rusjad Nurdin and Umar Suriatmadja, the Masyumi leaders in West Java and Bandung, respectively. The preliminary enquiries, and particularly the autopsy report, established that the victim’s death was not due to an assault, which led Umar Suriatmadja to express his astonishment that such a rumour had appeared in the press. He reminded \textit{Abadi}’s readers that in Islam it was a very serious offence to falsely accuse somebody without foundation.\(^{97}\)

This desire for a more moderate approach can no doubt explain the lukewarm reception given to Isa Anshary’s Anti-communist Front. Founded in September 1954 by the turbulent president of the West Java branch of Masyumi, this group aimed, according to its proponents, at thwarting the PKI’s efforts to create a Democratic Popular Front (Front Demokrasi Rakjat).\(^{98}\) However, during the national tour which he undertook to develop his organisation, Isa Anshary met with wariness from Masyumi leaders. In Palembang on 4 December, he announced his intention to form a local branch of the Anti-communist Front, but the president of the South Sumatra section of Masyumi, Djadil Abdullah, politely refused his invitation to join. He explained that the local leadership had not yet discussed the question and that Isa Anshary’s initiative was primarily a regional one.\(^{99}\) Similar misgivings were advanced by the national leadership of the party. In November, the \textit{ulamas} of Persis\(^{100}\) announced their support for the Anti-communist

\(^{95}\) Interview with Umar Suriatmadja, Bandung, September 1955.
\(^{97}\) \textit{Abadi}, 21 June 1955.
\(^{98}\) \textit{Abadi}, 14 September 1954.
\(^{99}\) \textit{Abadi}, 6 December 1954.
\(^{100}\) Persatuan Islam was a radical reformist organisation which was very influential in West Java. Isa Anshary was its spiritual guide.
Front and adopted an intransigent position towards the wayward Muslims “in a party in opposition to the laws of Islam”, who, if they persisted would have to be considered as apostates (murtad) and could not be buried or honoured religiously.\textsuperscript{101} In response, Masyumi’s religious council (the Madjelis Sjuro) adopted a more moderate stance, merely remarking that communism was, according to Islam, an atheist (kufur) doctrine and that those who adhered to it knowingly were infidels (kafir). Mohammad Natsir, for his part, declared that although many Masyumi members had joined the Anti-communist Front, the party had no links with it.\textsuperscript{102}

Between 1950 and 1956, Masyumi’s political influence progressively waned. In 1949, it was considered to be the largest political organisation in the country and was an essential pillar of all coalition governments, but clouds began to appear on the horizon after Natsir and his inner circle took over the reins of the party in 1950. In response to the new leadership’s policies, the PNI, NU, PSII and the PKI gradually sketched the outlines of an informal alliance which united around the figure of Sukarno. Natsir and his allies at the head of Masyumi could now only count on the support of three political parties—Sjahrrir’s PSI and the two Christian parties, Parkindo and Partai Katholik—which, though prestigious, were modest in size. This position was shown to be a very fragile one, given the serious crises which successive Indonesian governments had to overcome during this period.

**Islamic Rebellions—Masyumi and Its Wayward Brothers**

Between 1950 and 1956, five of the country’s regions were the scenes of major rebellions inspired by Islam. These uprisings were the after-shocks of the period known as the Physical Revolution and constituted the main concern of the five successive governments in power during the period. Before 1957, national political leaders were united in a common cause to fight against these rebellions, and even if they did not always agree on the methods to be adopted, they managed to prevent the insurrections from posing any real threat to the Republic's

\textsuperscript{101} Abadi, 12 November 1954. The ulamas were quoting verse 11 of the Koran to support their decision.

\textsuperscript{102} Abadi, 30 December 1954.
territorial integrity. Subsequently, however, movements which associated themselves with Darul Islam rediscovered a regionalist dimension which had previously been toned down for the benefit of the ideal of an Islamic state, and began to participate in a motley coalition opposed to President Sukarno’s Guided Democracy. With support now coming from part of the political classes, including certain Masyumi leaders, this coalition planned to extend its political struggle beyond the capital to the whole of Indonesia. Masyumi was involved in the rebellions which took place between 1950 and 1956 in two different respects. On the one hand, some of its local branches which identified with the party’s revolutionary heritage took part in the rebellions, and so left the party as a whole open to criticism and also to clampdowns by the government. However, at the same time, as one of the main parties of government, Masyumi also attempted—both through negotiation and repression—to guide their wayward brothers back to the right path, and away from the “shortcut” they had taken which turned out in fact to be a dead end.103

Revolutionary Movements Hostile to Any Diplomatic Concession

Throughout the 1950s, West Java, which was the cradle of the Darul Islam movement in Indonesia, remained the epicentre of the struggle between republican troops and supporters of an Islamic state. The split between the movement led by Kartosuwirjo and the Republic was a progressive one. Each diplomatic agreement with the Dutch gave those in favour of an insurrection against the Republic a new pretext to lay another stepping stone towards that goal, and finally, on 7 August 1949 in the village of Cisampang, an Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia) was proclaimed.104 Despite the efforts of the republican

103 “We see some of our own members, who fought in the Revolution choosing a shortcut (jalan pendek) in the desire to reach the summit quickly.” Speech by Mohammad Natsir made in Medan on 2 September 1953, and published the next day in Abadi.
104 Kartosuwirjo had been forced to leave his headquarters in Mont Sawal, which he considered to be his Mecca, and fled to Cisampang, which he rechristened Medina. A visit to Mont Sawal for Darul Islam’s combatants was the equivalent of the Hijra, the pilgrimage to Mecca. Cees Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p. 92.
army, Darul Islam managed throughout the first half of the fifties to reinforce its influence and its military capacity. At its height, around 1957, the rebellion was able to mobilise almost 13,000 men and had at its disposal 3,000 firearms, including machine guns and mortars.\textsuperscript{105} At this point, its troops controlled large zones in the counties of Tasikmalaya, Ciamis and Garut, as well as the region around Cianjur, and from their hiding places in the mountains they frequently launched attacks on the nearby villages.

In the region of Central Java, three guerrilla movements claiming to belong to Darul Islam were active during the 1950s. Although they maintained some contact with the rebels in West Java, they neither managed to join forces with them nor to develop their military capability. As a result, republican army operations rapidly reduced their number to a few groups of armed pillagers who were more concerned about their own survival than about the creation of an Islamic state.\textsuperscript{106}

In South Sulawesi, the militia groups who had fought against the Dutch, assisted by former soldiers of the KNIL (the Royal Army of the Dutch East Indies), had grouped together and joined the Union of South Sulawesi Guerrillas (Kesatuan Gerilya Sulawesi Selatan, KGSS). In 1950, after talks with the government, their demand to be integrated \textit{en masse} into the republican army was refused by the government.\textsuperscript{107} The officer in charge of the negotiations, the former guerrilla coordinator for all of East Indonesia, Abdul Kahar Muzakkar, was outraged by the government’s attitude and resigned. Although he was at the head of the KGSS, an organisation containing 15,000 men which was now banned, he continued to help the republican troops in their battle against the KNIL’s last remaining revolutionary units. However, at the beginning of August, a republican unit killed two leading guerrilla

\textsuperscript{105} Van Dijk, \textit{Rebellion under the Banner of Islam}, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{106} Amir Fatah’s mujahideen, K.H. Machfudz’s Army of Umma (Angkatan Umat Islam) and the Hizbullah troops battalion 426. See Van Dijk, \textit{Rebellion under the Banner of Islam}, p. 127–56. Some of these insurgents had rebelled because of the social revolution which had affected the regions of Brebes, Tegal and Permalang during the first months of independence. Anton Lucas, “The Tiga Daerah Affair: Social Revolution or Rebellion?”, in \textit{Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution, Unity from Diversity}, ed. Audrey Kahin (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 1985).

\textsuperscript{107} The combatants wished to create a brigade within the army in memory of Hasanuddin, the Sultan of Goa, who in the 17th century had briefly succeeded in resisting the Dutch invasion. Ibid., p. 169.
Map 3.1  Movements linked to Darul Islam between 1949 and 1960.

1 - Darul Islam led by Kartosuwirjo
2 - Moudjahadin led by Amr Fatah
3 - The Army of the Umma led by K.H. Machfudz
4 - The Rebellion of the Diponegoro Division’s battalions (no. 423 and 426).
5 - Darul Islam led by Kahar Muzakkar
6 - The Union of the Oppressed People led by Ibnu Hadjar
7 - Darul Islam in Aceh.
figures during a meeting which had been planned in advance, and this military blunder marked the beginning of a real rebellion against the Republic. The incident reinforced the population’s sympathy towards the rebels, and the conflict rapidly took on an ethnic dimension.\(^{108}\) Despite efforts by the army and attempts to reconcile the two sides, the Indonesian authorities were not able to stamp out to the rebellion.\(^{109}\) Meanwhile, Kahar Muzakkar had made contact with Kartosuwirjo, and on 20 January 1952, he officially accepted command of the Indonesian Islamic Army (Tentara Islam Indonesia) for South Sulawesi. In August 1953, Muzzakar proclaimed Sulawesi a part of the Indonesian Islamic Republican State (Negara Republik Islam Indonesia), and on 1 January 1955, Kartosuwirjo named him deputy minister of defence.\(^{110}\)

In Kalimantan, located in the Indonesian part of Borneo, the rebellion against the republican government broke out, like in Sulawesi, when the creation of the unitary state was announced in 1950. However, it never had the same scope as the Uprisings organised by the other organisations affiliated to Darul Islam, and although it certainly mobilised several thousand men, they never had more than a few dozen firearms between them. The main zone affected by this rebellion was the county of Hulusungai; the provincial capital, Banjarmasin, on the other hand, was only occasionally threatened by rebel attacks.\(^{111}\) The rebellion was led by Ibnu Hadjar, a former officer of the Marine Fourth Division (the Angkatan Laut Republik Indonesia Divisi IV, otherwise

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\(^{109}\) As the authorities were aware that the South Sulawesi guerrillas, who requested to be given an important role in the military organisation of the region, were a lot better organised than those in West Java, they finally agreed to create a Hasanuddin Brigade. However, on the morning of 17 August 1951, the date planned for the official inauguration of the brigade, the government officials found the camp deserted. The former guerrillas had retreated to the jungle, bringing with them the money and the 5,000 uniforms they had just been given. Kahar Muzakkar justified this decision by explaining that the army had not respected the unwritten clauses of the agreement, namely the release of their men from prison and the transferral of the officers involved in the Udjung Pandang incident. *Hikmah*, 22 September 1951.

\(^{110}\) Kahar Muzakkar did not use the official name given to the state founded by Kartosuwirjo, which was called Negara Islam Indonesia. *Abadi*, 8 August 1953.

\(^{111}\) Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam*, p. 218.
known as ALRI Div IV), which for four years had successfully tor-
tmented the Dutch troops and which often received support from those
amongst the population who were unhappy with the new republican
order. After re-establishing their control in the region, the Jakartan
authorities had undoubtedly upset the fragile social and economic equi-
librium established by ALRI Div IV under which the local population
had prospered for four years. During that time, the local farmers were
cut off from the country’s cities, and as a result, organised themselves
into cooperatives. They managed to completely control the means of
production and channels of distribution of rubber, but when commu-
nication with the rest of the country was re-established, retailers from
the cities were able to regain control over the rubber trade.\footnote{112}

Ibnu Hadjar did not rally behind Darul Islam until the end of
1954, when Kartosuwirjo offered him a seat in the government of the
Islamic State of Indonesia. Given the modest size of the Kalimantan
guerrilla, Ibnu Hadjar only received a secondary position in cabinet,
that of \textit{menteri Negara}, which literally means minister of state, but
which in reality meant that he was a minister without a portfolio.
However, he was named commander of the Islamic Indonesian Army
in Kalimantan. This integration into the Darul Islam movement, how-
ever, amounted to nothing more than an Islamisation of Ibnu Hadjar’s
political rhetoric. He took on the title of \textit{Ulil Amri}, the “Authority” of
the Islamic kingdom, and he had a new Indonesian national anthem
composed, but he carried out no substantial reforms in the territory he
controlled.

The rebellion in Aceh, a region in the very north of Sumatra,
broke out in 1953. It was the result of a complex mix of social, reli-
gious and political demands, and it came to an end in 1959 once the
rebels’ main demand—the creation of an autonomous province—was
satisfied. Following the proclamation of independence, the republican
government, in Aceh as elsewhere, looked for the most experienced
people to be its representatives. It was therefore logical for it to confide
most of the young administration’s responsibilities to the \textit{uléébalang}, the
traditional elite, just as the Dutch and Japanese had done previously.\footnote{113}

\footnote{112} Ibid., p. 250. 
\footnote{113} The \textit{uléébalang} generally held the titles of \textit{Teuku}, while the \textit{ulama} held that of
\textit{Teungku}; ibid., p. 270.
Between December 1945 and January 1946, they had to face violent opposition in the shape of a “social revolution” which was led by the region’s *ulama* and resulted in many of this elite being killed. The surviving *uléëbalang* had to give up their hereditary rights, and were removed from the positions they had occupied within the republican administration.

This outburst of violence was in fact part of an older conflict between traditional and religious elites. Since 1939, the religious elites had been part of the Union of Ulama of Aceh (Persatuan Ulama-Ulama Seluruh Atjeh), and one of its founders, Teungku Daud Beureu’eh, had established himself as the region’s strong man in the five years that followed the proclamation of independence. During that period, Aceh found itself in a situation of de facto autonomy, and after the elimination of the *uléëbalang*, Daud Beureu’eh took the rank of military governor, a position which was officially confirmed in May 1949 by Sjafruddin Prawiranegara’s emergency government (PDRI). Prawiranegara, who was named deputy prime minister with authority over the question of Sumatra after the republican government was released, divided North Sumatra into two provinces and established Daud Beureu’eh as governor of Aceh in December 1949.

When the unitary Republic of Indonesia was created, however, this new administrative division was abandoned, much to the disappointment of the local population. Subsequently, tensions continued to grow in the area and in September 1953, Daud Beureu’eh and his allies, faced with the threat of being arrested, took to the nearby mountains. The former governor saw his rebellion as part of a struggle in the name of Islam, but although contacts were made with Kartosuwirjo’s government, the Aceh branch of Darul Islam never considered becoming part of the Islamic State of Indonesia. The government’s successive clampdowns in response to this rebellion were not really effective. Far from weakening Darul Islam’s troops, the army’s offensives reinforced the local population’s support, something which the chiefs of military staff themselves recognised in 1956. After much hesitation, Ali Sastroamidjojo’s second cabinet adopted the measures which had previously been initiated by Boerhanoeddin Harahap, and a law was passed in December 1956 which established Aceh as an autonomous province,

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114 On the role of the *uléëbalang*, who were theoretically the officers of the sultan but who in actual fact were local potentates, see James Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 10 ff.
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with A. Hasjami, one of the senior figures of pre-war PUSA, as its first
governor.115

The rebellions linked to Darul Islam were principally motivated by
regionalist demands. These were often accompanied by a social dimen-
sion which can be explained by the proximity between the traditional
regional elites and the republican government. With the exception of
Aceh, religious considerations appeared as a secondary factor in the out-
break of rebellions. The reference to an Islamic state may have allowed
the movement to organise itself on a national level, but it never de-
veloped into anything more than a shared opposition to the republican
state, and the Negara Islam Indonesia never constituted a serious alter-
native to the regime in Jakarta.

“Masyumi = DI”? The Responsibility of Masyumi
in the Islamic Rebellions

Masyumi’s political opponents regularly drew attention to the rebellions
organised by Darul Islam, which for many years became a burden for
the party and tarnished its reputation. The PKI’s propaganda machine
constantly harped on about Masyumi’s supposed involvement in these
Islamic revolutionary movements, and it was popularised by the slogan
“Masyumi = DI”, which rang out at political rallies. This association was
not just confined to communist circles, and indeed General Suharto
used it in 1969 as an argument to reject the plea made by Masyumi’s
former leaders for their party’s revival.116 Between these accusations
and the blatant insincerity of certain Masyumi figures concerning their
complicity with the insurgents, it is difficult to determine the extent of
the party’s involvement in these rebellions. There was no doubt a link
between certain regional party structures and the rebellions, but at the
same time, the party never refused to condemn the insurgents’ actions.
It should also be remembered that the backdrop to this turbulent
period was made up of a poisonous combination of rumours, secret
emissaries and arbitrary arrests.

A study of the senior figures and combatants belonging to Darul Islam in Indonesia reveals undeniable links between the insurgent

115 At the same time, a former head of the Islamic guerrilla received the military
command of the region of Aceh. Discussions then took place with the political
representatives of Darul Islam. They were about to reach an agreement when the
PRRI-Permesta revolt broke out.

116 Cf. Infra, Epilogue.
organisations and Masyumi. Of the seven movements who claimed to belong to DI, four of them drew a significant portion of their supporters from Masyumi or from its militia group, Hizboellah.

Kartosuwirjo, for example, had been one of Masyumi’s founders at the congress in November 1945. He was a member of the party leadership and was named as one of the five Masyumi representatives on the KNIP’s executive committee during its fifth session held in Malang between February and March 1947. In addition, he showed his attachment to Masyumi in July 1947 when Amir Sjarifuddin’s cabinet was formed: as a former leader of the PSII, which had been reformed in order to participate in the government, he was offered the post of second deputy minister for defence, but refused because, as he wrote at the time, given that he was not yet involved in the PSII, he “still [felt] obliged towards Masyumi”. It was also in the name of Masyumi that in November 1947 he set up in Garut and in Tasikmalaya, in West Java, two organisations to help the Muslim community. When Kartosuwirjo chose the path of secession in February 1948, it was completely logical for him to suspend, with the agreement of the local leaders of GPII, Hizboellah and Sabilillah, Masyumi’s activities in West Java. In this region, the party’s organisational infrastructure

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117 The records of the congress, however, do not attribute any official position to him within the party, contrary to what Pinardi claimed (Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo [Jakarta: Aryaguna, 1964], p. 31). Quoted by Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 81. He presented Kartosuwirjo as the first secretary of the party, a position occupied in fact by Harsono Tjokroaminoto Pinardi (Soesoenan Poetjoek Pimpinan Partai “Masjoemi”, in Pengoeroes Besar Partai Masjoemi, Masjoemi, Partai Politik Oemmat Islam Indonesia [Jogjakarta, 1945], p. 3).

118 Quoted in Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 83.

119 See supra. Chapter 2.

120 There is a lot of uncertainty surrounding this question. The debates between ulamas which took place at the congress in December 1949 shed a different light. It was said that the Masyumi branch and its constituent organisations in West Java decided to break up in order to better fight against the Dutch. During these debates, allusion was also made to an organisation called Darussalam which was said to have fought, with the help of the Dutch, against the Darul Islam movement. Did this organisation have links with Masyumi? The participants in the debate remained silent on that question, and highlighted the deep state of confusion which reigned in the region at that time. Badan Usaha dan Penerbitan Muslimin Indonesia, Kongres Muslimin Indonesia, 20–29 Desember 1949 di Jogjakarta (undated), pp. 50–2.
was undoubtedly at the origin of the rebellion and Masyumi’s national leadership took many months before finally managing to reorganise a regional branch under the direction of Isa Anshary, one of the leaders of Persis.

In Aceh, a comparable situation existed. PUSA was one of the constituent organisations of Masyumi and the party’s regional head was none other than Daud Beureu’eh. In fact, one of the reasons he instigated a rebellion was Masyumi’s removal from government. The replacement of the Wilopo cabinet—within which the modernist party exercised considerable influence—by the Ali cabinet, which did not contain a single Masyumi member but enjoyed support from the PKI, was interpreted in Aceh as a sign that the central government had fallen into the hands of Islam’s enemies. Despite the undeniable involvement of Masyumi’s regional branch in the rebellion, which was exploited by its political opponents, the national leaders of the party strenuously denied any accusation of the party’s complicity. Kasman Singodimedjo, for example, in an analysis of the events in Aceh given in October 1953, while recognising the involvement of numerous members of his party in the events, explained that the problem was to know if they did so as members of Masyumi or for other reasons. He was also angered at the fact that, for most commentators, the person in charge of the revolution was Daud Beureu’eh “the member of Masyumi”, and not Daud Beureu’eh “the former governor of the province of Aceh.”

The involvement of Masyumi appears to be less direct in the three rebellions in Central Java. Two of those rebellions—the one led by Amir Fatah and the one instigated by the Diponegoro division—originated in the former units of the Hizboellah. However, the third—Angkatan Umat Islam—had no direct link with the party. Unlike in Aceh and West Java, the Masyumi leadership managed to protect the party’s organisational structure in this region from the contagion of revolutionary Islam, thus depriving the rebels of both the logistical and popular support which they would soon be badly in need of.

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121 Kasman forgot to mention, however, that Daud Beureu’eh had been appointed to this position by Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, a member of the Masyumi leadership.

122 Amir Fatah claimed to be the president of the Central Masyumi Defence Council (Dewan Pembelaan Masjumi Pusat); Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 138. This position was in fact occupied by Wahid Hasjim, Al-Djihad, 12 October 1946. Amir Fatah’s usurpation of this title was interesting insofar as it shows how the party, even when it was under fire, remained an indispensable means of gaining credibility within the Muslim community.
In Sulawesi, as in Kalimantan, the rebels for the most part originated from various guerrilla groups unhappy with the future prospects offered to them by the government of the unitary state. Although they had sometimes been part of Islamic movements in their youth, (Kahar Muzakkar, for example, had been a pre-war member of Muhammadiyah), their demands concerning Islam seemed secondary and they joined Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam more out of political opportunism than because of their Islamic convictions. Masyumi and its constituent organisations were in fact very thin on the ground in these regions before August 1950, and the groups which the party was closest to remained loyal to the Republic. In Kalimantan, for example, Hassan Basri, the founder and vice president of one of Masyumi’s constituent organisations, the Union of Indonesian Muslims (Serikat Muslimin Indonesia, SERMI), worked hand in hand with his virtual namesake, Hasan Basry, to stop the rebellion from spreading. Hassan Basri was subsequently named as Masyumi’s representative for South Kalimantan in the Parliament of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia, and afterwards appointed to the unitary state’s Provisional Assembly.123

It was for their alleged support for the movements of Darul Islam, as opposed to their actual participation in rebellions, that numerous members of Masyumi were pursued by the Indonesian army. As the elections of 1955 later showed, the regions in question were strong bastions of support for the party. Nonetheless, in most cases, the assistance given locally to the rebels did not signify a complete adherence to the ideals of Darul Islam. During the fighting, numerous villages found themselves caught in a quandry, with each side suspecting villagers of supporting their opponents and punishing them accordingly.124 An acronym was coined to describe these local populations who were obliged to keep both sides happy. They became known as Kongres because they used to explain to Darul Islam that they supported it (menyokong), while assuring republican troops that everything was in order (beres).125

123 KH. Hasan Basri 70 Tahun (Jakarta: Media Da’wah, 1990), pp. 29–55.
124 In January 1953, for example, the KRYT burned down 50 houses in a village in South Kalimantan whose inhabitants had gone to see President Sukarno, on a trip to the region. Later the same day, more houses were burned down in the same village by the army in response to suspected support by villagers of the rebels. Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 259.
125 Ibid., p. 105. Karl D. Jackson talks of gonta-ganti villages, meaning villages which alternated between the two sides. The inhabitants in these villages could
In these villages, the government clamped down particularly on Masyumi members and local party leaders. The party’s press gave a faithful account of the considerable number of arrests which were made between 1951 and 1953 at all levels of the party. In June 1951, for example, in Bondosowo, a locality near Surabaya, 600 members of the local Masyumi branch were arrested and put in prison. Most of the time, however, only the party’s senior figures were targeted. In August of the same year, during the large wave of repression which followed the breakdown in negotiations in West Java, several members of Masyumi’s regional membership were arrested, including Isa Anshary, head of the party in West Java. A few days later, K.A. Hassan, the president of Persis and part of Natsir’s inner circle, was also placed in custody.

The region of Sukabumi was particularly affected by the government’s campaign of repression. Military police arrested the local head of the party in July 1953; he was arrested again in June 1955, this time along with several other of the local branch’s senior figures. In most cases, these arrests took place without any official reason and the people concerned were released again a few days later after questioning. In some cases, however, detention periods could last longer, and the party responded by forming a “Committee for the Defence of

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126 Suara Partai Masjumi, 29 June 1951.
127 Berita Masjumi, 28 August 1951. The article recounting this event allows us to see a technique frequently used in the Masyumi press when it came to reporting on rebellions. Before mentioning the most plausible hypothesis—that Isa Anshary had been arrested for supporting Darul Islam—a highly improbable explanation was given of Isa Anshary’s alleged involvement in an attempted pro-communist coup d’état. Such an idea is outrageous when you remember how virulently anti-communist he actually was.
128 Berita Masjumi, 31 August 1951.
129 Abadi, 28 July 1953 and 6 June 1955.
130 At the time, the Masyumi press claimed, disingenuously, not to know the reasons behind these arrests.
Political Prisoners belonging to the Masyumi Family of Central Java” (Panitia Pembela Tahanan Politik Keluarga Masyumi Djawa Tengah). In December 1952, the committee thanked the command of the Diponegoro Division in Semarang for releasing party members, and asked for the same clemency to be extended to the remaining prisoners based on the somewhat curious basis that with the election on the horizon, these prisoners, who were being held without trial, had to be given the opportunity to vote.\(^{131}\)

Most of those charged were not really complicit in the rebellion in the sense that they did not support the rebels’ struggle against the republican state. According to H. Marcoesyah, a former local party leader for the village of Banjarsai in West Java, the members of his branch did not contest the position of the central party leadership condemning the rebels’ machinations. Nonetheless, it was impossible for these party members to turn down offers of help, in the form of food, money or medical treatment, to their family members who had joined the Indonesian Islamic Army.\(^{132}\)

**Masyumi’s Policy concerning Darul Islam**

As of 1949, the party had to progressively clarify its position with respect to the Darul Islam rebels, as it ran the risk otherwise of becoming associated with them. Masyumi was swift to issue a condemnation in principle of the rebels’ actions, but its message remained for a long time quite conciliatory, insisting on Islamic movements’ original military goal, namely the fight against the Dutch. Although the party understood the rebel population’s discontent and shared some of their ideals, it nonetheless did not intend to sanction their methods. It was concerned about the possibility of a religious war breaking out in Indonesia, and it presented itself as the architect of a “psychological solution”, as opposed to the “military solution” which a significant portion of the Indonesian political class was calling for.

The job of establishing an official party line on the question of Darul Islam fell to the fourth Masyumi congress, held in December 1949 in Yogyakarta. Thanks to the reports of the meetings between *ulama* present at the congress, it is possible to get a fairly clear picture of the debates which preceded the adoption of the motion on DI.

\(^{131}\) *Berita Masjumi*, 2 December 1952.

\(^{132}\) Interview with H. Marcoesyah, Banjarsari, September 1996.
Several of those who spoke, notably Munawar Cholil, one of the most influential ulamas within Masyumi, emphasised the fact that there existed "several sorts of DI”. Some of these movements, it was said, were even “the work of the Dutch, created to achieve their policy aims”. For these religious figures, the complexity of the situation required one to avoid any rash condemnation and necessitated, above all, the organisation of an official fact-finding committee.\textsuperscript{133} The resolution on DI which was adopted by the congress reflected these hesitations. It urged the government to create a commission of enquiry in order to explore all the available solutions, and also asked the authorities to offer “a real opportunity for the divine ideology and religion to develop in all levels of society", and to avert “any measures which were likely to dishearten the Muslim community and to offend its religious sensibilities”\textsuperscript{134}. The resolution also condemned, for good measure, all attempts at secession in the country, although it only did so implicitly. It launched a warning, in terms that were as cautious as they were convoluted, about the dangers of the “direct path”, reminding the public that:

> Whether in its domestic policy or its foreign policy, Masyumi remains committed to the goals outlined in article two of its statute, namely to preserve the sovereignty of Indonesia which resulted from the Revolution of the Indonesian nation on 17 August 1945, and also to achieve the ideals of Islam on a national scale. [The Congress wishes] Masyumi in particular and the Indonesian umma in general to become more aware of the fact that the situation requires this ideal to be accomplished by good deeds which need to be better organised and closer to the real goals of the party.\textsuperscript{135}

In the weeks following this warning, Masyumi’s attitude towards Darul Islam in West Java remained conciliatory. In an article entitled “Concerning the Problem of Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam”, for example, Sjarif Usman reminded his readers that the rebel leader had proclaimed his Islamic state in a zone controlled by the Dutch and not in the Republic’s territory, and as such, was serving the interests of the nation.\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{133} Badan Usaha dan Penerbitan Muslimin Indonesia, Kongres Muslimin Indonesia, 20–29 Desember 1949 di Jogjakarta, pp. 41–54.
\textsuperscript{134} Berita Partai Masjumi, February 1950.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{136} "Sekitar soal Darul Islam-Kartosuwirjo", Suara Partai Masjumi, April–May 1950.
Two months later, an article by Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, “The Indonesian State as a Darul Islam”, clearly showed that the language used had none of the inflammatory rhetoric which it was later to acquire.\footnote{“Negara Indonesia sebagai Darul Islam”, Suara Partai Masjumi, August–September 1950.} Without making any reference to the movement in West Java, the author expounded the benefits of this “Darul Islam”, but by doing so insinuated that Kartosuwirjo should not deter Muslims from their principal objective of establishing an “Abode of Islam”. It was only over the following months that the party’s position became clearer, no doubt in response to the growing dangers posed to it by any association with Darul Islam. As the idea of Darul Islam could now no longer be distinguished, in the eyes of the public, from the idea of a rebellion against the Republic, Masyumi thereafter refrained from mentioning it. Following the growing number of arrests made of its members, the party leadership intended to distance itself more clearly from the dissident groups. On 21 January 1951, it published a declaration which, through the rhetorical device of repetition, was intended to appear unequivocal:

1. Although Masyumi has, on several occasions, explained the difference in political opinions between the Masyumi party and the Darul Islam movement, it seems that, for a number of people, this difference of opinion is not clear enough.
2. This difference of opinion is not yet clear enough for, amongst others, the employees of our government, particularly low-ranking officials.
3. Therefore, the party leadership considers it necessary to publish a clarification specifying the differences in political opinion between Masyumi and the Darul Islam movement.
4. Masyumi wishes to achieve its goals by following a path of parliamentary democracy, following a path which is in conformity with the Constitution and with the laws of the Republic of Indonesia.
5. With this declaration, we hope that the difference of opinion between Masyumi and the Darul Islam movement will be clearer in the public mind.\footnote{This declaration was to be adopted again by the fifth party congress in February 1951, and could also be found in Berita Masjumi, 24 January 1952.}
A year later, the warning addressed by Mohammad Natsir to the members of his party susceptible to being caught up in the revolutionary wave was even stronger. He alerted his fellow countrymen to the dangers of various forms of “populism which strike in particular young minds and the most desperate among us”. He referred specifically to the attempts aimed at creating a “state within the state” undertaken by “extremist movements, both left-wing and right-wing (Darul Islam in the region of Priangan and the Popular Republic of Indonesia [Republik Rakjat Indonesia] near Tjirebon).”

For the Masyumi president the discontent of a part of the people was understandable, but the party’s duty should be to “preserve the Republic of Indonesia, which is the fruit of our holy war” and to “enshrine the principles of Islam in the Constitution”. However, Natsir reminded his audience that this had to be done “by following the usual paths in a democratic country”, and that any other attitude would be considered irresponsible (“if the house which we have just built does not satisfy our wishes, are we going to burn it straight away?”), “suicidal” and “contrary to God’s design”.

The party’s position towards Darul Islam remained the same subsequently. At the beginning of February 1952, one of Masyumi’s radical members, Isa Anshary, who was head of the party in West Java, joined in the chorus. He reminded Berita Masyumi’s readers of Article Four of the party’s statutes, forbidding its members from becoming affiliated to any other political organisation whatsoever, adding that “Darul Islam should not be an exception to that rule”. Once Masyumi’s ideological position had been clarified, its leaders hammered home the message that it was now no longer possible to associate the party with Darul Islam, and endeavoured to provide their supporters with arguments proving this. Mohammad Natsir, for example, pointed out that Masyumi was banned in the regions controlled by Kartosuwirjo, and criticised “those who wonder if the ultimate goals of Masyumi and DI are the same”. For him, such a question could “only be the fruit of an immature mind” or else was an instance of pure

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139 Berita Masjumi, 24 January 1952. The Popular Republic of Indonesia in the region of Cirebon was a small left-leaning movement led by Chaerul Saleh, one of Murba’s close allies. The scope of this movement cannot be compared to Darul Islam, however.

140 Berita Masjumi, 1 February 1952.
provocation. He went on to remark that “nobody would dream of putting Stalinism and social democracy on the same level even though these movements are both founded on Marxism.”\textsuperscript{141}

These positions, which were adopted during the first months of 1952, remained the official party line over the following years. Nonetheless, Masyumi always remained somewhat sympathetic towards Islamic insurgents. Although it denounced their actions, it recognised the cause of these revolts and therefore always pleaded for a political rather than a military solution.

\textit{The Solution for a “Military, Political and Sociological” Problem}\textsuperscript{142}

Two important elements need to be kept in mind when considering Masyumi’s commitment to a peaceful solution. The first one is that on several occasions, the party’s leaders, on behalf of the government, began attempts at reconciliation which, for the most part, failed. The second is that, as a result of these failures, the Muslim party became involved in a policy of secret negotiations on the fringes of the government’s official manoeuvrings. The main consequence of these secret negotiations was to give credence to allegations of complicity between Masyumi and the rebels.

In September 1949, Natsir was appointed to chair a commission designed to advise the Hatta government on the question of Darul Islam. However, he did not manage to establish contact with Kartosuwirjo. In December 1949, as we have already seen, the fourth Masyumi congress adopted a motion demanding the formation of a “Resolution Committee”. The government yielded to this demand, and one of the architects of the party’s initiative, Wali al-Fatah, was appointed by the Hatta government to head this body. A former senior member of Muhammadiyah and Masyumi, Wali had also been a companion of Kartosuwirjo in the PSII during the pre-war years. He managed to make contact with the rebels in May 1950, but subsequently disappeared.

\textsuperscript{141} Berita Masjumi, 6 February 1952.

\textsuperscript{142} “Guerrilla warfare is not only a military problem, it is also a political and psychological one.” Mohammad Natsir’s inaugural address, Kementarian Penerangan RI., Membangun diantara tumpukan puing dan pertumbuhan. Keterangan Pemerintah diutjapkan oleh Perdana Menteri Mohammad Natsir dimuka sidang Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat Sementara, 10 oktober 1950 (Jakarta, 1950), p. 20.
without trace for almost two months. He was not located again until mid-July following an attack by the republican army. According to his declarations, the commander of the Indonesian Islamic Army, Oni, refused to allow any meeting between him and Kartosuwirjo. Other accounts maintain that the leader of Darul Islam in West Java had hoped to meet an emissary who was higher up in government and had refused to meet Wali al-Fatah because he did not have the rank of Bupati. In reality, Kartosuwirjo demanded negotiations between governments, which meant that he wanted, prior to the beginning of talks, recognition for his Islamic State of Indonesia by the Republic. At the end of May 1950, Masyumi sent emissaries to K.H. Machfudz, the leader of Angkatan Umat Islam which was in rebellion in Central Java. However, despite the fact that one of these envoys was the minister for religions, K.H. Wahid Hasjim, Machfudz refused to receive them.

With the nomination of Mohammad Natsir at the head of the first government of the unitary Republic, talks began again. His programme for government planned to reintegrate guerrillas into civil society, but the gestures of appeasement made towards the different rebellions in the Indonesian archipelago only brought limited results. It is true that in Aceh, Natsir managed to defuse the emerging conflict. On 23 January 1951, he announced an agreement with PUSA which stipulated that the recent creation of the province of North Sumatra should not be considered a lasting obstacle to Aceh becoming a province. Two days later, the government named a new governor for North Sumatra, Abdul Hakim, who was a member of Masyumi known for his sympathetic attitude towards Aceh’s claims for regional independence. In Sulawesi and Kalimantan, however, the efforts of the new prime minister turned out to be a lot less successful. Hasan Basry’s reconciliation mission with his former comrades in arms failed, and we have already seen what happened to the agreement made with Kahar Muzakkar providing for the integration of his troops into the new “Hasanuddin brigade”. Finally, concerning West Java, the prime minister announced that the combatants who surrendered between 28 November and 14 December would be able to join the armed forces or the police if they wished, provided they were able to pass the relevant

143 Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 114.
145 Natsir’s government lasted from September 1950 to April 1951.
aptitude tests. The government furthermore committed to finding all members of the brigade new livelihoods.

In reality, these offers of incorporation were largely illusory. The government had already prepared a rationalisation programme for the armed forces which was supposed to limit their number in the following months to 200,000 men. This implied, as Natsir himself revealed at the end of September 1950, the demobilisation of nearly 80,000 soldiers. Although this policy of appeasement was a fiasco, it nevertheless avoided the government from finding itself in a political impasse. For the entire province of West Java, less than 1,200 people surrendered, carrying only 46 firearms. For the government, and especially for the army, it was only the number of arms surrendered that counted in this operation, and Natsir himself later recognised that his policy had been a failure. Commenting on the intention of the new government to follow a “tougher” line towards Darul Islam, he declared that he was “part of those who prayed and hoped that ‘tougher’ will mean more successful.”

Under pressure from the army and from his allies in the PNI, the new prime minister, Soekiman, was forced to give up his search for the political solution which his party demanded, launching the first military operations in West Java in January 1951. In Java, the government’s military operations were supported by militia groups close to left-wing parties such as the PKI, Murba and the PNI. On 29 August 1951, the government gave five weeks to the rebels in Sulawesi to surrender before authorising the army to launch its “Operation Merdeka”. At the same time, Hasan Basry took it upon himself to begin the crackdown on the rebellion in South Kalimantan. The decision to launch two simultaneous military operations, however, limited their effectiveness considerably, as the army was obliged to disperse

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146 Berita Masjumi, 12 January 1951.
147 Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 110.
148 Ibid., p. 111.
149 “Saja masuk orang2 jang turut mendo’akan mudah2an ‘lebih tegas’ itu akan berarti lebih berhasil”, Berita Masjumi, 16 May 1951.
150 The Soekiman cabinet was in power from April 1951 until April 1952.
151 Masyumi Djawa Barat issued a declaration protesting against the creation of these volunteer groups, “some [of whom] were under the control of communists”. The numerous assassinations of ulamas and Muslim figures, which had taken place in several parts of West Java (Garut, Tasikmalaya, Ciamis), were also denounced. Abadi, 22 September 1953.
its troops. Moreover, the army had underestimated the determination of the rebels, and so failed to gain a clear upper hand on either front. Nonetheless, successive governments continued a largely repressive policy for a further four years, \(^{152}\) and Masyumi denounced on numerous occasions this “military-centred” (Tentara-centrische) approach to the problem. \(^{153}\) The party’s representatives were particularly critical of the lack of respect shown by the army towards places of worship. In February 1952, for example, Prawoto Mangkusasmito handed a letter of protest to the government on behalf of Masyumi. The document stated that certain behaviours by republican soldiers often had the effect of increasing the Muslim community’s resentment. He mentioned the case of a village in Central Java, Kartirejo, whose mosque had been set on fire by the army and he also reported an account which indicated that in the region of Surakarta, republican troops had entered the prayer hall accompanied by dogs and without taking their shoes off. \(^{154}\) In April 1954, Natsir offered a very bleak assessment of the Ali government’s security policy. Given the sums of money invested by the government and the amount of rebel activity over the previous year, he came to the conclusion that this policy was both harmful and ineffective. \(^{155}\)

One of the Masyumi leadership’s main worries was the prospect of these conflicts escalating into a religious war. If that were to happen, the party would have great difficulty dissuading its members from taking part in it and would find itself even more exposed to machinations by the army. Their warnings against the escalation of violence were addressed as much to the rebels as to the government. In a speech given by Natsir in Medan in December 1953, he denounced those who wanted to “turn everywhere into a place of holy war”. \(^{156}\) In February 1954, Masyumi vigorously opposed a government plan to have the Acehnese rebels condemned by a fatwa issued by ulamas in the region.

\(^{152}\) In Sulawesi, however, an offer of amnesty made by the government in March 1952 was relatively successful and caused Kahar Muzakkar to lose some of his troops. Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam*, p. 195.

\(^{153}\) The expression was used by Natsir in an article entitled “The Current Impasse Requires a New Way” (Dajlan buntu sekarang memerlukan rintisan baru), *Berita Masjumi*, 28 September 1951.

\(^{154}\) *Suara Partai Masjumi*, 3 March 1952.

\(^{155}\) *Hikmah*, 28 August 1954.

\(^{156}\) *Abadi*, 2 December 1953.
The president of Muhammadiyah, A.R. St. Mansur, set out in *Abadi* the reasons for his opposition to this plan.\(^{157}\) It was, according to him, vain to look to Islamic law for a solution to a problem whose origins were sociological, psychological and economic. He added that this ploy recalled the methods used by the Dutch and Japanese colonisers, which had caused a significant section of the *ulama* to be held in disregard in the eyes of the people. Finally, he pointed out that such practices were in danger of creating a division in the country along religious lines, which would be a lot more harmful than any other type of division.

The entire political class was concerned about the risk of these conflicts degenerating into a large-scale politico-religious confrontation. At the beginning of 1953, a very heated debate followed President Sukarno’s speech in Amuntai, in which he warned that if an Islamic state was proclaimed, the country’s Christian regions would also secede.\(^{158}\) In response to this speech and in the absence of any Masyumi representatives in the Ali government, which had been formed in August 1953, Daud Beureu’eh’s supporters became convinced of the necessity to begin their rebellion. At the same time, however, Sukarno’s words also gave free rein to the supporters of a more repressive policy.

The formation of the government led by Boerhanoeddin Harahap, which was in office from August 1955 to March 1956, restored hope for those who backed a negotiated settlement. With the agreement of Vice President Hatta and Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, the highly controversial deputy chief of staff, the prime minister entered into low-key talks with the rebels of Aceh and West Java.\(^{159}\) The government, however, was too uneasy about this reconciliation policy for it to succeed, and as soon as the existence of these talks was uncovered, the authorities strenuously denied that any emissaries had been sent to meet with rebels. The rebels’ pre-condition for entering talks, though, was precisely their recognition by the government, if not as a state, then at least as a negotiating party. The second Ali government understood this point and in December 1956, it passed a law which accorded to Aceh the status of autonomous province and named a governor from

\(^{157}\) *Abadi*, 24 February 1954.

\(^{158}\) See infra, Chapter 4.

\(^{159}\) Daud Beureu’eh’s son, Hasballah Daud, was sent to Aceh, and in February 1952 in West Java, the army intercepted and passed on to the press letters signed by Harahap and Lubis, offering Kartosuwirjo a ceasefire. Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam*, pp. 329–30.
amongst the ranks of PUSA. This policy opened the way for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in North Sumatra, an outcome which had for a time been delayed by the PRRI rebellion.\footnote{See infra, Chapter 4.}

In West Java, however, none of the government’s attempts at reconciliation were successful. Although the republican army managed, as of 1957, to isolate Darul Islam’s troops and contain them to certain mountainous areas, the rebels remained a real threat. The attempted kidnapping of Khrushchev in February 1960, during an official visit to Indonesia, illustrated this in spectacular style. On the road between Bogor and Bandung, the Soviet leader narrowly escaped capture by a Darul Islam commando.\footnote{Van Dijk, Rebellion under the Banner of Islam, p. 125.} On 4 June 1962, Kartosuwirjo was finally caught, and shortly after his arrest, one of his sons “on behalf of the imam-president of the Islamic state” ordered his supporters to surrender. On 16 August, Kartosuwirjo was condemned to death and one month later was executed.

Overall, Masyumi did not gain much political capital from its demand for an “alternative path” (djalan lain) to the government’s policy towards Darul Islam.\footnote{“Djalan lain” was the usual expression used in writings by party members to signify a policy of reconciliation, as opposed to a policy of repression.} Others benefitted politically from the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Aceh and, to a lesser extent, in Kalimantan. In West Java, Kartosuwirjo’s intransigence and his submission in 1962 justified in retrospect the hawkish enthusiasm of those who opposed any concession. The party’s pacifist manoeuvres, however, remained fruitless and they turned out to be disastrous for the party in the long run. Its efforts to resolve the conflict with Darul Islam were primarily focussed on their action in government or within Parliament; however, they also permitted a number of their party members to act as unofficial negotiators who, though largely ineffectual, gave credence in public opinion to the theory of collusion between Masyumi and the rebels. In 1953, two of those negotiators were prosecuted during a high-profile court case which showed the ambiguity of the relations between Masyumi and Darul Islam.

Afandi Ridwan, who was leader of GPII and a Masyumi representative in West Java’s provincial assembly, as well as having been present at the Masyumi congress in 1949, had been one of the initiators of the security resolution passed by the assembly. This document invited
the government to look for an alternative to a military solution to address the problem with DI. Afandi Ridhwan was also the spokesman of the Committee for the Destiny of the People (Komite Nasib Rakjat), an organisation which in its meetings with civil and military authorities, argued for a more measured approach to the crisis. He was part of Natsir's inner circle, and at the party congress of 1949 he did his utmost to bring about the implementation of the motion calling for a peaceful solution to the conflict.¹⁶³

Having informed the military authorities and his colleagues in the provincial assembly, he took the initiative of making contact with Sanusi Partawidjaja, one of his former fellow party members in GPII who had become Kartosuwirjo's main advisor.¹⁶⁴ In January 1952, he went to the headquarters of Darul Islam in Cigadu near Cianjur where he attempted to convince the rebel movement to abandon their demand for recognition by the Republic, prior to negotiations, of the Islamic State of Indonesia, and advised them instead to look for this recognition from Saudi Arabia or from Pakistan. At his trial, Partawidjaja stated that this proposal had in fact been made in jest, but it was taken seriously both by the military authorities, who saw this as proof that he was an active supporter of Darul Islam, and by Kartosuwirjo, who tried unsuccessfully to make contact with foreign embassies.¹⁶⁵

Afandi Ridhwan managed, however, to obtain from Sanusi Partawidjaja a letter accepting negotiations in principle, on condition that the government gave a guarantee that the army would not interfere in them. He then went to Jakarta and handed the missive over to Deputy Prime Minister Prawoto Mangkusasmito's assistants.¹⁶⁶ Ridhwan, in his account of the events, was then given authorisation by Prawoto to continue his negotiations, and while waiting for a meeting with Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, the minister for defence, in order to ensure his support, he was arrested and imprisoned at the end of May 1952.

¹⁶³ His wife had been one of Natsir's pupils when he was a teacher in Persatuan Islam in Bandung. Interview with Afandi Ridhwan, Bandung, September 1996.
¹⁶⁴ Ibid. The idea that the provincial assembly was aware of his actions seems to be corroborated by the motion of confidence which it voted in favour of Afandi in August 1952. Hikmah, 2 August 1952.
¹⁶⁵ According to Feith, Darul Islam authorities also made contact with the American embassy which they hoped would provide them with help in the event of a Third World War breaking out. Feith, The Wilopo Cabinet, p. 98.
¹⁶⁶ Prawoto Mangkusasmito, moreover, was a member of Masyumi.
His trial began in Bandung on 26 February 1953 and lasted four months, during which Abadi gave a faithful account of the hearings. However, neither the newspaper nor the members of Masyumi’s leadership risked commenting on this delicate affair.\(^\text{167}\) The only one to speak publicly about the case was Kasman Singodmedjo, the second vice president of the party, who did so as the accused’s lawyer.

The case was a very sensitive one. The prosecution’s main witness was Ijet Hidajat, a former “prefect” of the Islamic State of Indonesia who had been in custody since October 1952. At the hearing of 15 March 1953, he explained that he had been removed from his position in 1950 for having refused to continue the armed struggle after the proclamation of the unitary state in August 1950. He claimed that Natsir subsequently confided him with a mission to negotiate with Darul Islam in order to “end the struggle between us and us”.\(^\text{168}\) According to Ijet, in 1952, Afandi Ridhwan allegedly gave information to the rebels about the positions of Colonel Kawilarang and Indonesian army units. This testimony, which Afandi refuted, led to him being sentenced to three and a half years in prison.\(^\text{169}\) It seems to me, though, that the evidence in this case was rather flimsy. The witness himself admitted that he was no longer a member of Darul Islam at the time of the events. In that case, how could he have known the nature of the information communicated by Afandi Ridhwan to the rebels? The accused was clearly a victim of the change in strategy effectuated in the corridors of power in response to the rebellion which took place after the collapse of Natsir’s cabinet. He was no doubt also targeted by one of the sabotage operations which certain sections of the army were fond of carrying out during negotiations. Afandi Ridhwan’s greatest crime in this affair was without doubt his naivety. The accusations brought against another member of the party, who was also put on trial a few weeks beforehand for collusion with DI, seemed a lot more credible.

Achmad Buchari, who was vice president of GPII, was also accused of having facilitated contact between Kartosuwirjo’s movement

\(^{167}\) On 2 March 1953, for example, *Abadi* indicated the presence of Isa Anshary, while on 16 March, it reported that Mohammad Natsir and Soekiman had “come expressly from Jakarta” to attend the hearings.

\(^{168}\) An account of the hearing reported in *Abadi*, 16 March 1953.

\(^{169}\) *Abadi*, 6 July 1953. On his release in January 1956, Affandi Ridhwan returned to sit in the provincial assembly and became a Maysumi party official in West Java. Interview, September 1996.
and Kahar Muzakkar in 1951.\textsuperscript{170} His trial saw all the main figures of the Movement of Young Muslims appear in the witness box and, like during Afandi’s trial, the benevolent presence of Mayumi’s senior figures could be seen in the courtroom.\textsuperscript{171} Without delving into the details of this highly complex case, we should note first of all the strong desire on the part of the presiding judge to implicate Masyumi by highlighting the existing links between the party and GPII. The trial’s second hearing, held on 6 September 1953, was given over entirely to this question.\textsuperscript{172} The judge asked the accused on several occasions to clarify the nature of the links between the two organisations. Denying the obvious, the accused stated that GPII was an independent movement which cooperated with all political parties. He merely acknowledged “a few special links with Masyumi”, but nothing more.\textsuperscript{173} Second of all, it should be pointed out that Achmad Buchari, like Afandi Ridhwan, thought himself to be entrusted with a negotiation mission by the Indonesian state. This conviction was based on a meeting the president had accorded the GPII leadership in mid-1951 during which Sukarno is said to have shared with these young people—and this was confirmed by other senior figures in the organisation—his hope to see contacts established with Darul Islam.\textsuperscript{174} As the government, for political reasons, was unable to do so, the president considered that it was up to Islamic organisations such as Masyumi and GPII to establish preliminary contacts.

At the end of the court proceedings, however, Achmad Buchari’s guilt seemed clearly established. He admitted to having conveyed a letter from Kartosuwirjo to Kahar Muzakkar; he explained that he had gone to Makassar solely on behalf of GPII, but rejected the claim that certain former rebels considered him a representative of Darul Islam. Achmad Buchari’s explanations seemed much more coherent and appeared to make his involvement in the rebellion a lot more plausible than Afandi’s. How could the fact of having conveyed a message—no

\textsuperscript{170} Abadi, 25 August 1953.
\textsuperscript{171} On 2 November 1953, Natsir and Mohamad Roem were present. Abadi, 3 November 1953.
\textsuperscript{172} Abadi, 8 September 1953.
\textsuperscript{173} GPII was, however, Masyumi’s youth organisation. Cf. infra, Chapter 6.
\textsuperscript{174} Dahlan Lukman and Anwar Harjono attested to this. Abadi, 22 September 1953.
doubt a proposal made by Kartosuwirjo to Kahar Muzakkar planning to integrate Muzakkar’s troops into NII—from one rebel zone to another back his claim to have been in favour of a negotiated solution? At the end of his trial, Achmad Buchari, unsurprisingly, was sentenced to three years in prison.

The involvement of certain Masyumi members in rebellions is certainly indisputable, but it took place in differing degrees, and does not, in my view, enable one to conclude that the party was collectively responsible. The revolutionary mentality of the second half of the 1940s certainly inspired many advocates of this “direct path” towards an Islamic state, but from early 1950, the efforts made by the party leadership to bring them back to the “democratic and parliamentary path” left little doubt that it in no way supported the rebels. The fact still remains, however, that by advocating a more “psychological” rather than a military solution, Masyumi left itself open to accusations of leniency towards Darul Islam. The participation of some of its members in secret negotiations, and also the fact that certain leaders, such as Natsir, had been tempted at the beginning of the 1950s to use the rebellions as an argument for claiming a greater place for Islam, helped to cultivate this association between the two organisations.\textsuperscript{175} Finally, we should add that on the side of the army and the justice system, but also on the side of Darul Islam, there were many who had an interest in maintaining this belief in a collaboration.\textsuperscript{176}

\textsuperscript{175} An association which is still maintained today by certain anachronisms such as referring to Masyumi’s stance during the debates in the Constituent Assembly (i.e. from 1958 to 1960) to explain certain party positions in the early 1950s. See, for example, Hendra Gunawan, \textit{M. Natsir dan Darul Islam. Studi Kasus Aceh dan Sulawesi Selatan, Tahun 1953–1958} (Jakarta: Media Da’wah, 2000), pp. 23–4.

\textsuperscript{176} Concerning Darul Islam’s desire to have its struggle recognised by Masyumi, one should cite as an example the letter from the Islamic Army of Indonesia’s command in the Cianjur region in West Java (TII Komandemen I Tjuempaka Tjiandjur) to Isa Anshary and Kasman Singodimedjo, thanking them for the speeches they made during a Masyumi rally in Cianjur in November 1954. The letter explained that the two Masyumi members’ reading of the situation was interpreted as a sign of support for the Islamic Army who were being pursued by “the army of infidels, otherwise known as the communist Republic of Indonesia” (\textit{Tentara Kafir alias Tentara Republik Indonesia Komunis}). The Masyumi official in Cianjur who received this letter pointed out that the party leadership in Cianjur did not wish for an agreement with or promotion of “external groups”, who, moreover, were illegal. \textit{Abadi}, 3 January 1955.
The involvement of Masyumi’s local branches was extremely variable, then, depending on the region, but it does appear in retrospect that their participation was a necessary condition in order for the rebellions to achieve some degree of success. It is nonetheless difficult to conclude that the party was directly or in some general way responsible for sparking these insurrections. The fact that certain guerrillas fought in the name of the same Islamic ideal which Masyumi had defined in the early years of the Revolution apportioned upon the party a certain degree of moral responsibility. From the beginning of 1950, however, the message addressed by the central leadership to those party members tempted to join the rebellion seemed sufficiently clear for those who were prepared to listen. Moreover, as Cees Van Dijk has shown, the demand for an Islamic state was only one aspect of a more widespread malaise prevalent in numerous regions of the Indonesian archipelago at the end of the Physical Revolution. This malaise was linked both to a sense of resentment towards the growing influence of the republican army, which relegated the country’s irregular troops to a secondary position, and to the increasing control which the central government was exerting over the provinces after several years of considerable regional autonomy.

**A Pragmatic Foreign Policy which was Open to the West**

Five years after the proclamation of independence, the recognition of Indonesia as an independent state became complete with its admission to the United Nations in September 1950. Apart from the thorny issue of its relations with its former colonial master, which had become deeply embittered due to the West Irian question, foreign policy did not constitute an important topic of public debate. Most parties agreed on the principle of a certain degree of neutrality, although Masyumi and the other parties abandoned this term because of its somewhat passive connotation:

By calling its policy free, the government wishes to follow a concrete path, so that Indonesia may be able to help humanity, in a positive manner, to achieve its aspirations. If a neutral policy is understood as a negative policy, a refusal to get involved in a conflict on the basis that it will not influence our situation, and affect neither our destiny nor the world’s; if it is understood as remaining
in peace without doing anything to find a solution, then it is not a policy of neutrality which we wish to pursue.\textsuperscript{177}

Despite this consensus on the principle of neutrality, the country’s parties clashed on several occasions over the area of foreign policy. The positions adopted by Masyumi at this time revealed the outlines of an approach to international affairs which was chiefly pragmatic. Apart from an openly expressed concern for the problems of the Third World, its policy was above all very anti-communist, and though moderately pro-nationalist, it was in fact relatively unconcerned with religious considerations.

The first diplomatic problem Masyumi had to confront involved the question of Western New Guinea. This region was the only part of the former Dutch East Indies not to have been integrated into the newly independent Indonesia, and according to the agreements which came out of the Dutch-Indonesian Round Table Conference, its future was to be determined, at the latest, by 27 December 1950. This deadline had passed without any sign of talks beginning between the Republic and the Netherlands. On 3 January 1951, Prime Minister Natsir declared before the Parliament that in light of this new situation, relations between the two countries had to be reconsidered, particularly the status of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union (DIU).\textsuperscript{178} This reaction was deemed by many to be too timorous, and in fact a motion put before Parliament by the PNI calling for the DIU to be dissolved and the Round Table Conference Agreement to be revoked almost succeeded in being voted.\textsuperscript{179} In response, Sukarno called for drastic measures against the Netherlands and declared his intention to announce them himself in an upcoming speech. Natsir responded to this by reminding the president that it was the constitutional role of the government and not the president to draw up policy. This firm reminder led to a deterioration of relations between the two men.


\textsuperscript{179} 66 votes to 63, on 10 January 1951.
For the Masyumi leadership, negotiations with the Netherlands had to be part of a diplomatic policy aimed at obtaining widespread international recognition for the Republic’s claim over West Irian.\(^{180}\) To this end, it was important for Indonesia to present to the entire world an image of a responsible country, mindful of maintaining cordial relations with other countries, including its former colonial masters. According to Masyumi, a converse policy, such as the hard line called for by the PNI and supported by Sukarno, was in danger of discrediting Indonesia on the international stage, and thus depriving it of the vital support it required to assert its rights with the United Nations.\(^{181}\) This point of view was echoed during Ali Sastroamidjo’s premiership on the occasion of the signature of a protocol providing for the dissolution of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union.\(^{182}\) It was then made official in a resolution passed by the party congress in December 1954, which stipulated that the struggle for the control of West Irian could not meet with success unless a policy was put in place which restored the international community’s confidence in the Republic.

Shortly afterwards, the main architect of Masyumi’s diplomatic policy, Mohamad Roem, denounced the radical attitude of the parties who supported Ali’s government and who were the reason why the Republic had lost the support of certain countries in the United Nations, notably Australia. He singled out for criticism the PKI’s proposal to expel Dutch nationals from Indonesia, and reminded the public that Dutch citizens, as long as they respected the laws of the state, should receive its protection. For Roem, a measure such as the one proposed by the PKI would be in total contradiction with the government’s demand for negotiations made before the international community.\(^{183}\)

It finally fell to Boerhanoeddin Harahap’s government to implement the diplomatic policy elaborated by Masyumi. As soon as the

\(^{180}\) This was identified by Masyumi’s programme of action as a “national requirement”.


\(^{182}\) The Sunario-Luns Protocol did not, however, solve the question of West Irian. The Dutch refused to broach the issue and the protocol was never ratified by Indonesia. Natsir denounced this agreement as useless posturing which was harmful for Indonesia’s image internationally. \textit{Abadi}, 23 August 1954.

\(^{183}\) \textit{Abadi}, 13 January 1955.
new government had taken office, it endeavoured to regain the confidence of Indonesia’s former allies, and to this effect a delegation was sent to Australia, headed by Mohamad Roem. Although Roem did not manage to obtain the complete support of their neighbours, the Australian government did at least agree to no longer support the Dutch position. This diplomatic offensive soon yielded further results: in December, the government managed to get the United Nations General Assembly to pass a resolution on West Irian calling on the two parties to enter negotiations. A similar proposal presented by the Ali government had failed a few months earlier and so this proposal led the government to entertain hopes that an agreement might at last be reached. Negotiations came close to finding such an agreement at the end of December, but eventually failed because of an upsurge in nationalist sentiment in both countries.

Masyumi’s anti-communism, which formed an integral part of its political identity, naturally played an important part in the elaboration of its diplomatic policy. In 1949, the party’s political programme announced a general principle “of friendship with all nations, and particularly with those nations founded on democracy and a belief in God.” As communist countries corresponded to neither of these two criteria, friendly relations would be more difficult to establish, and the party endeavoured to avoid any mutual recognition. In the name of neutrality, it never rejected the principle of establishing diplomatic relations with these countries, but it constantly looked for ways of preventing that from happening. The possibility of Indonesia and the Soviet Union exchanging ambassadors was mooted for the first time in September 1950, and in the inaugural address he gave upon taking office as prime minister, Mohammad Natsir saw no objection to it. However, he immediately added that “negotiations must still be organised between our two countries concerning technical matters.”

184 Abadi, 23 October 1955.
185 Abadi, 19 December 1955.
186 The Masyumi leadership also saw the negotiations as a means for them to use their poor electoral results to their advantage. The Dutch government was no doubt aware that any future cabinet would be more hostile towards it, and so to refuse to make concessions now would expose Dutch economic interests in Indonesia to unilateral decisions by a future Indonesian government.
His government as well as Soekiman’s never managed to resolve these “technical matters”. In response to this obvious policy of obstruction, those in favour of establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union decided to act. In April 1953, during the Wilopo premiership, a parliamentary deputy, Rondonuwu, tabled a motion in the Assembly to open an embassy in Moscow “before the year was out”. Masyumi, who had members in the Wilopo government, showed great unity of purpose in opposing this motion. Jusuf Wibisono explained, once again, that “it was not a question of principle but a question of time”.188 He added, apparently oblivious to the contradiction in his argument, that establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR “would bring nothing to Indonesia” either economically or politically. He further claimed that the presence in Indonesia of Russian diplomats, “known for often operating outside of their diplomatic missions”, could be a source of a lot of trouble for the country. These arguments, however, were not enough to convince a majority of the Parliament and the Rondonuwu motion was carried by 82 votes to 43.189 In response, Boerhanoeddin Harahap declared that his party would envisage withdrawing its ministers from government if an embassy were to open in Moscow.190 This threat did not materialise, however, as Wilopo’s government resigned in June 1953, and despite the constant opposition of Masyumi’s deputies, an Indonesian embassy was finally opened in Moscow by the Ali cabinet in March 1954.191

Although Masyumi had had a solid reputation since the revolutionary period as being pro-American,192 there was never the same consensus in the party regarding the question of relations with the United States as there was concerning its attitude towards communism. It was in fact a question which caused one of the most serious crises the party experienced during the 1950–56 period. In mid-August of 1951, the Soekiman government had sent its minister for foreign affairs, Subardjo, to the San Francisco Conference where a peace treaty with

188 Abadi, 9 February 1953. This position dates back to the sixth party congress in fact. Berita Masjumi, 8 September 1952.
189 Abadi, 10 April 1953.
192 For examples which led to this reputation, see Ann Swift, The Road to Madiun: The Indonesian Communist Uprising of 1948 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Monograph Series, 1989), pp. 16–7.
Japan was supposed to be concluded. On this date, however, the coalition parties who supported the government—mainly Masyumi and the PNI—could not agree on whether their countries’ participation in this agreement would be opportune or not.\textsuperscript{193} Within Masyumi, there was a particularly lively debate, and during the final days before the signature of the treaty, from 4 to 6 September, the party leadership held meetings continually.\textsuperscript{194}

The supporters of the treaty, who backed Prime Minister Soekiman, contended that it would contribute to stabilising the situation in the Pacific, and thus hinder the advance of communism. Faced with the impossibility of creating a third international power in Asia, they maintained that Indonesia should rally behind the West, whose democratic ideology was much closer to \textit{Pancasila} and Islam than communism was. Soekiman explained that this rapprochement in no way signified that the country was abandoning its independence in matters of foreign policy. The minister for finance, Jusuf Wibisono, added economic motivations to the political arguments just mentioned. He emphasised certain advantages which the treaty gave to Indonesia, namely the payment by Japan of war damages as well as the limitation of both Japanese imports and Japanese fishing in Indonesian territorial waters. Natsir’s entourage, who were opposed to the agreement, responded to these arguments point by point. For Mohamad Roem, the proposed document did not constitute a guarantee of stability in the region for the coming years. By prolonging the economic and military supervision of Western powers over Japan, it was in danger of provoking the Japanese into a violent reaction. Instead of this multilateral agreement which placed Indonesia in the Western camp, Roem argued for the signature of a bilateral treaty with Japan. This solution would leave open the possibility of cooperating with India and Burma, two countries who had refused to send delegates to San Francisco. He also noted that the treaty was to give to Japan the clause of the most favoured nation, an advantage which Indonesia had refused to give to India a short time before. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara explained that Indonesia did not have to sign a treaty with the Japanese since it had never been at war with Japan. This did not stop him from claiming damages from Japan,

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid., p. 193.
\textsuperscript{194} The most complete account of these debates can be found in \textit{Berita Masjumi}, 21 September 1951.
however, as he maintained that their payment could be founded on Article 4 of the Round Table Conference Agreement which provided for the transfer of all rights and obligations from the Dutch East Indies to Indonesia.

In the end, it was the prime minister’s supporters who prevailed. On 6 September, Masyumi authorised the government to sign the San Francisco Treaty, but the affair did not end there. During his stay in the United States, the minister for foreign affairs, Subardjo—a very controversial figure within Masyumi—began discussions with Secretary of State Acheson, concerning American aid to Indonesia. When he returned to Jakarta, he pursued these negotiations with Ambassador Merle Cochran. Up until that point, the aid given to Indonesia by the United States was based on a simple agreement of economic and technical cooperation. In October 1950, Natsir’s government, mindful of containing American pressure on the country, turned down an offer of military help by the United States. The subject of the discussions between Subardjo and Cochran was a continuation of American assistance in the form of financial aid provided for in the Mutual Security Act (MSA) which Congress had just passed. In theory, the countries that benefitted from financial assistance had a choice of two options, provided for in Articles 511(a) and 511(b) of the MSA. The first of these articles, 511(a), was the most restrictive on the beneficiary state; it provided for the alignment of its defence policy with the United States. The second article, 511(b), only mentioned much vaguer obligations, with the beneficiary simply committing to joint efforts at promoting and maintaining peace and to take part in jointly defined actions to limit international tension.

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195 33 of the 61 members of the Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan) were present at the debate. 17 voted in favour, 14 voted against and two abstained. Ibid.

196 Achmad Subarjo was a close friend of Soekiman’s. He, like Soekiman, had become an activist in Perhimpunan Indonesia during his studies in the Netherlands. After the declaration of independence, he had become involved in Tan Malaka’s attempted coup d’état on 3 July 1946. Subarjo was not known for his strong religious convictions and before his nomination as minister for foreign affairs, he had not occupied any position of importance within Masyumi.

197 Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, p. 175.

198 For details on these articles, see Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 199–200. The text of the MSA was published by Abadi on 2 February 1952.
On 5 January 1952, Subardjo signed an agreement based on Article 511(a). The signature of this protocol was initially kept secret, and when it was made public at the beginning of February, it sparked an outcry in political circles. Within Masyumi, Natsir’s supporters were extremely angry and their reaction led to the summoning of the party leadership to a meeting which was attended by Jusuf Wibisono and Soekiman, but not Subardjo. Soekiman, who was no doubt surprised by the virulence of this reaction, declared that he had not been kept informed of his foreign minister’s manoeuvres. At the end of the meeting, the party decided to “refuse to take any responsibility for this signature”, though it did not go so far as to withdraw its members from cabinet.”

On 21 February, Subardjo resigned, but most of the political parties continued to call for the resignation of the entire government, which duly took place two days later on the 23rd.

Masyumi’s policy towards countries belonging to neither of the two international blocs followed two main principles: natural solidarity with other Muslim nations, and a circumspect neutrality towards any attempt at getting drawn into an alliance with one of the Cold War protagonists. Masyumi, who often received messages and delegations from Muslim countries, became the advocate of their causes before the Indonesian people. In May 1953, for example, a telegram from the Indonesian Union in Egypt (Persatuan Indonesia di Mesir) warned the party leadership of the nascent conflict between Egypt and Great Britain concerning the Suez Canal. In response, Masyumi called on the Indonesian umma to vigorously support Egypt’s claims. When the Suez Crisis broke three years later, the Indonesian government, which Masyumi was a member of and which was being led for the second time by Ali Sastroamidjojo, immediately declared that the Egyptian people were within their rights. Natsir expressed his desire for an Indonesian intervention in the conflict, without actually specifying how this would happen. At the beginning of November 1956, the Union of Indonesian Muslim Workers (Sarekat Buruh Islam Indonesia, SBII) even suggested a worldwide strike to protest against the Anglo-French

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199 Berita Partai Masjumi, 21 February 1952.
200 Natsir himself declared that the government’s decision to remain in office “was incomprehensible”. Abadi, 22 February 1952.
201 Abadi, 30 June 1953.
202 Abadi, 9 August 1956.
attack. *Abadi* noted that this was an extremely exceptional measure, as the union “was normally opposed to any political strikes.” 203

Palestinian Muslims also benefitted from Masyumi’s support. In May and June 1954, three of their dignitaries went to Indonesia where they were invited to various religious ceremonies by Masyumi leaders who assured them of their support. 204 Curiously enough, however, the Palestinian situation was never a topic which generated much real interest within the party. No proposal for concrete action was ever made and the party congress never passed a resolution in relation to it. Masyumi’s press published few articles on the Middle East, however, *Abadi*’s readers were much better informed about the events of French political life, with most government resignations there making the front-page news.

The Algerian question, on the other hand, was closely followed by the party. In December 1954, a resolution by the Seventh Masyumi Congress demanded that the United Nations take strict measures obliging France to recognise the independence of its three colonies in North Africa. In June 1956, Mohammad Natsir, in one of his speeches, drew a series of parallels between the Algerian nation’s struggle and the struggle which Indonesia had engaged in a few years previously. He proposed the organisation by Muslim countries of a new Afro-Asian conference entirely devoted to the Algerian question, and also asked the government to intervene in the United Nations in order to get a motion passed which would oblige France to begin negotiations geared at giving its colony independence. 205 A few days later, Masyumi’s president participated, as Indonesia’s representative, in the World Islamic Congress in Damas, which launched an appeal to break off all relations with France. 206

References to Islam in Masyumi’s foreign policy never went beyond paying particular attention to other Muslim countries, which was essentially a rhetorical ploy on their part. Masyumi’s struggle was only a political one, and it never envisaged sending combatants or providing arms to its oppressed Muslim brothers abroad. Indeed, the Masyumi leaders’ criticism of contemporary Islamic states weakened the prospect

203 *Abadi*, 5 November 1956.
204 *Abadi*, 24 May and 7 June 1954.
205 *Abadi*, 6 June 1956.
206 *Abadi*, 10 July 1957.
of a “Muslim International” which might play a role on the international stage.\textsuperscript{207} The idea of setting up an association uniting countries in favour of a neutral stance towards the two superpowers should in theory have appealed to the party leadership who, on several occasions, had made known their refusal to align themselves with either the USA or the USSR. Nonetheless, they were concerned that any such organisation would become a neutral ally for the communist bloc, and so they greeted the Ali government’s decision to organise an Afro-Asian summit in Bandung with circumspection. The idea of such a conference, proposed by the Indonesian prime minister during a conference held in Colombo from the 28 April to 2 May 1954, did not receive a warm welcome from the party’s leaders. The party’s official reason for its lack of enthusiasm was its fear that China’s presence, along with the close relations between the Ali cabinet and the PKI, would lead the conference to merely condemn Western imperialism instead of adopting a more balanced and neutral position.\textsuperscript{208} But with the elections only a few months away, the party was also wary of the political capital which the prime minister’s party, the PNI, could gain from such an event.

A few incidental remarks were made about the summit by party members, but it was Rusjad Nurdin, the secretary of Masyumi for West Java, who developed the most complete commentary of the conference’s resolutions in \textit{Abadi}. Analysing one of the resolutions adopted which condemned colonisation in all its forms, he maintained that it was aimed in particular at communism, through the actions of the Soviet Union. As evidence for this claim, he cited the attendance at the conference of representatives of Muslim Turkestan and Buddhist Kalmuk, two minority groups who had suffered oppression under Soviet rule. Their presence had angered the PKI, who accused Masyumi of collaborating with these representatives with a view to sabotaging the conference.\textsuperscript{209}

The conference constituted an overwhelming success for the Ali government, and Masyumi’s unease with this could be seen clearly in the way the event was treated in \textit{Abadi}. The Muslim daily devoted relatively few pages to the conference’s debates and resolutions,\textsuperscript{210} but

\textsuperscript{207} See infra, Chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{208} See, for example, an interview with Mohamad Roem published by \textit{Abadi}, 23 December 1954.
\textsuperscript{209} \textit{Abadi}, 28 April 1955.
\textsuperscript{210} Less than one article per day and rarely on the front page.
reported in great detail on the controversy which arose concerning the “Hospitality Committee”. As soon as the conference ended, the Masyumi deputy Nur el Ibrahimy took the government to task over this body, which was supposed to take care of the conference-goers’ “naughty needs” (kebutuhan jang nakal). In response to the authorities’ vigorous denials, Abadi, who gave over a large number of pages to this illustrious affair, published an invitation card issued by the committee. It was a personal invitation—though the name of the lucky beneficiary was hidden—written in English which read: “Give this ticket to the lady of your choice. If not ‘used’, please return it to the Hospitality Committee.” In the following weeks, the pro-Masyumi press abounded with new accounts concerning such practices as well as a significant number of condemnations by Islamic organisations. This allowed the party to detract from the government’s considerable success in organising the conference.

Overall, the foreign policy pursued by Masyumi, both in government and in opposition, confirmed the strong influence of Western ideas on the party’s identity. Islam never appeared as the direct source of inspiration for specific party policies. Although the party’s unanimous condemnation of communism had a basis in religion, Masyumi’s evolution throughout the period 1945–49 showed that its anti-communism was above all founded on a certain assessment of both the national and global balance of power; political ideology, and therefore Islam, were only referred to afterwards. What was most important for the Masyumi leadership was to keep this bond with the West which characterised their political culture. It was in the West that these men found the touchstone for their political identity, and although they paid lip-service to the idea of remaining neutral in the Cold War struggle which began at the end of the 1940s, they had clearly chosen their side.

There was nonetheless a subtle distinction between open support towards the Western bloc and total alignment with an American position which sometimes divided the party leadership. A certain number of grey areas surrounded the behaviour of the various protagonists in the MSA affair. It would have been logical, for example, for Soekiman, who was at that time still close to Sukarno and who was more nationalist than Natsir, to have argued within the party for a certain degree

211 Abadi, 2 May 1955.
212 Abadi, 5 May 1955.
of neutrality. Was his desire to tie Indonesia’s destiny to that of the United States, and more importantly, were the unusual manoeuvres of his minister for foreign affairs, the result of some obscure American machinations? Shortly after the affair, the possibility of such an intrigue was dealt with by the Indonesian press, but the evidence currently available does not allow us to affirm that it actually existed. Audrey Kahin and George Kahin, who studied the involvement of the United States in the revolt led by the PRRI, and who had access to declassified CIA documents, mention the Americans’ goodwill towards the Masyumi leadership, but they do not reveal, for this period at least, any financial assistance given by the United States to the modernist party.

Economic Policy

The Challenges of Indonesia’s Economic Recovery

In 1950, Indonesia had two major challenges to tackle. First, it had to adapt to its new status as an independent state, which notably involved transforming an economy formerly reliant on the Dutch metropole and worldwide markets. The vast majority of the country’s economic wealth was in the hands of oligopolistic companies, most of which were Dutch, in control of plantation farms, the oil industry, maritime trade, the aviation industry, the banking sector, as well as foreign trade (approximately 60% of Indonesia’s trade with the Netherlands was carried out by five Dutch companies). Domestic trade, on the other hand, was mainly controlled by companies belonging to the country’s Chinese minority. In addition, the country had to deal with the problems linked to the aftermath of almost ten years of conflict. The rice harvest, for example, did not recover its 1938 yield levels until 1952, and in the same year, industrial production only represented 60% of a pre-war level which was already quite poor.

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213 See infra, Chapter 4.
215 Estimated to be two per cent of the population.
216 For a complete picture of the country’s economic situation at the beginning of the 1950s, see “L’évolution économique de l’Indonésie”, in Notes et études documentaires, nos. 2014 and 2015 (Paris: La Documentation Française, May 1955).
The Indonesian parties did not possess the skills necessary to elaborate credible economic planning policies. Masyumi, with two relatively reputable economists, Jusuf Wibisono and Sjaffrudin Prawiranegara, both of whom served as minister for finance, was far from being the least qualified in this area.\textsuperscript{217} Indeed, it was one of the few parties to have developed an economic programme which went beyond the assertion of a few general claims. Like most of the other political parties, they advocated a pro-active policy based on a large degree of state intervention. The first principle set out in the party’s 1949 programme was that of a “planned economy” (\textit{ekonomi terpimpin}). This principle encapsulated planned economic production, limited and constructive competition between companies under the state’s supervision, the controlling of prices and salaries and, finally, incentives for cooperatives aimed at promoting indigenous companies.\textsuperscript{218} At the Surabaya congress in 1954, Masyumi adopted an emergency economic and financial programme which, in order to attract foreign investors, was published in English as well as in Indonesian, and which constitutes the most complete economic policy document to have been published by the party. It took up the principles which had already been laid down a few years earlier, and sketched out a path which the party thought would help Indonesia emerge from the economic doldrums which it depicted the country to be in.\textsuperscript{219}

The first characteristic of Masyumi’s economic policy was the necessity for budgetary and economic rigour. For the party’s leaders, the spiralling increases in state spending constituted the principal cause of inflation, Indonesia’s main economic woe. To remedy this situation, the party proposed focusing public policy efforts on “the restoration of law and order, education and professional training as well as productive activities in areas of public benefit (irrigation, electricity etc.).”\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{217} The other Islamic parties were cruelly lacking in expertise in this area. Perti was mainly interested in questions of education, while NU made no effort to recruit economic specialists until after their electoral success in 1955. Amongst those whom NU enlisted to provide economic advice was Boerhanoeddin, minister for finance in Ali’s second government. Noer, \textit{Partai Islam di pentas nasional}, p. 287.

\textsuperscript{218} Masyumi’s Programme for Action (II.1), 1949.

\textsuperscript{219} Masyumi had at this time been in opposition for almost a year.

\textsuperscript{220} Masjumi Congress at Surabaya in December 1954, \textit{Urgency Programme of the Masjumi, to Safeguard the Nation Economically and Financially} (Jakarta, 1954), p. 37.
This restriction of the state’s activities was supposed to allow a significant reduction in the number of civil servants, but although it was advocated by the cabinets led by Hatta, Natsir, Soekiman and Wilopo, it was never really implemented. The army was the only state sector to experience a considerable drop in its numbers, with the ensuing problems mentioned earlier.

Within the party, this policy of budgetary rigour was not always interpreted in the same manner. It provoked debates over the question of civil service pay but also the wider issue of how public money should be spent. Under the Natsir government, the finance minister Sjafruddin Prawiranegara posed as the champion of a policy of financial rigour. Despite the enormous growth in state revenue due to the Korean War and the consequent rise in the price of raw materials, particularly tin and rubber, he distributed this financial windfall with extreme parsimony, refusing both to raise civil servants’ salaries and to finance political patronage networks. As a result, Indonesia benefitted from its only budgetary surplus of that period. However, this policy of budgetary rigour did not receive unanimous approval within the party, and the Soekiman government which succeeded Natsir’s cabinet had every intention of making use of the budgetary reserves accumulated by their predecessors. The new minister for finance, Jusuf Wibisono, handed out generous pay increases to civil servants, notably through a modification of how the Lebaran bonus was awarded. He also instituted an informal system, which other governments also adopted, authorising banks controlled by the state to award generous

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221 During the Wilopo government, the number of civil servants was roughly the same as it had been four years previously (571,000). Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, p. 302.
222 He was notably the architect of a comprehensive monetary reform—the money supply was almost halved—accompanied by a strong devaluation of the rupiah. On the extremely complex modalities of these reforms, see “L’évolution économique de l’Indonésie”, in Notes et études documentaires.
223 See Indonesia Dipersimpangan Djalan, written shortly afterwards.
224 1.2 million rupiah for 1951, despite the largesse of the Soekiman government, which came to power on 27 April 1951.
225 Previously, the government had merely given civil servants an advance at Lebaran (the end of Ramadan), which it recovered over the following months by docking it from their pay. Jusuf Wibisono transformed this advance into a simple bonus which would not have to be refunded. Moreover, the government reduced the tax rate for civil servants. “L’évolution économique de l’Indonésie”, Notes et études documentaires.
credit conditions to companies run by members of the government parties.\textsuperscript{226} This spendthrift policy was sternly denounced in the Masyumi press by Sjafruddin Prawinaegara.\textsuperscript{227} Prawinaegara finally managed to impose his vision of monetary policy in the Urgency Programme which stated its desire to combat the “demon of inflation”.\textsuperscript{228}

In other areas of economic policy, Masyumi did not identify itself with any particular school of thought. Nonetheless, the analysis of both its economic programmes and their implementation shows it to have been a party very much located on the supply-side spectrum of economic theories. Its main objective was to contribute to the improvement of productivity levels rather than to stimulate an increase in domestic demand. Economic growth, brought on largely by the Korean War, led to an improvement in exchange rates which brought about significant salary rises: between 1939 and 1951, salaries (calculated in dollars) increased threefold.\textsuperscript{229} However, production per inhabitant remained well below its pre-war levels, and so the benefit of these wage increases was lost in the resultant spiralling of inflation.

The country’s production capacity at the time depended mainly on a small industrial sector specialising in the transformation of agricultural products. It consisted mainly of family firms, and successive governments worked towards encouraging it to develop further. In 1949, the Hatta government established a programme incentivising the creation of cooperatives between small agricultural producers, most of whom were also engaged in small-scale industrial activity. These programmes were continued and amplified by Masyumi-led governments. In accordance with the programme set out in 1949 and taken up again in 1952, the Natsir government established the “Sumitro Plan”.\textsuperscript{230} The

\textsuperscript{226} Herbert Feith, \textit{The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia}, p. 218. However, Feith points out a little later in the book (p. 296) that, unlike Iskaq, the minister for finance in the first Ali government, Jusuf Wibisono did not discriminate against any political party when distributing indirect financial assistance, and even allowed the PKI to benefit from it.

\textsuperscript{227} See, for example, \textit{Abadi}, 2 July 1951.

\textsuperscript{228} Masjumi Congress at Surabaya in December 1954, \textit{Urgency Programme of the Masjumi, to Safeguard the Nation Economically and Financially}, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{229} “L’évolution économique de l’Indonésie”, in \textit{Notes et études documentaires}.

\textsuperscript{230} The name was taken from the minister for trade and industry, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo. He was a former trade attaché to Washington, a member of the PSI and a close supporter of Natsir and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara. He was later called the “most brilliant economist of his generation”. The Suharto regime turned to him when it was in its dying days in April and May 1998.
foundations for this plan were laid in October 1950 with the creation of a government body, the Cooperative Service (Jawatan Kooperasi), responsible for encouraging the creation of cooperatives in rural towns and providing small-scale agricultural producers with both technical advice and financial assistance.

The Sumitro Plan encountered a certain degree of success, helped no doubt by the fact that it was maintained under the Ali government. Along with this policy of stimulating growth, Masyumi simultaneously endeavoured to limit payroll costs for businesses and to diminish the number of industrial disputes. In 1950, the government had to promulgate a law dating back to 1948 which established a 40-hour working week and a seven-hour working day. Meanwhile, however, new laws promoting social justice through the provision of social security, old-age pensions and various other benefits, led to small and medium-sized enterprises incurring significant social charges. The Masyumi leadership regularly declared itself in favour of many of these social gains, and indeed in September 1950, the Natsir government established a minimum wage for workers in the plantation sector. However, Masyumi’s position concerning questions of economic policy, as in many other areas, was governed by pragmatism. The seven-hour working day was often called into question, and the Masyumi leadership often called on employees to moderate their demands for wage increases, reminding them that the effect of such increases would be cancelled out by their inflationary impact.

In response to the conflicting demands which weighed upon it, the party managed at times to find creative solutions. In an attempt to reconcile economic competitiveness with the need for social justice, for example, Masyumi proposed to create a system in which on top of a minimum wage paid by employers (upah kerja), the state would add a supplement (upah social), which would allow employees a decent

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231 Between 1952 to 1954, the number of cooperative members rose from 1 million to 1.4 million.

232 In October 1951, Natsir explained that “Our country will not find a way out of its current difficulties by working only seven hours a day at a leisurely pace”. *Berita Majumi*, 3 October 1951. In April 1953, Jusuf Wibisono declared that the working day should be increased from seven to eight hours a day. *Abadi*, 1 April 1953. However, these measures were extremely unpopular and were never implemented.

233 See, for example, Masyumi Congress at Surabaya in December 1954, *Urgency Programme of the Majumi, to Safeguard the Nation Economically and Financially*. 
standard of living. This proposal, formulated in the 1949 Programme for Action, was never in fact put into action. In the area of industrial disputes, however, another original and pragmatic solution did manage to get implemented. In February 1951, in response to a series of strikes which had paralysed the country, the Natsir government issued a directive banning, on pain of being fined or imprisoned, all work stoppages in sectors which could be considered as essential, including transportation, banking and the oil industry.\textsuperscript{234} At the same time though, Natsir established, at both national and regional levels mediation committees tasked with holding negotiations between employers and employees. The government’s measures limiting strike action were criticised vehemently by the opposition parties, who considered that they were in violation of the Constitution. They nonetheless led to a significant drop in the number of industrial disputes in 1952, including sectors where strikes were permitted.\textsuperscript{235}

\textit{A National rather than Nationalistic Economy}

The entire Indonesian political class agreed on the necessity for creating a genuinely national economy. This objective entailed both the elimination of the country’s dependence on exports and the transferral of foreign-owned companies to Indonesian ownership. There was an overall consensus on the means needed to achieve the first of these targets. Successive governments attempted, by means of taxes or import licences, to limit the importation of non-essential products.\textsuperscript{236} However, Masyumi spoke out strongly against the abuse of these measures by the first Ali government. The minister for economic affairs, Iskaq Tjokrohadisurjo (PNI), had established a system of awarding import-export licences which favoured native Indonesians at the expense of foreigners but also Indonesian citizens of foreign extraction (the latter were, for the most part, of Chinese origin). Masyumi did not contest the principle of this policy, nor did it object to the xenophobia which

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\textsuperscript{234} The new directive was published by \textit{Suara Partai Masjumi}, March–April 1951.

\textsuperscript{235} “L’évolution économique de l’Indonésie”, in \textit{Notes et études documentaires}.

\textsuperscript{236} For example, the Wilopo government, in February 1952, imposed taxes as high as 200\% on luxury products. Another type of measure used included limiting import companies’ working capital by requiring the upfront payment of up to 75\% of their imported goods and by forbidding banks from extending credit on the strength of those amounts.
underpinned it. However, it did denounce the partisan favouritism and corruption which the awarding of these licences brought about, as well as the way in which they led to an unnecessary increase in the price of imported goods.\textsuperscript{237} The party also accused the government of having “failed to bring about the emergence of middle-class entrepreneurs who would be beneficial to our society”, and also “having done little more than give birth to a group of flunkies and Ali-Baba and Ali-William entrepreneurs.”\textsuperscript{238}

From the late 1940s, another much more radical means was proposed in order to allow native Indonesians to regain control of their country’s economy. This involved the nationalisation of large companies owned mainly by foreigners or by Indonesians of foreign extraction. Masyumi, contrary to what its political opponents claimed, was in fact very much in favour of this policy, but the party considered that it should be implemented progressively, and should protect both the country’s finances and its future prospects of attracting foreign capital investment. Consequently, the 1949 Programme for Action planned to nationalise, in order of priority, “the Central Bank, companies which played an essential role in the area of communications, public service corporations and mining companies”, with the proviso that this be carried out according to the “state of public finances and to general economic conditions”. The minister for finance in the Natsir government, Sjafrudding Prawiranegara, for example, did not want to nationalise the \textit{Javasche Bank}, as he believed that the Central Bank’s Indonesian personnel did not have sufficient experience to run it properly. Jusuf Wibisono, who succeeded Prawiranegara as finance minister when Soekiman became prime minister, shared his predecessor’s point of view, but he considered that for symbolic reasons it was important to act. On 30 April 1951, three days after the new government took up office, the \textit{Javasche Bank} was nationalised and became known as \textit{Bank Indonesia}, with none other than Sjafruddin Prawiranegara as its governor.


\textsuperscript{238} The terms “Ali-Baba” and “Ali-William” referred, respectively, to companies owned by Chinese or Dutch businessmen who used Indonesian figureheads. Masyumi Congress at Surabaya in December 1954, \textit{Urgency Programme of the Masjumi, to Safeguard the Nation Economically and Financially}, p. 20.
During Wilopo’s premiership, two affairs sparked off a debate between the two main coalition partners, the PNI and Masyumi, over the issue of nationalisation. These affairs concerned the oilfields of North Sumatra and the restitution of an occupied tobacco plantation to its foreign owners. During the Dutch colonial period, significant deposits of oil had been discovered in the north of the island of Sumatra and the concession to exploit these oilfields had been awarded to Bataafse Petroleum Maatshappij (BPM). Following the war, the exploitation of these reserves had been handed over to the company’s Indonesian employees, resulting in a substantial drop in oil yields to the extent that its income no longer even enabled it to pay its employees. Faced with the likelihood of bankruptcy, the Wilopo government decided to hand its management and ownership back to the original concessionary company. However, this move was suspended when the PNI demanded, at its party conference in December 1952, that the oil deposits be nationalised, or at the very least that their exploitation be reserved for the government. Though it was in favour of nationalising the exploitation of all of the country’s underground resources in the long term, Masyumi was opposed to these demands, considering it necessary first of all to acquire the necessary technical know-how to make the operation successful. Natsir reiterated this position in December 1953 during a visit to Sumatra; the problem had still not been resolved at this stage and the government of the day, under Prime Minister Ali, despite a number of forceful declarations, had not yet found a solution to the technical problems attendant upon nationalisation. At one stage, the possibility of Japanese participation had even been evoked, drawing an ironic reaction from the president of Masyumi, who explained that his own party had often been criticised for kowtowing to foreign investors, but that in this instance the government was planning to simply replace the Dutch with the Japanese.\(^\text{239}\)

In this affair, Masyumi warned the government against adopting an overly nationalistic attitude which would run the risk of discrediting the country in the eyes of the international business world.\(^\text{240}\)

A few months later, the debate over nationalisation arose again with the Tandjung Morawa affair. In East Sumatra, former tobacco

\(^{239}\) Abadi, 7 December 1953.

\(^{240}\) An attitude described as “cowboyish” (bersifat cowboy-cowboyan) by Isa Anshary. Abadi, 2 February 1954.
plantations had been illegally occupied since the war by families that had developed small subsistence farms there. The Indonesian authorities wished to hand back at least a portion of these lands to the Dutch companies who still held the concessions for them. As with the affair concerning the oil deposits, it was thought not only that this solution would allow a much more profitable exploitation of the plantations and therefore generate revenue for the government, but also that it would send out a positive message to potential foreign investors interested in Indonesia.

In July 1951, the Soekiman government succeeded in reaching a compromise agreement with the former concessionary company. According to the terms of this agreement, half of the plantation land—130,000 hectares of the total 255,000—would be returned to its original owners, while the rest would be used to rehouse the 62,000 families occupying the land illegally. Although the agreement was drawn up under Soekiman’s premiership, it fell to Wilopo’s government to implement it, and when the illegal occupants refused to leave the land, it was decided that they were to be removed by force. Tragedy struck, however, on 16 March 1953, when a group of Chinese and Indonesian peasants who were threatened with expulsion tried during a demonstration to seize the weapons belonging to a police station in Tandjong Morawa, a locality situated ten kilometres north of Medan. The police opened fire on the demonstrators, killing five people; a number of protestors were also arrested. The affair provoked an outcry and soon had political repercussions. A PNI deputy Abdullah Jusuf was sent by his party to investigate the incident and his enquiries led him to conclude that the Masyumi governor of North Sumatra, Abdul Hakim, was responsible for the tragic events. Jusuf even accused him of having received significant sums of money from the former concessionary companies. However, the conclusions reached both by representatives of the Home Affairs Ministry and by a delegation of Masyumi parliamentary deputies were quite different. They emphasised the role played by the local branch of the PKI as well as the presence in the area, at

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242 For further reading on these accusations and Masyumi’s denial, see Abadi, 26 May 1953.
the time of the events, of a representative of the Chinese consulate based in Jakarta. In mid-May, Sidik Kertapati, a parliamentary representative of the Union of Indonesian Peasants, SAKTI (Sarekat Tani Indonesia) tabled a motion of no confidence in the minister for home affairs, Masyumi’s Mohamad Roem, whom they held responsible for the crackdown on demonstrators. At this point, the PNI threatened to vote in favour of the motion and demanded, in exchange for their abstention, that Masyumi support the PNI’s candidate for the vacant position of minister for information. The Masyumi leadership decided to reject this trade-off, and on 3 June, before the motion had even been voted on, the Wilopo government tendered its resignation to the president.

In its Urgency Programme drawn up in December 1954, Masyumi returned at some length to these questions. The programme denounced the “economic policies inspired by a mis-interpretation of nationalism” espoused by its opponents, and it underlined the disastrous economic effects of foreign capital flight. It explained in particular that numerous plantations were not receiving the level of investment necessary for their survival because of concessionary companies’ fears of being expelled from the country. This situation was doubly regrettable as the revenue generated by a hectare of rice (2,000 Rp per year) was far below what could be generated by a hectare of sugar cane (28,000 Rp per year) or tobacco (37,000 Rp a year in East Sumatra). The programme consequently advised the government “to look for technical and financial assistance abroad, regardless of its ancestry, and also to mobilise both the entire work-force and all of the available capital in the country.” It also called on the plain common sense of their rural electors in an attempt to encourage them to overcome any reluctance towards such a programme:

If even a buffalo which we use to cultivate paddy fields needs to receive sufficient care and food for us to be sure of his services, will we abandon a human being whose assistance we require to further our own interests?

243 Abadi, 28 May 1953.
244 Abadi, 1 June 1953.
245 “Economic policy from Misinterpreted Nationalistic Viewpoint”, Masyumi Congress at Surabaya in December 1954, Urgency Programme of the Masyumi, to Safeguard the Nation Economically and Financially.
246 Ibid.
These concrete aspects of Masyumi’s economic policy, defended by the party both when in opposition and in government, constituted a remarkable example of the hiatus—which we will further examine later—that existed between the pragmatism of the actions proposed and implemented by the party and the idealism of the general theories defended by its central figures.\textsuperscript{247}

The necessity of economic recovery and, more importantly, the instability of government coalitions did not allow it to implement the Islamic principles which it claimed to be the representative of. The chronic political instability of the young Republic was, at that time, attributed to the Provisional Assembly regime which had been in place since 1945, and which justified the adoption of temporary solutions. With the organisation of legislative and constituent assembly elections planned for September and December 1955, Masyumi hoped to consolidate its policies in the subsequent years. The programme which it formulated for the election campaign was designed to allow it to appeal to voters who were not advocates of political Islam, and thus to become the uncontested political heavyweight of the future Indonesian Parliament.

\textsuperscript{247} See infra, Chapter 6.