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**THE DECLINING SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE
OF THE INDONESIAN MILITARY**

by

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December 1998

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THE DECLINING SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE OF THE INDONESIAN MILITARY

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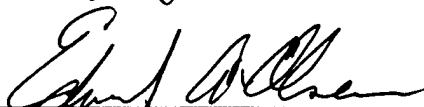


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ABSTRACT

The Indonesian military has played a significant socio-political role since the independence struggle against the Dutch. Subsequently, the military continued its socio-political intervention, influencing political decisions in the military, domestic and international arenas. Most scholars consider the New Order regime (1966-1998) to have been one dominated by the military. However, this thesis concludes that the level of the military's socio-political participation has been declining in recent years. It also aims to present some reasons for this decline. The analysis involved the examination of the levels and types of military prerogatives and contestations the military exercised against the civilian leadership, allowing for both objective and subjective analyses to be conducted.

The analysis conducted demonstrated that the Indonesian military's socio-political role had been eroded in recent years. Suharto's policies featured prominently as causes of this decline; but pressures from within the military, Indonesian society as well as international pressures also dictated a reduction in the military's socio-political role. This reduction will continue into the future, although a total elimination of the military's socio-political role remains highly unlikely.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Indonesian military played a social and political role in the struggle for independence and through the years since then. During the armed struggle, the Indonesian military played the role of a "people's army," leading the population in the fighting against the former colonial masters. The success of this armed struggle strengthened Indonesians' beliefs that a successful military formation and strategy are predicated upon the common people's participation. Towards this end, the Indonesian military had to play an active role in the social and political affairs of the newly emerging state. Because they relied heavily on the support of the local population, the military was always careful to rally popular enthusiasm around their cause; this was the basis of the military's political role. This political role was never relinquished by the military even after independence. The socio-political role was formalized in 1957, and crystallized as the *Dwi Fungsi* or "Dual Functions" role in 1965—being a military force as well as a socio-political force.

The military has continuously exercised its *Dwi Fungsi* roles in Indonesian society since the struggle for independence. However, the levels of its political influence have fluctuated through the years. This thesis presents the proposition that the Indonesian military's socio-political role has declined in recent

years. A comparative method over time is used for this analysis, examining the levels of military contestation and prerogatives that the military has held over the civilian authorities.

Analysis of events during the 1940s and 1950s ascertained that this period represented the formative years of the Indonesian military's political posture. Herein, the military exercised its prerogatives and contestations against civilian decisions affecting mainly military matters, for example, its leadership and structure. Even so, it had experienced failures in its contestation attempts.

The *Orde Lama* or "Old Order" period (1959-1965) saw an expansion of the military's political influence. Significantly, the military began to interfere extensively in areas beyond military affairs. It successfully countered Sukarno's moves to sideline its influence, eliminated the *PKI* and eventually forced Sukarno out of office. Military initiatives also successfully shaped foreign affairs during *Konfrontasi*, Indonesia's armed campaign against the formation of Malaysia in the 1960s. Its successes shaped the behavior of all political players, as civilian leaders subsequently had to factor in the military's potential reactions to political decisions. The frequency and scope of military prerogatives and contestations during *Orde Lama* thus illustrated a leap from those previously undertaken.

Orde Baru or the "New Order" period (1966-1998) saw a general decline of the military's influence in politics, although it continued to play an important role exercising its social roles at the lower levels of Indonesian society. Suharto's

intimate knowledge of the military enabled him to exercise a relatively successful "checks-and-balances" strategy in containing the military's political role. His continued employment of loyalists in key positions ensured that he maintained effective control over the military. By the 1990s, he had rendered the military leadership basically impotent.

As noted above, Suharto played a significant part in marginalizing the military's socio-political role. Suharto's own mandate in ensuring his rule and the prosperity of his family probably dictated the military's directions during *Orde Baru*. This state of events remained until the economic downturn in 1997 and 1998, which unleashed a wave of discontent in Indonesia that Suharto could not suppress, ultimately leading to his resignation. This crisis also released the military from Suharto's grasp, allowing it to exercise its own initiatives in the post-Suharto era. Until now, the military leadership apparently had decided to continue with the reduction of the institution's socio-political role, although it had emphasized that it would not consider a total elimination of these roles. Desires to reduce its political influence in the face of democracy, to regain legitimacy after its excesses in the past decades and to return to professionalism are the probable intra-military reasons prescribing its decision to reduce the socio-political role. In addition, societal demands as well as international pressure also forced the military's hand.

An understanding of the circumstances leading to the crystallization and decline of the Indonesian military's socio-political role provides a better insight

into Indonesia's extremely dynamic political situation. The coming years will be crucial in the formation of Indonesia's new political landscape, and the military's initiatives in this area will have a definitive effect on these developments. Even with the implementation of more democratic reforms, the military will likely maintain a stake in the new system. This is to ensure the stability of the social and political situation domestically, as well as to safeguard its own interests.

The Indonesian military will remain engaged in the socio-political arena in the near future. Without its mitigating influence, there is a possibility that Indonesia will revert to the chaotic times of the 1950s. Growth of the backward regions of the archipelago will also be severely hindered if the military does not participate in social programs in these areas. In the medium to long term, the situation may change with the maturing of the democratic movements and the establishment of non-military social organizations. Then, the military can concentrate its attention on developing a professional armed force befitting its size and influence in the Southeast Asian region.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the revolution for independence from Dutch colonial rule, the Indonesian military has played a social and political role in the national arena. The failure to secure independence from the Dutch via diplomatic means forced the young military to take a more active role towards this end. During the armed struggle (1945-1949), the Indonesian military played the role of a "people's army," leading the population in the fight against the former colonial masters. Even when the Dutch forces arrested the civilian leaders—Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta—in December 1948, the military did not cease its attacks but instead redoubled its efforts, culminating in its attack on the city of Yogyakarta on 1 March 1949. This proved to be the turning point of the independence struggle, with both sides subsequently agreeing to resume negotiations that resulted in the formation of an independent Indonesia on 27 December 1949.

The success of this armed struggle strengthened the Indonesians' belief that a successful military formation and strategy are predicated upon the common people's participation. This belief is reflected in the Indonesian military's basic military strategy *Sishankamrata* or "Total People's Defense System." Towards this end, the Indonesian military had to play an active role in the social and political affairs of the newly emerging state. Because it relied heavily on the

support of the local population, the military was always concerned to rally popular enthusiasm around its cause. This formed the basis of the military's political role. The Indonesian military never relinquished this political role even after independence. Later, after the introduction of martial law in 1957, the army Chief-of-Staff Major General Abdul Haris Nasution formulated the concept of the "Middle Way," whereby the military would neither seek to take over the government nor remain politically inactive. Instead, the military claimed the right to continuous representation in the legislature and government administration. The military further developed this "Middle Way" concept into the doctrine of *Dwi Fungsi* or "Dual Functions" roles in 1965—the military being a military force as well as a socio-political force.¹

In 1965, President Suharto emerged as the master manipulator of Indonesia's internal politics, at least until his downfall in May 1998. Throughout his rule, he maintained a credible "checks-and-balances" system to ensure that the different factions in Indonesia's domestic scene did not become powerful enough to challenge his rule. Even though he was a former military general, Suharto did not spare the Armed Forces from his manipulations, often balancing them against the Muslim factions in the country. In addition, he exploited the "*Dwi*

¹ Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), 24.

Fungsi" aspect of the military's roles to assist in his rule of Indonesia for the past 30 years. However, this did not mean that the military was always subservient to politicians, even in Suharto's largely authoritarian rule. Throughout its history, the military has confronted politicians, struggling to tilt the balance between civil and military powers. However, it has appeared that the military's influence in civil affairs has waned in recent years. During his years in office, Suharto succeeded in reducing the military's formal representation in the political arena. In addition, there have been calls for the military to "return to the barracks" or to become a purely professional force. Even though the military played a part in the recent removal of Suharto as president, its profile appeared significantly lower when compared to the situation in 1965/66, when Suharto succeeded Sukarno.

A. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

A decline in the socio-political functions of the Indonesian military will have an impact on Indonesian society, given the leading roles that the military played in previous decades. If the non-military roles continue to decline in the post-Suharto era, the future development of the Indonesian military as a professional armed force will also be affected. Therefore, it is pertinent to examine the reasons for, and direction and pace of this decline, so that one can predict future developments within the military and the Indonesian society.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Several research questions guide the direction of the thesis. The questions are used to determine the aims and the scope of the study. These are:

- a. How has the Indonesian military's socio-political role changed since 1949, and especially in recent years?
- b. Did ex-President Suharto try to constrict the socio-political influence of the military? What other factors contributed to the rise and decline of these roles?
- c. What are the effects on Indonesian society and military as a result of the changes in the military's socio-political role?

C. AIM OF THESIS

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that the level of the military's socio-political participation has been declining in recent years. The thesis aims to present the likely causes of the decline, especially the extent to which ex-President Suharto was responsible for lower levels of participation. It will also examine the effects that the military's socio-political participation have on Indonesian society and military.

D. SCOPE OF STUDY

The thesis will cover the developments since 1949, when Indonesia achieved independence from the Dutch and when the Indonesian military began to play a legitimate and expanding role in the socio-political arena until mid-1998. The thesis will examine the social and political functions of the armed forces, with special emphasis on the political roles that have endured the most erosion in recent years. The thesis will also highlight the detriments and benefits arising from the changing nature of these roles, so that inferences can be drawn on the effects of further declines in the military's socio-political role.

E. STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This chapter is the introductory chapter. Chapter II will trace the origins of the military's socio-political role, and will present a historical account of the development and realization of these roles in Indonesian society. It will also evaluate the costs and benefits brought of the military's social and political involvement.

Chapter III will address the decline of the military's socio-political influences in recent years. The level of participation of the military in the social and political arenas will be compared over time. Specifically, historical events in Indonesia in which the military has challenged the civilian politicians will be studied to determine both the type and intensity of these challenges.

Chapter IV will put forward some reasons for the decline of the military's socio-political role in Indonesian society. As Indonesia matures, one expects that the military would want to retreat to the background of the socio-political arena and allow civilians to take the lead in these areas, unless the civilians seriously threaten the military's basic ideals. In addition, Chapter IV will analyze the influence of President Suharto in determining the level of the military's socio-political participation as well as the reasons why he marginalized the military in the political landscape over the last decade. Lastly, this chapter will address the impact of the reduced level of political and social participation by the military in both the military and within the Indonesian society.

Chapter V will be the concluding chapter. It will present the findings of this study, and determine if the hypothesis presented in Chapter I is supported by existing data. In addition, it will speculate on the level of the military's socio-political involvement in the near term, especially in the light of the removal of Suharto as president.

F. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The analysis will use the comparative method over time to examine the involvement of the military in the social and political affairs. The method chosen to analyze the political influences of the Indonesian military is modeled after

Alfred Stepan's "Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone,"² an examination of the military politics in Latin America. This method analyzes the levels of military prerogatives and contestations employed by the military towards the civilian authorities.

1. Military Prerogatives

"Prerogative" is often seen as "a special privilege or power that one has or is allowed to have."³ In his book, Stepan defined "military prerogative" as "those areas where, whether challenged or not, the military as an institution assumes it has an acquired right or privilege, formal or informal, to exercise effective control over its internal governance, to play a role within extra-military areas within the state apparatus, or even to structure relationships between the state and political or civil society."⁴ This definition will be followed in the analysis of the Indonesian military. Certain indicators can be used as a guide to determine the level of military prerogatives, and they are reflected in Table 1. These are generic indicators modeled after the list from Stepan's book.⁵ This thesis will use these indicators as guidelines in examining the levels of prerogatives exercised by the Indonesian military.

² Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics : Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).

³ *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*, 1991 ed., s.v. "Prerogative." (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991).

⁴ Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*, 93.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 94-97.

Table 1
Indicators for Military Prerogatives.

FACTORS	LEVEL OF MILITARY PREROGATIVES		
	Low	Medium	High
1. Military's political role defined in Constitution.	None.		Yes. Military can legally take actions to preserve law and order within the country.
2. Ability to mobilize armed forces.	None. Civilian leader is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and troops can only be mobilized by him.		Able to mobilize forces independently, even without civilian authorization.
3. Active duty participation in Cabinet.	Normally none.	Military's representation limited to professional areas, e.g., in defense and security.	Military's participation in areas other than defense and security.
4. Active duty participation in government.	None.		Institutionalized. Assigned as local governors or civil leaders.
5. Policing internal security.	Police force under civilian authorities.		Police force is part of the military.
6. Internal intelligence.	Controlled by civilians.		Controlled by military.
7. Promotion of military officers	Determined and approved by civilian leadership.	Determined by military leadership, approved by civilian leadership.	Determined and approved by military leadership.
8. Military Acquisition.	Civilian authorities able to significantly influence military acquisitions.	Military determines necessary acquisitions, conducted after civilian approval.	Military determines and approves acquisitions.

The above list is not exhaustive, as certain events that are examined will not fall within these indicators. In addition, the determination of the level of military prerogatives will largely be subjective, with the levels being determined relatively over time.

2. Military Contestation

Another measure of the military's involvement in politics is examining the level of military contestation against the policies of the civilian democratic leadership. This is characterized by the extent to which there is intense dispute or substantial agreement between the military and the government concerning a number of key issues. For example, issues of potential conflict between the two institutions may concern military reaction toward the government's initiatives vis-à-vis the organizational mission, structure and control of the military, and the military budget.⁶

The levels of military influence will largely be determined subjectively. One cannot merely count the number of military officers participating actively in political affairs to determine the levels, as the military is not always a homogenous entity but one riddled with factions that can be exploited by competent civilian politicians.

⁶ Ibid., 68.

The Indonesian military has always played a significant role in politics. This thesis will use the analysis of the prerogatives and contestations to determine the level of political participation. By examining the levels through the years, we could determine the trend and prove the thesis that the Indonesian military's political role is declining.

II. ORIGINS OF THE MILITARY'S SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE

Prior to the Second World War, the Dutch colonial masters of Indonesia did not attempt to widely assimilate the indigenous population into the defense of the archipelago. The colonial army in Indonesia, the *Koninklijk Nederlands - Indische Leger (KNIL)*, was mainly officered by the Dutch and the Eurasians and very few Indonesians became officers, with the highest rank attained before 1940 being a major.⁷ While the Dutch recruited Indonesians as troops in the *KNIL*, most of them were from the Christian Indonesian areas of the eastern part of the archipelago. The Dutch also gave soldiers from these areas a substantially higher rate of pay than the relatively small number of Javanese, Sundanese, and other Indonesian soldiers in the *KNIL*. In addition, the Dutch officers also often highlighted the disadvantages of a Javanese dominated Indonesia to the Indonesian Christian soldiers.⁸ Such Dutch attempts to fragment the indigenous Indonesians in the *KNIL* were largely successful. As such, one cannot consider the *KNIL* the cradle of the Indonesian military.

⁷ Bilveer Singh, *Dwi Fungsi ABRI: The Dual Function of the Indonesian Armed Forces* (Singapore: Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 1995), 21.

⁸ George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1959), 453.

It was only during the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies during the Second World War that the nucleus of the Indonesian armed forces was formed. In October 1943, the Japanese occupation forces in Java created *PETA* (Defenders of the Fatherland), an independent military force officered by Indonesians to assist the Japanese in repelling an Allied invasion of the archipelago. By the end of the war, *PETA* had some 37,000 men in arms in Java and 20,000 in Sumatra. However, its socio-political role was not formed at the inception of the armed forces. These roles developed later during the independence revolution against the Dutch. This chapter will examine the Indonesian military's socio-political role, and will present a historical account of the development and implementation of these roles in the Indonesian society. In addition, the detriments and benefits brought about by the military's social and political involvement will be examined at the end of this chapter.

A. A MILITARY FORCE DURING AN INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE

A military is a potent force. Its abilities to organize, train and lead in adverse conditions make it a valuable component in almost any struggle for independence; without the armed force support, the chances of success are drastically reduced.

As an active participant in an independence struggle, the military will be involved in armed conflicts during the struggle. Regular military units often form the backbone in these conflicts, although most independence struggles also

involve the use of irregular units, comprising civilian militia forces or hastily trained civilian personnel in the fighting. In these instances, the regular military will normally take the lead in the armed struggles, bringing their expertise and equipment to the civilian population. Training and motivating the civilian population is crucial in developing a force capable of conducting armed struggles effectively. The military will also have to establish good relations with those under their charge, and this can be achieved by undertaking social projects. Thus, the military can play a significant social role in ensuring the success of the independence movement.

In addition, the chaotic situation and the uprooted society often call upon the military to perform tasks above and beyond its war fighting duties. Recognizing its organizational abilities, the military often takes the lead or is asked to take the lead in organizing political activities in support of the struggle. Determining the goals for the struggle, negotiating with the other parties, and setting the direction of and pace of the struggle are often undertaken by the military. Also, the military often has the final word in negotiations with the colonizers, or in determining the end of the independence struggle. Thus, a military's political roles often take root during the struggle for independence.

The Indonesian military's socio-political role evolved along the above pattern, and were not designed at a particular point of time by a higher authority. Through this evolution, these roles became legitimized and generally

accepted in the Indonesian society. The rest of this chapter will explore the evolution process of the military's socio-political role since the Second World War.

B. THE INDONESIAN MILITARY IN THE INDEPENDENCE REVOLUTION

The Indonesian independence revolution against the Dutch colonizers lasted from 1945 to 1949. In this struggle, politics and military actions were often closely intertwined. The youths who joined the revolutionary forces in the independence struggle were motivated less by the desire for a military career than by national patriotism. In addition, the nature that the struggle eventually took also underscored the military's concern for political matters. During the independence struggle, the Indonesian government had very little central control over the fighting forces. For example, the revolutionaries in the Outer Islands had minimal contact with Java. These forces drew their strategies and their recruits on the basis of local social pressures and alignments, and these did not correspond faithfully to the forces at work on Java.⁹ However, the mode of fighting against the Dutch remained essentially the same throughout the archipelago. Inferior in its training and armaments compared to the Dutch professional army, the Indonesian revolutionary forces conducted guerrilla warfare against the Dutch. This form of warfare drew heavily on support from the local population. The revolutionary forces acquired manpower and logistical

⁹ Ruth McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army: Part I," *Indonesia*, no.11 (April), 142.

requirements such as food and fuel from the civilians. In addition, the guerrilla fighters were organized along politically aligned units as well as regular army forces. The military leaders often had to perform political functions in order to rally these different political groups together and to obtain support for their independence cause. In many cases, the roles of the political and military leader became almost indistinguishable.¹⁰

1. The Origins of the Socio-Political Role

Professionally trained officers are normally not politically inclined, as the duties of protecting the state against armed threats are assumed to be beyond politics. However, this professional tradition was absent in the Indonesian officer cadre during the independence struggle. While there were some Dutch-trained professional officers who had joined the nationalist side, the majority of the officers were recruited from the quick mobilization necessary to build a large fighting force. This larger group of officers received military training in auxiliary military organizations set up by the Japanese during the occupation (especially *PETA*); many others had taken up arms in local *laskjar* or irregular units formed spontaneously throughout the country in the months after the proclamation of independence on 17 August 1945.¹¹ The latter two groups of officers did not share the same ethics as those professionally trained officers, especially

¹⁰ Harold Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 25.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

concerning the separation of politics and military. Thus, the absence of an apolitical military tradition made it easier for the officers to accept the political roles.

The circumstances under which military officers acquired the political orientation during the revolution gave them a sense of having their own political purposes that could differ from those of the civilian politicians in the government. The military nature of the struggle had inevitably involved the army leadership in national politics, where their views often conflicted with those of the civilian government. The government leaders, who had joined the nationalist movement during the 1920s and 1930s, came mainly from the urban, Dutch-educated elite, whereas the senior officers of the army were rarely more than thirty years old and usually came from the small towns of Java. They had been steeped in traditional culture, obtained only secondary schooling, and learned little Dutch. The lack of rapport that derived in part from this generation and cultural gap was exacerbated by the feeling of army officers in the field that they had at least as much right as civilian politicians in the government to decide how the struggle was to be pursued. For example in 1945, the first army commander, Colonel Sudirman, was selected by an intra-army election rather than appointed by the civilian leadership.¹² Also, the army leaders often joined other political groups in expressing strong dissatisfaction with the government's readiness to offer

¹² Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-46* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1972), 244.

concessions to the Dutch in the interests of a negotiated settlement. The leaders of the government had perceived the struggle in its broader view of diplomatic retreats; these were regarded as betrayals by guerrilla fighters, who were willing to risk their lives for nothing less than total victory.

2. Early Manifestation of the Military's Political Role

One instance where the civilian leaders were considered betrayers to the Indonesian cause was the acceptance of the Linggarjati Agreement on 25 March 1947. This agreement resulted in the de facto recognition by the Dutch of Indonesia's sovereignty over Java, Sumatra and Madura, but not over the entire republic. However, this agreement was seen as a violation of Indonesia's independence proclamation of 17 August 1945, which implied sovereignty over the whole territory of the Republic.¹³ The Indonesian people disapproved this agreement, and demanded that the government make no concessions to the Dutch and only negotiate on the basis of 100 per cent *merdeka* (independence).¹⁴ Here, Sudirman defied the civilian leadership and advised his soldiers to struggle on regardless.¹⁵

¹³ Soetjipto, H., Karamoy, W. A., Wuryani, M. S., et al., *Indonesia 1995 : An Official Handbook* (Department of Information, Directorate of Foreign Information Services, Perum Percetakan Negara RI, 1994); available from <http://www.prica.org/indonesia/general/history.html>, accessed on 15 June 1998.

¹⁴ Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, 305.

¹⁵ Anthony J.S. Reid, *Indonesian National Revolution: 1945-50* (Hawthorn, Victoria: Longman Australia Pty Limited, 1974), 96.

Another example where the military opposed the civilian directions occurred in January 1948, when the civilian leaders signed the Renville Agreement with the Dutch. This occurred after the Dutch drove the republican forces out of Sumatra, eastern and western Java, confining them to the region of central Java around Yogyakarta. The agreement stipulated a cease-fire and stopped the Dutch from capturing Yogyakarta, in return for the Indonesian recognition of the "van Mook line,"¹⁶ and to withdraw republican forces from eastern and western Java. The military again felt betrayed and opposed this agreement. While some units followed the government's direction to withdraw, many units continued to occupy the easily defended guerrilla bases in Dutch-occupied territories in defiance of the agreement.¹⁷

The alienation of army officers from the government reached its peak when the army fought on after the leaders of the government (Sukarno, Hatta and half of the cabinet) had allowed themselves to be surprised and captured by the Dutch in December 1948.¹⁸ Many army officers were suspicious of the new round of negotiations that commenced in 1949. They nearly rejected the cease-fire ordered by the government and felt cheated by the terms of the transfer of

¹⁶ This line connected the points of the most extensive Dutch inroads into the Indonesian republic's territory.

¹⁷ Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, 234.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 337-338.

sovereignty in December 1949. Thus, by the end of the evolution, many army officers had become deeply distrustful of the civilian politicians who had led the government.¹⁹

3. Post Revolution Developments

After achieving independence in 1949, the military accepted civilian supremacy in ruling the country. However, the end of the revolutionary struggle did not mean a cessation of problems for the new republic. The political situation did not alleviate the tenuous situation at independence. Instead of adopting the 1945 Constitution²⁰ that was perceived to be advocating a strongly authoritative presidential regime, the civilian politicians adopted a more liberal democratic style of government. As such, a multi-party parliamentary system based on western political models was formed to win favor from the victorious Allies. In addition, many modern-educated Indonesians had imbibed from their Dutch mentors the

¹⁹ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 27.

²⁰ The 1945 Constitution was developed by Sukarno and the *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Body to investigate measures for the preparation of Indonesian Independence) or BPKI prior to the declaration of independence on 17 August 1945. It is influenced by Sukarno's *Pancasila* (Five Principles) ideology.

Sukarno's *Pancasila* ideology was first expounded in a speech to BPKI on 1 June 1945. It encompasses the following five principles:

- a. Belief in one and only God.
- b. Just and civilized humanity.
- c. The unity of Indonesia.
- d. Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives.
- e. Social justice for the whole of the people in Indonesia.

idea that parliamentary democracy was a sign of maturity as a modern state.²¹ But this style of governance proved highly unstable. Between 1950 to 1957, there were seven cabinets, each lasting about 15 months, and 100 political parties. As the civilian leadership became increasingly factionalized and ineffective in governing the nation, the Indonesian military became convinced that it bore the responsibility to intervene in order to "save" the nation. In this state of affairs, the conception of the army as an apolitical tool of the state quickly gave way to the older idea that the army was the guardian of the national interest and should intervene in political affairs whenever the weaknesses of civilian government made it necessary.²²

Events beginning from 1956 provided opportunities for the military to take a more prominent role in politics. The population deemed the Ali Sastroamidjojo government that was elected in 1956 as promoting only the interests of Javanese. This proved unpopular with those living outside Java, as they saw the government dominated by Javanese intent on "exploiting" the natural wealth of the export-producing areas. With the support of the local population, several regional and local commanders in Sumatra and Sulawesi took control of local governments in defiance of the central government. Factionalism within the army also added to the chaotic nature of the period. Of significance was the Lubis

²¹ Ruth McVey, "Building Behemoth: Indonesian Constructions of the Nation-State," *Making Indonesia*, ed. Daniel S. Lev (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1996), 18.

²² Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 30.

Affair, which was a coup attempt by Colonel Zulkifli Lubis in 1956.²³ This turbulent atmosphere prompted Sukarno (with the support of the military) to declare the abandonment of liberal democracy and proclaim a State of Emergency in April 1957. The military exploited the situation and expanded its influence into the economic and political spheres.²⁴ In 1959, Sukarno on the strong urging of the military re-instituted the 1945 Constitution. This provided Sukarno with substantial powers of the state. This period, which lasted until 1965, became known as the "Guided Democracy" phase.

The military took full advantage of this period (1957-1965) not only to strengthen their political position but also to expand into the fields of general administration and economic management. From 1957 to 1963, *Peperti* or Supreme War Administration was established. This was an army hierarchy that paralleled civilian territorial administration down to the local level and was responsible for administering the martial law. It provided a regular means for military intervention in civilian affairs at all levels. In the early years of the martial law, decisions made by *Peperti* were often more important than those taken by

²³ Lubis was a rival to the then Army Chief-of-staff, Major General Abdul Haris Nasution. When Nasution took steps to strengthen central army control over the regional army units, he and other officers whose posts were threatened and this prompted them to organize the coup attempt. As part of the coup demands, Lubis did not call for the removal of Sukarno but declared that the president could be forced to accept the dissolution of political parties and the establishment of a military junta. See Ruth McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 157-171.

²⁴ McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army: Part II," *Indonesia*, no.13 (April), 147.

the civilian cabinet.²⁵ The most significant military representation in the 1959 cabinet was General Nasution, who became the Minister of Defense in addition to his position as the leader of the army.²⁶ At the regional level, the number of military officers appointed as provincial governors rose from 5 in 1960 to 12 out of 24 in 1965, including key provinces as Jakarta, West Java, and East Java.²⁷ Military officers were also appointed as members of parliament at both the national and regional levels, and they were influential in the National Front set up by Sukarno to mobilize popular support for his political campaigns. The military's political involvement did not diminish when Sukarno lifted martial law in 1963 or when Sukarno once again introduced a modified martial law in 1964 during the Confrontation with Malaysia.

4. *Dwi Fungsi* or "Dual Function"

To maintain legitimacy for its non-military roles, the then Army Chief-of-staff, Major General Nasution, formulated the concept of the "Middle Way" in 1958. According to him, the Indonesian army would not follow the Western model as a lifeless instrument in the hands of the government. On the other hand, it should not take over the government as this would only lead to coups and counter-coups as in the cases in Latin America. Instead the military

²⁵ Ibid., 151.

²⁶ Ibid., 150.

²⁷ Harold Crouch, "Indonesia," *Military-Civilian Relations in South East Asia*, ed. Zakaria Haji Ahmad & Harold Crouch (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), 57.

should tread the "Middle Way," participating in all areas of political and social life but not seeking to dominate the government.²⁸ It would claim the right to continuous representation in the government, legislature and administration. However, it is not until April 1965 that the military formalized this political role in its first seminar, when it produced the doctrine on the Indonesian Armed Forces' *Dwi Fungsi* or "Dual Functions." This "Dual Functions" doctrine stipulated that the military has two functions, as a "military force" and as a "socio-political force." As a "socio-political force," the military activities would cover "the ideological, political, social, economic, cultural and religious fields."²⁹

5. The Military and the Communists

By the early 1960s, the military had emerged as a credible and potent force in Indonesia's political arena. Because of the earlier experiences of civilian leadership (during the revolution for independence), the military still had a deep distrust of civilian leadership. As such, President Sukarno had to turn towards other organizations in Indonesia to garner grassroots support. Particularly, he cultivated the *Partai Komunis Indonesia—PKI* (Indonesian Communist Party). He recognized that the *PKI* was more able to mobilize mass support and more in fear of the army than the other parties, thereby making them the prime candidate for balancing against the power of the military.

²⁸ Ibid., 59.

²⁹ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 24.

Politically, the military already regarded the *PKI* as their main long-term rival and wanted to limit its potential for growth. Protected by President Sukarno, the *PKI* was permitted to continue as a legal party despite strong anti-Communist sentiments in the military. *PKI* members held a substantial number of seats in the main representative bodies. However, the *PKI* was unable to make inroads into the executive positions of the cabinet.³⁰ Despite this, the communist party remained an effective check to the military's political powers. Its political clout expanded during Indonesia's conflict with the newly formed Malaysia—called *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation)—when it opted to take advantage of the sense of national invulnerability provided by the anti-Malaysian crusade to press its demands for greater influence in the government. It took a militant stance towards British and American interests in Indonesia, when *PKI*-led unions took over a number of their plantations and enterprises. In addition, Sukarno banned its most vocal civilian critic, the *Murba* Party³¹ in January 1965.³² The *PKI* appeared to have gained an upper hand in politics over the military when President Sukarno announced in August 1965 that Indonesia was fostering an anti-imperialist axis—the Jakarta-Phnompenh-Hanoi-Peking-Pyongyang axis.³³

³⁰ Ibid., 50.

³¹ *Murba* Party was formed in 1948 by supporters of the "national-Communist" Tan Malaka. It was a rival party to the *PKI*. After the alignment of the *PKI* with the Chinese Communist Party in 1963, contacts were made between some elements in the *Murba* Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with a view to the *Murba* replacing the *PKI* in international communist bodies such as the World Federation of Trade Unions.

³² Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 66.

³³ Ibid., 67.

6. The 1965 "Coup"

However, the *PKI* "supremacy" in politics over the military crashed in the aftermath of the abortive 1965 "coup." This "coup" was conducted by *Gerakan Tiga-Puluh September—G.30.S* (Thirtieth of September Movement) on the night of 30 September/1 October, with the main actions taking place in Jakarta and Central Java. Technically, this was not a coup in the normal sense; there was no intention to bring down the government. Instead, according to the leader Lieutenant-Colonel Untung, the action was designed to forestall a planned coup on 5 October by a "Council of Generals" against the President. The members of *G.30.S* seized and murdered six generals, including the army commander Lieutenant General Yani.³⁴

Major General Suharto, then the commander of *KOSTRAD* (the Army's Strategic Reserve Command), was able to crush the coup. There are several theories with regard to the true perpetrators of this coup. Some hypothesize that the "coup" was planned and conducted by disgruntled factions within the army and not by the *PKI*. However, the official army version at that time conveniently linked the *PKI* to the coup, and subsequently took steps to eradicate the communist party as a political force. Army-sponsored actions throughout the country arrested and killed active members of *PKI*, while passive supporters were rounded up and sent to jails. While the army conducted most of these actions, the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 97-99.

military authorities also gave civilian anti-Communist organizations a fairly free hand in eliminating the communists. The total number of people killed in the aftermath of the coup remains unknown to date, with estimates ranging from 250,000 to 1 million killed.³⁵ The aftermath of the coup did not augur well for Sukarno. With the elimination of the *PKI* as his key source of strength, he was powerless in stopping the military from becoming more entrenched in the Indonesian political scene. Nor could he prevent his own downfall in 1966.

This landmark event signaled the end of the era of Guided Democracy. It also marked the demise of *PKI* and the rise of Major General Suharto and the military in the political world. Their rise to power was in accord with Nordlinger's theory that "the military are often propelled into the political arena, and often remain there, when their countries are in the throes of violence and governmental instability."³⁶ Already, many of the military officers had become experienced politicians, unlike officers of other military regimes that grabbed power from the civilian authorities through military coups. Two decades of political involvement had honed their political skills. They were adept at negotiating, bargaining and compromising—essential skills for successful politicians. Their involvement in non-military activities in the preceding two decades had shaped a political style more suited to the advancement of officers' interests within the existing structure

³⁵ Ibid., 155-157.

³⁶ Eric A Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti: The Impact of Military Rule upon Economic and Social Change in the Non-Western States," *American Political Science Review*, 64:4, 1970, 1141.

than to the creation of an entirely new political order. Thus, when the military strengthened its grip on the government after the "coup," it did not suddenly become the bearer of new values and ideals but was more inclined towards the consolidation of power and the advancement of its existing interests.³⁷

7. The Military in the New Order Period

Between October 1965 and March 1966, Suharto successfully limited Sukarno's power while at the same time strengthening his own position within the army and the army's position in relation to the president. Under the pretext of ensuring stability and order in Indonesia after the "coup," Suharto gradually took control of the army. On 16 October 1965, Sukarno was forced to appoint Suharto as the commander of the army. At the same time, Sukarno's powers gradually withered away. This period represented perhaps the high point of military ascendancy over the civilian leadership, and will be examined in detail in Chapter Three of this thesis. It would suffice to say here that the military prevailed over the civilian authorities, forcing Sukarno to relinquish most of his powers to Suharto on 11 March 1966. This paved the way for Suharto to formally assume the Presidential post in March 1968, and *Orde Baru* or the "New Order" began in Indonesia.

Unlike other military regimes, President Suharto did not adopt a bureaucratic-authoritarian form of government. Instead, he continued with the

³⁷ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 35.

1945 Constitution (which suited his authoritative style of government) and re-established Sukarno's *Pancasila* form of democracy in Indonesia, which differed significantly from the Western modes of democracy. First, his New Order Government decreed that all political organizations would adopt the State Ideology, *Pancasila*, as their sole organizing principle. In addition, he limited the number of political players to three parties—the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP) or “United Development Party”, the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI) or “Indonesian Democracy Party” and *Golongan Karya* (GOLKAR) or “Functional Groups.”³⁸

By adopting the 1945 Constitution, Suharto automatically remained as the Supreme Commander of the armed forces.³⁹ However, he was also careful not to portray an overly militaristic appearance, perhaps to downplay the military nature of his government in international and domestic eyes. However, Suharto maintained the prominence of the Armed Forces in the society through its socio-political role—he did not abolish the military's *Dwi Fungsi* concept postulated by General Nasution. He was careful to ensure that the military remained a minority

³⁸ The United Development Party is a fusion of the Moslem Scholars Party, the Moslem Party, the Islamic Confederation and the Islamic Union.

The Indonesian Democratic Party is a fusion of the Nationalist Party, the Catholic Party, the Christian (Protestant) Party, the Indonesian Independence Party and the People's Party.

GOLKAR represents personnel not affiliated with either party, namely civil servants, retired members of the Armed Forces, women's organizations, professional groups, farmers, students, etc.

³⁹ Article 10 of the 1945 Constitution: The President is the Supreme Commander of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

in the cabinet. Even so, they remained relatively more powerful than the civilian majority, having the political backing to exercise real power. While the military wielded substantial influence in politics, it also sought to associate civilians of various types with it, partly to draw on their skills and experience, and partly to create a favorable image among Western aid donors. In 1966, the military expanded its participation in the civil service. Military personnel headed eleven out of 20 departments concerned with civilian affairs; 23 out of 64 director-generals were also military officers.⁴⁰ The military was also automatically allocated seats in the People's Representatives Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*). Previously, 100 out of the 500 seats were assigned to the military, although this figure had declined to 75 in recent years.⁴¹

The military was also dominant in regional administrations. In 1966, 12 out of the 24 provincial governors were military officers, including the important provinces of Jakarta, West Java and East Java. By 1968, this number rose to 16, and again increased to 22 out of the 26 in the 1971 elections. The military's political influence even reached to the lower levels of administration. By 1971, officers were appointed to about two-thirds of all the *bupatis* (district heads) and

⁴⁰ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 242.

⁴¹ *Komposisi & Daftar Nama Anggota MPR : Komposisi Keanggotaan*, available at <http://mpr.wasantara.net.id/komposisi.htm>, accessed on 25 September 1998.

mayor positions in Indonesia.⁴² The Indonesian military, through these political appointments, thus has a political influence in governing the various levels of the country.

8. The Military's Social Roles

The relationship between the Indonesian military, the state and society is best described by the military's basic military strategy. According to this strategy, the Indonesian people will rise up and fight with the military against any threat to the independence and sovereignty of the nation. It calls for the mobilization of the entire nation's potential and assets to create the capabilities required to defend the security of the nation. Formally, this system is called *Sistem Pertahanan dan Keamanan Rakyat Semesta* (in short *Sishankamrata*), or "People's Total Defense and Security." According to Indonesia's defense and security policy,⁴³ the Indonesian military will lead the resistance. Supporting the military will be the population and national infrastructure, who will enforce public order, provide emergency services, guarantee public security, and organize popular resistance in the form of guerrilla warfare.

This approach has shaped the roles the military has undertaken, its fighting strategies, ideals and expectations in relation to the state and the people. To succeed, this strategy demands close affiliation and cooperation between the

⁴² Crouch, *Military-Civilian Relations*, 61.

⁴³ *Indonesia's Defense and Security Policy*, available at <http://www.abri.mil.id/index5/whitepre.htm>, accessed on 19 June 1998.

military, the government and the general public. Here, the army's "territorial" organization⁴⁴ serves well to develop this military-public rapport, with an army level of command corresponding to each of the functions of the civil government from the province right down to the village.⁴⁵

The military has to pursue a strong social role to achieve this rapport. As this duty is formally included as part of the *Dwi Fungsi* concept, the military can actively carry out social duties as part of its assigned tasks. These duties include the development of social infrastructures, and the improvement of the population's welfare. Through these social duties, the military has participated actively in nation building. The "territorial" organization of the army meant that the dispersion of forces throughout the country was necessary. This has contributed to the ease of carrying out social duties, as most of the army units are in position to assist the local government in developing the regions.

⁴⁴ The territorial organization of the army evolved over the years but gained momentum in the early 1960s as the army struggled to contain the growing influence of the *PKI*. 10 *KODAMs* or Military Area Commands are established in the archipelago, and each *KODAM* is further subdivided into *KOREM* (Military Region), *KODIM* (Military District) and *KORAMIL* (Military Sub-district) in the territorial command structure. Using this structure, the army is able to reach out to the village level, as each *KORAMIL* commands an average of seven to eight villages. Territorial units are responsible for the defense and security of the areas under their control. Even though the personnel in these territorial units are not necessarily raised from the local population, their influence is widely felt as these units often undertake operations to develop geographic, demographic and sociologic resources to improve the lifestyles of the population.

⁴⁵ Bill Dalton, *Indonesia Handbook*, 5th ed. (Chico, California: Moon Publications Inc., 1991), 18.

C. CONSEQUENCES FROM THE SOCIO-POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

The socio-political role has been formally accepted in the Indonesian society since the independence struggle. Even so, the military has to continue conducting necessary actions to maintain its legitimacy. Some of these actions have benefited the Indonesian society, while others have stifled growth, especially in the political sectors. The following section will provide a short analysis on both the benefits and problems arising from the military's socio-political role.

1. Benefits

a. *ABRI Masuk Desa*

The Indonesian population has benefited from the active military socio-political involvement. One of the prime examples is the *ABRI Masuk Desa* or "Indonesian Armed Forces Entering the Villages" program. This has been very successful in developing the infrastructure and amenities of the relatively backward villages. Through this program, the military built roads, canals and other social infrastructures. In addition, the military sometimes provides health care to the population. The Indonesian Armed Forces have played the role of a modernizer, while at the same time advancing their social and political standing in society.

b. Transmigration

Apart from the *ABRI Masuk Desa* program, the military also assisted the government in other social areas. For example, the navy provided transportation means for people and material in the national "transmigration" program.⁴⁶ Through these successful programs, the military was able to present the image of a "caring military" to the ordinary population. The interaction between the military and society has also remained very close, resulting in some cases in a good rapport being built between the population and the military. The military thus hopes to rely on the population in times of need. In fact, local intelligence on the society is partly provided by the population itself.

c. Economic Success

President Suharto had relied heavily on both the military's and technocrats' expertise to run the country and bring Indonesia out of the economic doldrums it had experienced since independence.⁴⁷ To promote a healthy economic environment, he ensured that the Indonesian Armed Forces remained a professional fighting force capable of handling both internal and external threats. The degree of success can only be seen on the domestic front where the

⁴⁶ This program aims to spread the concentration of people from the populated areas of Java and Sumatra to the other reaches of the archipelago.

⁴⁷ Robert Cribb and Colin Brown, *Modern Indonesia: A History since 1945* (Singapore: Longman Singapore Publishers (Pte) Ltd, 1995), 115.

Armed Forces (of which the Police is a component) was largely successful in curbing internal social unrest. However, Westerners have often criticize its approach to curbing such unrest as being excessively repressive. Nevertheless, it was the military that had ensured social and political stability, albeit at a very high cost in the number of lives lost during the turbulent years since independence. This high cost had allowed Indonesia achieve the significant economic progress since 1967.

2. Problems

a. *Political Repression*

By far, the greatest problem resulting from the military's intimate involvement in Indonesian politics is the repression of free speech and political activities. By limiting the number of political parties, President Suharto had effectively controlled the political directions and activities in Indonesia. In addition, the Armed Forces has been very effective in curbing political excesses under the general concern of ensuring stability within the country. In fact, critics of Indonesian politics contend that the Armed Forces were behind the ousting of Ms Megawati from the Chairmanship of the Indonesian Democratic Party before the last general elections. The restrictions appeared to have lifted somewhat in the recent ousting of Suharto as president. However, the continuing strong presence of the military in the political arena would still be an impediment towards complete political freedom and free speech.

Recent reports have also pointed out the certain members of *KOPASSUS* (Special Forces) were involved in the kidnapping of political activists during the May 1998 upheaval.⁴⁸ At the moment, the identities of the main perpetrators are not clear, nor is the issue of whether these actions were ordered by civilian leaders to suffocate dissident opposition or by the military as attempts to maintain domestic stability. In any case, this represents another military intervention in domestic politics.

One cannot understate the importance of the military in politics. Without the tacit approval of the military, political changes cannot take place. For example, some reports stated that Suharto stepped down from the president post after the military had delivered an ultimatum that forced him to resign.⁴⁹ General Wiranto also had to voice support for the current President, Habibie, before the latter could be credibly accepted in the society or by the military, which had long held him in great contempt.

b. Corruption

The strong political and social roles played by the military inevitably led to a deep involvement of the military in the economic sector. Many

⁴⁸ "7 soldiers arrested for kidnappings," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea6_0715.htm, accessed on 15 July 1998; "Soldiers to be court-martialled," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea6_0716.htm, accessed on 16 July 1998.

⁴⁹ "Did military tell Suharto to step down?" *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea4_0523.htm, accessed on 23 May 1998.

businessmen sought their assistance in influencing events in their favor. Commanders and staff officers may be able to help the businessmen obtain contracts, licenses or permits to conduct particular commercial activities. They may also assist in resolving land disputes, calming labor disputes (often by strong-arm tactics), overcoming bureaucratic obstacles, relocating squatters and so on. Many businessmen, especially those of Chinese origin, find it prudent to keep the local military on side against the day when social unrest might threaten their lives or property.⁵⁰ However, such influences did not come free and financial remuneration was the order of the day. This led to widespread corruption in the military, and added to the cost of conducting business in Indonesia. Indonesia has the dubious distinction of being one of the most corrupt nations in Asia. In 1997, the organization "Transparency International" ranked Indonesia as the 6th most corrupted country out of 85 countries surveyed.⁵¹

c. *Limited Development of Social Organizations*

Suharto's regime often view non-governmental organizations with suspicion, especially those with international links. As such, Suharto had used the military effectively to prevent the growth of such organizations. In addition, the military's superior organizational skills, extensive use of personnel and

⁵⁰ Robert Lowry, *The Armed Forces of Indonesia* (Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd, 1996), 141.

⁵¹ "The Corruption Perceptions Index," *Transparency International & Dr. Johann Graf Lambsdorff, 1997*, available at <http://www.transparency.de/documents/cpi/index.html>, accessed on 24 September 1998.

widespread influence in Indonesia's social arena overshadowed any efforts by fledging social organizations. As a result, the perennial presence of the military in the social arena severely stunted the development of non-governmental social organizations. In the post-Suharto era, the country is effectively denuded of indigenous non-governmental organizations that can lead and rally the people effectively, and this will complicate the internal situation if the military were to suddenly withdraw its participation in the social scene.

The involvement of the Indonesian military in the social and political arena is historically rooted. This involvement has been legitimized by the military's actions in the independence struggle and by the formal *Dwi Fungsi* declaration. While this socio-political role had assisted in the development of Indonesia since independence, it had also stifled proper progress in certain sectors, particularly in the areas of free speech and true democracy. However, the military did not always play this role as freely as it could. Civilian leaders had made attempts to marginalize the military's influence in politics, some successfully, others not so. This ebb and flow and in general a decline of the military's socio-political influences in recent years will be examined in the following chapter.

III. DECLINE OF THE MILITARY'S SOCIO-POLITICAL INFLUENCES

A. THE CHANGING LEVELS OF THE MILITARY'S POLITICAL ROLE

The preceding chapter described the formalization of the Indonesian military's socio-political role. In the military's view, its actions both prior to and immediately after the chaotic independence period justified and legitimized these extensive roles in the Indonesian society. However, not all sectors in the society accepted these roles. There were always attempts by the civilian elites to decrease these roles, to reduce the influences of the military and to limit the organization to its professional duties.

This chapter will analyze the level of the military's socio-political influences in recent years. As detailed in Chapter I, the method to be used is a comparison over time of events that demonstrate the levels of military prerogatives and contestations—that will indicate the level of military influences in non-military affairs. Historical events in Indonesia in which the military had challenged the civilian politicians will be studied to determine both the type and intensity of these contestations. Analysis of these events demonstrates that the military enjoyed the highest political influence towards the end of Sukarno's rule in the 1960s, and that this level gradually diminished during Suharto's reign. The result of this analysis therefore goes against prevailing thoughts that the military greatly benefited from Suharto's rule and thereby expanding its domination of the Indonesian society.

B. BEGINNINGS OF MILITARY PREROGATIVES AND CONTESTATIONS

1. Prerogative over Appointments

During the independence struggle, different factions of the armed forces—*PETA*, *Laskjar* and *KNIL*,⁵² among others—were loosely bonded by the common goal of *pejuangan* (struggle). Local administrative chiefs controlled these forces, rather than the *Badan Keamanan Rakyat* (*BKR* or People's Security Organization), the government's organization for these revolutionary forces.⁵³ In an attempt to exert central control over these forces, Sukarno in October 1945 proclaimed the formation of *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat* (*TKR* or People's Security Army), designed to amalgamate all the revolutionary forces under the control of the cabinet. *TKR* represented the first army high command of the Indonesian military, even though in reality this high command still had little influence and control over the regional forces. As it turned out, civilian control over *TKR* proved almost impossible. For example, military leaders rather than civilian leaders decided upon the appointment of Sudirman as *Panglima Besar* (loosely translated as "Commander-in-Chief") of the revolutionary forces in November 1945.⁵⁴

⁵² *KNIL* - Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger, the Dutch-trained Indonesian army officers and men.

⁵³ Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, 103-104.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 232-244.

The military again exercised its prerogative in determining its leadership in June 1955. Then, the coalition government led by *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (PNI) or the Indonesian National Party appointed Colonel Bambang Utojo, a PNI-sympathetic but relatively junior officer, as the army chief-of-staff. Officers of both the major factions joined to reject the appointment. As a result, the government was humiliated in that it could not control the military and soon fell from office. The fall of the Ali government produced an atmosphere of self-confidence in the army, and officers became convinced that they could have far more political influence in the future.⁵⁵

The exercise of military prerogative in determining its own leadership would surface repeatedly throughout Indonesia's modern history. While not all the attempts were unsuccessful, the military nevertheless managed to intervene successfully in crucial times.

2. Contestation over Organization

The political leaders were eager to assert civilian control over the armed forces over fears that militarism or fascism would arise in Indonesia. The Sjahrif and Sjarifuddin cabinets (1945-1947) introduced a political commissar system into the army. This was primarily instituted through *Staf PePolit* (Political Education

⁵⁵ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 31.

Staff) and *Biro Perjuangan* (the Struggle Bureau), established in the Ministry of Defense. The former aimed to indoctrinate and control the army and the latter was a coordinating body for guerrilla activities against the Dutch. The governments also backed revolutionary units that seemed more sympathetic to them rather than to the army high command. For example, they established *laskjar* (irregular) units to fight the Dutch to balance against the recalcitrant army high command.⁵⁶ These represented some of the first attempts that the civilian leadership undertook to control the military.

The army high command quickly crushed these initial attempts by the Indonesian civilian leadership. The military was assisted by the conservative Hatta administration of 1948 that also endeavored to dismantle the leftist institutions established by the previous two regimes—the same institutions that had attempted to control the military. Hatta also forged an alliance with the military whereby the latter agreed to support government's policies in return for civilian non-interference in its affairs. As a result, the *laskjar* forces and army units deemed as disloyal to the central command were dismantled in the name of retrenchment and rationalization.

⁵⁶ McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 136.

The subsequent Madiun Affair of September 1948 further provided the military with a reason for advocating civilian non-intervention in its affairs. The Madiun Affair was an armed confrontation between the communists and the conservatives, where communist-influenced army personnel supported a coup attempt by the communists. Specifically, Brigade 29, formerly the *Biro Perjuangan*, captured and killed the leading pro-government officers in Madiun.⁵⁷ The high command claimed that the incident was a result of civilian influence within the military as it was the army institutions set up by the leftist Sjahrif and Sjarifuddin cabinets that instigated this incident. It gave the military leaders an excellent argument to use whenever, in subsequent years, political leaders again tried to engineer devices for civilian control of their forces.⁵⁸

3. Failure of Military Contestation—The 17 October 1952 Affair

Not all military contestations or prerogatives against civilian authorities were successful during this period. One instance was the 17 October 1952 Affair, which began with an attempt by the civilian leadership to determine the composition of the army high command. In particular, it demanded the dismissal of Ali Budiardjo (secretary general of the Ministry of Defense), Major General T.B. Simatupang (Chief-of-Staff of the Armed Forces) and Colonel A.H. Nasution (Army Commander). To the army high command, this represented the kind of civilian interference that the military could not overlook if it were to preserve the

⁵⁷ Reid, *Indonesian National Revolution*, 142.

⁵⁸ McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 137.

autonomy essential to its role as guardian of national independence. To safeguard its position, the military together with some supporters surrounded the presidential palace on 17 October, where they then demanded the dissolution of the parliament.

Sukarno at that moment agreed to the military's demands, but later reneged on his promises. He and the political parties set about working the destruction of the high command. He was successful in portraying the coup leaders as unpatriotic and therefore with no legitimate rights to their posts. Sukarno and his supporters were also able to sway elements within the military to conduct intra-military coups, removing commanders who had favored the army leadership. He removed Ali Budiardjo, Simatupang and Nasution, and dissolved Simatupang's former office of Chief-of-Staff of the Armed Forces, thereby allowing civilians promote inter-service rivalry as an instrument of their control.⁵⁹

The 17 October 1952 Affair thus represented a failure in military contestation with the civilian leadership. However, it did not characterize a downturn in the military's political fortunes. Valuable lessons learnt from this event helped shaped future military-civilian interactions. Particularly, Nasution, who would again come into power after 1955, realized that one should not

⁵⁹ See Simatupang's account of these affairs in T.B. Simatupang, *Report from Banaran: Experiences during the People's War*, trans. Benedict Anderson and Elizabeth Graves (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1972).

confront Sukarno directly and that the army's cause was best served by pursuing its goals in such a way as to avoid a direct challenge.⁶⁰

In summary, this period (from 1945 to the mid-1950s) is characterized by the initial attempts by the military to assert itself against civilian control. While some of the prerogatives and contestations that the military attempted were successful, others were less so. The disunity in the military also prevented it from adopting a higher political profile, as adept leaders like Sukarno could exploit the fractures within the military. In addition, the scope of most of these military's initiatives against civilian control was limited, directed towards the determination of the military organization and leadership and not against the political directions of the state. Thus, we can conclude that this period represented the initial growth phase of military's intervention in politics.

C. PRIMACY OF THE MILITARY IN *ORDE LAMA*—SUKARNO'S ERA

The defining moment for the military's deep involvement in the social and political arenas appeared to be in 1957. Specifically, the declaration of a State of Emergency in 1957 and the establishment of *Peperiti* (Supreme War Administration, 1957-1963) provided the legitimacy for the military to rapidly expand its influence in all sectors of Indonesian society. The levels of military contestations and prerogatives did not diminish in the following years when Sukarno introduced his own brand of administration during the Guided

⁶⁰ McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 143-150.

Democracy years. Initially, Sukarno relied heavily on the military for support, but he was also well aware that a military strongly entrenched in politics would be a potent challenger to his rule. From 1959 to 1965, he sought to limit the military's political influence. In addition to exploiting rivalries within the military, he cultivated and obtained support from civilian groups to balance the powers of the military. The most important and most powerful of these groups was the communist *PKI*. Thus, the military in this period faced strong opposition in exercising its prerogatives and contestations against civilians. However, events demonstrated that the military successfully faced the civilian leadership in most cases, and ultimately culminated in removing of Sukarno from his presidential post in 1966.

1. Improved Military Unity

One of the reasons why the military was successful in pursuing its socio-political goals in this period was that it had become more integrated and united after the Lubis Affair in 1956. Nasution (the Army Chief-of-Staff) was able to use this incident to remove many dissident officers in the army. He was further able to consolidate central control over military units after suppressing the 1958

rebellions, thereby improving the unity of the military.⁶¹ The military thus became stronger as a result of these events, able to effectively assert itself against the civilian leadership.

2. Appointments

a. *Political Representation*

One of the most direct and most visible political gains by the military was the appointment of General Nasution to the post of *Menhankam* (Minister of Defense and Security) in 1959. This was the first significant cabinet post headed by an active-duty military leader, as Nasution then still held the position of army commander. This marked the army leadership's establishment of a principle for which it had struggled from the very beginning of the revolution and which had previously been denied by Indonesia's civilian governments—direct representation in the political apparatus.⁶²

Military representation throughout the country increased after Sukarno appointed Nasution to the cabinet post. At the regional level, the number

⁶¹ After the failed coup attempt by Colonel Lubis, several regional and local commanders in Sumatra and Sulawesi took control of local governments and succeeded in rallying considerable popular support against the central government. By 1958, the crisis had turned into open rebellion, when the dissidents garnered civilian political support to set up the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (*PRRI*) in West Sumatra. The military under Nasution was able to suppress this rebellion by playing off military factions within rebel commands and by presenting a prompt and credible show of central forces in the dissident areas. See McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 174-176; Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 33.

⁶² McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part I," 150-151.

of military officers appointed as provincial governors rose from 5 in 1960 to 12 out of 24 in 1965, including key provinces as Jakarta, West Java, and East Java.⁶³ Military officers were also appointed as members of parliament at both the national and regional levels, and they were influential in the National Front set up by Sukarno to mobilize popular support for his political campaigns.

The military also sponsored a series of mass organizations to extend its political influence. This began with the "National Front for the Liberation of West Irian" in 1958. In addition, the military also broadened its political base by establishing *Badan Kerjasama* (Cooperative Bodies) with the aim of detaching from the declining conservative parties their affiliated peasant, worker, youth, woman and other organizations. This was important not only to protect the military from accusations of undemocratic behavior, but also to give the military a broader influence in the National Council. The military was only one functional group amongst many in the National Council, but by influencing the leadership of other functional groups, it could create for itself a significant block of support in the Council.⁶⁴

b. Military Appointments

The military had gained an important post in the cabinet, but it was not totally free from civilian supervision. Sukarno continuously attempted to

⁶³ Harold Crouch, *Military-Civilian Relations*, 57.

⁶⁴ Stephen Sloan, *A Study in Political Violence: The Indonesian Experience* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1971), 79.

reduce the powers of the military and individuals within the military. For example, he was able to outmaneuver Nasution during the 1962 military leadership reshuffle and drastically reduced the latter's powers. In this episode, Sukarno offered Nasution the new post of *Pangab* (*Panglima Angkatan Bersenjata* or Commander-in-Chief, Armed Forces) with full authority over all four services provided Nasution relinquished his command over the army. Nasution probably agreed to be "promoted" so that the army could reassert its hegemony over the other services. The new post would also reinsure Nasution's position as *Menhankam* which he would continue to occupy after the 1962 leadership reshuffle. However, Sukarno apparently secured the support of Air Vice-Marshal Omar Dhani (Chief-of-Staff, Air Force) and Police General Sukarno Joyonegoro (Chief-of-Staff, Police), who protested on behalf of their services against being commanded by an army officer. As a result, Sukarno was able to exploit this and altered Nasution's planned promotion to the largely administrative post of *Kasab* (*Kepala Staf Angkatan Bersenjata* or Chief-of-Staff of the Armed Forces).⁶⁵

Sukarno had hoped that such a move would remove Nasution from immediate control of the army and supply an alternate focus for military loyalties. Sukarno had also expected that there would be dissension in the army with the promotion of Achmad Yani as the army commander. Yani was a relatively junior general and Sukarno had hoped that he might be weak enough in his new office

⁶⁵ C.L.M. Penders and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1985), 156-157.

to remain dependent on Presidential support. However, Yani proved to be sufficiently adept at army politics to overcome much of the resentment at his premature promotion. He was also aware of the disadvantages of breaking with the Nasution camp. As such, while Yani assumed a more cooperative public stance towards the civilian leadership, he essentially remained opposed to Sukarno's camp.⁶⁶ In a sense, then, the military was able to limit Sukarno's attempts to control the military.

c. Sukarno's Reorganization of Koti

Sukarno moved swiftly to contain the military at the end of martial law in 1963. He reorganized the military's operational commands by dissolving *Peperti* (Supreme War Administration) while retaining *Koti* (*Komando Operasi Tertinggi* or Supreme Operations Command), which was also formed during the martial law to prevent Nasution's Defense Ministry from gaining its powers. Sukarno also ensured that the army did not dominate the new *Koti*—army officers headed only two of the five divisions. He appointed the foreign minister, Subandrio, to be in charge of intelligence; the minister of information, Achmadi, became responsible for "mobilization;" and Air Commodore Sri Muljono Herlambang headed the division of operations. With broad and general functions, *Koti* became more important than the cabinet. The main cabinet ministers,

⁶⁶ McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part II," 152-153.

including Nasution, became members of its Advisory Council, and many important government decisions were taken at its sessions.

It would appear that Sukarno had some successes at reducing the military's ability to conduct political prerogatives and contestations against civilians. However, it was more likely that the military allowed Sukarno's advances. Under Achmad Yani, the army was prepared to cooperate with the president, but its cooperation was dependent on Sukarno not adversely affecting the balance of power. As long as the army could preserve its basic interests and *PKI* did not make significant advances politically, the army leadership was willing to tolerate minor changes that did not reduce its position as the most powerful organized force.⁶⁷ While Sukarno could challenge and outmaneuver the military, he nevertheless could not forge an army leadership subservient to him.

3. Military Control over its Budget

Another area of contestation between the military and the civilian authorities was the control over the military budget. The first opportunity for the military to partly control its own budget came in late 1957 when nationalist demonstrators seized all Dutch-owned enterprises in Indonesia following an adverse vote on West Irian in the United Nations. The military immediately used its martial law powers to place all Dutch enterprises under military supervision,

⁶⁷ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 55.

and its involvement remained even after the nationalization of these enterprises.⁶⁸ It appointed officers to managerial and supervisory posts in government enterprises, and this provided the institution with substantial sources of funding outside the regular government budget.

The Cold War also provided an additional boost that strengthened the military's control over their own budget. Indonesia was able to obtain aid from both the United States and the Soviet Union as these two superpowers courted Indonesia. Particularly, the Soviet Union provided substantial aid to Indonesia, and transferred a large amount of heavy equipment—modern ships and airplanes—to the military.⁶⁹ These opportunities thus enabled the military to reduce civilian control over its budget, thereby providing an avenue for the military to demonstrate a high level of contestation with civilians when required.

4. The Military and its Influence on *PKI*'s Development

Sukarno began to cultivate the *PKI* in 1960 as a counterbalance to the military's growing political strength. He felt that the communist organization would provide him with the grassroots support for his rule. The military on the other hand regarded the *PKI* as their main long-term rival and wanted to limit its

⁶⁸ Ibid., 38-39.

⁶⁹ McVey, "Post-Revolutionary Transformation: Part II," 157.

potential for growth. However, Sukarno was able to neutralize some of the military's attempts to marginalize the *PKI*, although he was aware of the depth of anti-Communist sentiment generally prevalent in the military. Protected by the president and contained by the military, the *PKI* soon became a key factor in the Indonesian balance of power. Sukarno allowed the *PKI* to remain as a legal political party, and its members subsequently held a substantial share of seats in the main representative bodies. He accorded its leaders, Aidit and M.H. Lukman, ministerial status as deputy chairmen of *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara* (Provisional People's Consultative Assembly) and *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Royong* (Mutual Assistance People's Representative Council) respectively, but the *PKI* continued to be excluded from cabinet posts holding executive powers.⁷⁰

Here, the military exhibited a high level of contestation in civilian politics. Even with the substantial communist support, Sukarno was still not able to elevate *PKI* to a higher political presence for fear of military opposition. The potential of the military to interfere in politics had thus placed some limitations and inhibitions to the natural development of politics in Indonesia since the 1960s.

⁷⁰ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 48-51.

5. *Konfrontasi*

The military's attitude towards the pursuance of *Konfrontasi* ("Confrontation") against Malaysia⁷¹ denoted the deepening level of military contestation against the civilian relationship. The military leaders were unenthusiastic, especially Nasution and Achmad Yani. However, they continued to follow Sukarno's instructions in conducting low-level infiltration and conflicts as long as the conflict did not escalate into a real war. In fact, they viewed this as a good opportunity to strengthen the military's political position as well as gain new armaments and equipment. But they began to undermine Sukarno's policies when he decided to escalate the conflict in 1964 to an invasion of Malaysia.

a. *Koga and Kolaga*

The military leadership saw the establishment of *Koga* (*Komando Siaga* or Vigilance Command, the body responsible for controlling the operations against Malaysia) as a move to reduce their capacity to restrain the military side of the campaign. The commander of the air force, Air Marshal Omar Dhani, headed *Koga*. The army considered him to be a Sukarno loyalist and therefore could not be relied upon to abide by the military's inclinations during *Konfrontasi*.

⁷¹ Malaysia's decision to incorporate Sabah and Sarawak (in present East Malaysia) into the Federation was not accepted by Indonesia. A decision was taken by both countries to request a United Nations mission to ascertain the wishes of the people in those areas. Following only brief hearings with local politicians, the UN mission concluded that the "majority" wanted to join Malaysia. These conclusions were immediately denounced by Indonesia. Taking the view that Malaysia was a "British project" designed to create a "puppet state" to perpetuate neocolonialism, Indonesia launched *Konfrontasi*, a campaign that began with low-scale incursions into both Malaysia and Singapore.

As such, the military was compelled to conduct a subtle contestation against Sukarno to redress the situation. The army leadership persuaded Sukarno to accept a military reorganization of the fighting forces into the *Kolaga* (*Komando Mandala Siaga* or Mandala Vigilance Command) structure,⁷² so that the military leaders, instead of Sukarno and his trusted officers, could exercise a larger controlling influence over the operations.

The army leadership also selected Brigadier General Kemal Idris to head the invasion forces in Sumatra. Idris was a long-time opponent of Sukarno and his decision to conduct the *Konfrontasi* operation, and the army leaders were confident that he would not conduct any invasion of Malaysia without the army's consent. The military also took various steps to forestall Sukarno's invasion attempts. Firstly, Idris was able to delay the transfer of invasion troops to Sumatra. In addition, the army planners for the invasion ensured that the preparations did not reach an advanced stage by not supplying the means of crossing the straits. These deliberate attempts ensured that the invasion of Malaysia remained just a plan.⁷³

⁷² *Koga* was replaced by *Kolaga*. This *Mandala* concept meant that the *Kolaga* had authority over all troops from all four services within the area of its command but no authority outside the area. For *Konfrontasi*, *Kolaga* had authority over Sumatra and Kalimantan but not over Java. The explicit limitation of the authority meant that it could not mobilize troops from Java but had to request forces from the service commanders. See Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 71.

⁷³ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 72-73.

b. *Military Prerogatives on Command Appointments*

While the military leadership could not prevent Sukarno from appointing Air Marshal Omar Dhani as the head of *Koga*, it was able to influence other key appointments. The appointment of Brigadier General Kemal Idris was instrumental in the military's plans to hinder Sukarno's execution of the *Konfrontasi* campaign. Even the appointment of Brigadier General Supardjo, a leftist officer completely committed to the president, to head the forces in Kalimantan was negated by the military's choice of the lower echelon commanders. The interregional commander for Kalimantan, Major General Maraden Panggabean, and the West Kalimantan commander, Brigadier General Ryacudu, were army loyalists. The army was also able to replace the left-leaning East Kalimantan commander, Brigadier General Suharjo, with Brigadier General Sumitro.⁷⁴ Here, the military again demonstrated a high level of prerogative in shaping appointments changes that would serve their interests.

c. *Military's Contestation in Foreign Affairs*

Sukarno's decision to land infiltrators in West Malaysia on 17 August and again on 2 September 1964 greatly disturbed the military leadership. It decided to develop secret contacts with the Malaysian and English leaders to inform them that the (Indonesian) army was not supporting the expansion of the conflict. By doing so, the Indonesian military hoped to reduce the risks of the

⁷⁴ Ibid., 73.

confrontation campaign while continuing to go through the motions of supporting it.⁷⁵ Achmad Yani was a prime mover for initiating these contacts, and he was able to prevent the conflict from being escalated to a full scale war.⁷⁶ This decision to bypass civilian authorities in contacting the Malaysian leaders represented a high level of military contestation against Sukarno, for this effort seriously undermined the entire *Konfrontasi* campaign.

The military in *Orde Lama* did not confine its attention to military affairs only. Militarily, it was able to achieve some success in determining its military leadership and organizational changes, and even able to obtain a certain degree of control over its budget during this period. Far more significant were the military's attempts to exercise its prerogatives and contestations beyond the military boundaries. The military's active participation in politics began in this period with the appointment of Nasution as the *Menhankam*, and the formal appointment of other active officers to governmental and regional civilian posts. In addition, civilian leaders began to factor in the military's potential reactions when deciding the political landscape of Indonesia. However, the *Konfrontasi* campaign probably demonstrated that the Indonesian military had matured into a credible and effective domestic political instrument. *Konfrontasi* demonstrated that the

⁷⁵ Ibid., 74-75.

⁷⁶ Julius Pour, *Benny Moerdani: Profil Prajurit Negarawan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Perjuangan Panglima Besar Sudirman, 1993), 317-320.

military was not subservient to Sukarno's politics. Instead, it had illustrated the military's willingness and capabilities to contest civilian political decisions when they diverged from the military's interests. While the military leaders were not able to reject the president's policies openly, they nevertheless successfully undermined the civilian authorities throughout the campaign. Such a level of prerogatives and contestations represented a leap from the non-military roles the military had undertaken between 1945 and 1957.

D. THE PEAK OF MILITARY CONTESTATION

The 1965 "coup" marked another landmark in the development of the military's socio-political role. The military exploited this incident to strengthen its political position vis-à-vis the other two parties in the power balance—Sukarno and the *PKI*. Here, the military probably exercised its highest levels of prerogatives and contestations against the civilian leadership. Two key army officers shaped the military's responses—Nasution and Suharto. They were the most senior officers in the army remaining after the coup, and they took a more belligerent stance towards Sukarno and the *PKI* compared to the previous Yani administration.

1. Military Prerogative in Leadership Changes

The military under Suharto demonstrated a high level of prerogative immediately after the "coup" on 1 October 1965. As Yani, the army commander was missing, Suharto took the independent decision to assume the leadership of

the army. The senior generals in Jakarta who could be contacted agreed to Suharto's initiative. In addition, he assumed control over the naval and police forces in Jakarta.⁷⁷ Here, Suharto did not rely on civilian consent to legitimize his appointment as head of the army, but depended on the support of the military to sanction his actions.

The army leadership further contested the decisions of the civilian leadership in the aftermath of the "coup." In a direct confrontation with the president, Suharto and Nasution refused to recognize Sukarno's appointment of Major General Pranoto Reksosamudro as the army commander. Their refusal forced Sukarno to compromise; Sukarno (in his capacity as Supreme Commander) took formal command of the army while appointing Pranoto to carry out the "daily tasks" of the commander, but only on the condition that Sukarno gave Suharto the responsibility for the "restoration of security and order."⁷⁸ In addition, Suharto refused to abide by Sukarno's appeals to limit the retribution to those directly involved, resulting in the killings of thousands of *PKI* supporters and the elimination of the *PKI* as a political party.

The military also demonstrated a high degree of prerogative in pressuring Sukarno on the issue of leadership changes within the military. Consequently,

⁷⁷ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 130.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 137.

Sukarno bowed to pressure and appointed Suharto as the army commander and chief-of-staff of *Koti* on 16 October. The military leadership under Suharto also forced him to dismiss the air force commander, Omar Dhani.⁷⁹

2. Military Prerogative in Organizational Initiatives

The military's prerogatives and contestations against civilian authority intensified when Suharto established *Kopkamtib* (*Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban* or Operations Command to Restore Order and Security) on 10 October to institutionalize the authority granted by Sukarno. *Kopkamtib* allowed Suharto to have operational control and command of military resources to conduct the security operations, providing him the de facto powers of the army commander.⁸⁰

Suharto further consolidated his powers by reorganizing *Koti* in late November. He removed the two civilians heads—Subandrio and Achmadi—and Air Vice Marshal Sri Muljono as he considered them to be Sukarno's loyalists. By doing so, he removed all vestiges of Sukarno's control of this organization.⁸¹ Suharto was also successful in establishing *Mahmillub* (*Mahkamah Militer Luar Biasa* or Special Military Court) to try leading prisoners from the 1 October coup. He also assumed the liberty to appoint the judges in such courts and to determine

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 160-161.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

who would be brought to trial.⁸² Suharto's successes demonstrated a high level of military prerogative in deciding organizational establishments and changes.

3. Military Prerogative in Eliminating the *PKI*

Sukarno's refusal to publicly announce the dissolution and the banning of the *PKI* brought him into conflict with the military. Again, the military demonstrated a high level of contestation against Sukarno when the West Java commander, Major-General Ibrahim Adjie unilaterally "dissolved" the *PKI* in his area on 17 November 1965. Regional commanders throughout the nation followed his actions, even though no civilian directions were given to pursue such initiatives.⁸³ The subsequent massacre of the *PKI* supporters, conducted mainly by civilian anti-Communist organizations, decimated its ranks and eradicated it as a political party. Some estimates put the number of *PKI* supporters killed at 1 million. Here, the in-action on the part of the military in not preventing the massacre proved to be crucial in the eradication of the *PKI*, its main political rival. Thus, through both actions and non-actions, the military had successfully contested and changed Indonesia's political environment.

4. The Disguised Coup of 11 March 1966

Despite the high level of military prerogatives and contestations against Sukarno in the beginning of 1966, the military still avoided ousting Sukarno from

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 163.

the presidential post and assuming direct political power. This would allow the military escape from the charge of destroying the nation-state's symbol of legitimacy that had for so long been vested in Sukarno. As one observer noted, "To ensure the long-term legitimization of the decimation of a political rival, the army needed the sanction of Indonesia's foremost national figure and sole charismatic personality, President Sukarno."⁸⁴

The unwillingness of the military to move decisively against the president perhaps provided Sukarno with the impression that he could still control the military. This emboldened Sukarno to initiate a series of moves designed to reassert his authority—reducing the powers of *Koti*, calling for the physical formation of *Barisan Sukarno*,⁸⁵ and demanding the release of thousands of *PKI* supporters. The president's offensive against the military culminated in the announcement of a cabinet reshuffle on 21 February 1966.⁸⁶ Sukarno dismissed *Menhankam* Nasution and nine other cabinet members. In their places, Sukarno appointed his supporters as well as *PKI* sympathizers.

Sukarno's intransigent attitude towards the military, his refusal to accept its expanding roles in politics and his attempts to marginalize the military completely

⁸⁴ Sloan, *A Study in Political Violence*, 78.

⁸⁵ In January 1966, faced with army-backed student demonstrations, Sukarno called for his supporters to form *barisans* (ranks) to defend him. This idea was subsequently picked up by the first deputy prime minister, Subandrio, who appealed in a radio speech for the formation of a *Barisan Sukarno*. See Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 167.

⁸⁶ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 173-174.

alienated the organization. The cabinet reshuffle, a clear attempt to deprive the military an independent voice in Indonesian politics, proved to be the principal factor in forcing the military to act against Sukarno. The military decided to adopt more drastic and explicit measures against the president, although it still did not envisage a military coup to seize power from the civilian leadership. One of these measures was the demand for the removal of certain ministers from the cabinet. Not surprising, Sukarno promptly disregarded this demand. Another measure was to create social unrest that would force the president to turn towards the military for assistance, thereby providing a leverage for the military. As such, the military encouraged students to create an atmosphere of anarchy in the capital and student demonstrations broke out on 23 February. The demonstrations grew in scale, and the police were powerless to act as army forces protected the demonstrators. A decision was also taken to arrest a number of the ministers, although this was not carried out. The contestation culminated on 11 March 1966, when soldiers "took up positions in front of the palace" where a full cabinet meeting was in progress. Alarmed with the growing anarchical situation in the capital, and at the boldness of Suharto and the military, Sukarno had no choice but to hand most of the powers to Suharto. He signed a "letter" empowering Suharto, as the army commander, to take all steps deemed necessary to

guarantee security, tranquillity and stability of the state.⁸⁷ In June that year, the military again showed its prerogative in calling for a session of the *MPRS* (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara* or Provisional People's Consultative Assembly) to obtain constitutional endorsement of Sukarno's "Letter of 11 March."⁸⁸

The military also interfered in determining the leadership of the other major political parties. It forced *PNI* (*Partai Nasional Indonesia* or Indonesian National Party) to hold a congress in April 1966, and blatantly forced Ali Sastroamidjojo, the Sukarnoist general chairman and his supporters out of office, replacing them with an army-supported cadre.⁸⁹

Events immediately before, during and after the 1965 coup clearly demonstrated the maturity and the intensity of military contestations and prerogatives against the civilian leadership. With Suharto and Nasution at the helm, the army—the premier service in the Indonesian armed forces—eliminated the *PKI* as a political organization and eventually forced Sukarno out of office. The effects of these prerogatives and contestations were significant, affecting developments not only in the military but also in Indonesia's society. The previous

⁸⁷ This "letter" later became known as *Super Semar* (*Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*) or "Letter of 11 March." The circumstances under which Sukarno signed this "letter" remained unclear, though it is likely that he was under severe duress as a result of the situation in Jakarta and the belligerent attitude of the military towards him. For a comprehensive account of this event, see Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 179-196.

⁸⁸ Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 201.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

multipolar political environment—with Sukarno, *PKI* and the military playing active roles—essentially disappeared and the military emerged as the principal political player in Indonesian society. The success of the military thus changed Indonesia's political landscape.

E. SUHARTO'S *ORDE BARU*

The military continued to influence the development of civilian political machines during Suharto's *Orde Baru* ("New Order"). These efforts were however driven by Suharto, and not truly autonomous attempts to contest civilian authority. By the 1980s, the military appeared to have lost some of its usefulness to Suharto. The military was in a sense a victim of its own success, as it had effectively denuded the Indonesian political scene of all effective opposition to Suharto's rule. In addition, in the wake of the oil crisis in early 1980s, Suharto began to rely more on civilian expertise in his government to provide professional advice to his government. His ties with the military institution thus became more tenuous, and some degree of military contestations against him surfaced. Here, the definition of military contestations and prerogatives becomes nebulous. Suharto was a military general, and technically, any military initiatives against him cannot be considered as military contestations against the civilian leadership. However, this thesis sees President Suharto as more "civilianized" as he did not champion the military's cause constantly, but in fact took initiatives to contain the

military so as to safeguard his powers. As such, military initiatives against President Suharto are considered as military contestations and prerogatives against the civilian leadership.

Nevertheless, these contestation attempts were not of the scale and scope of those against the civilian leaders of *Orde Lama*. It was not simply because the military was reluctant to oppose one of its former generals. Rather, it was the skills of Suharto that had prevent such contestations. Suharto's success in manipulating the military in the struggle against Sukarno had provided him an intricate knowledge of the power-play within the military. He knew that a united military would be an unstoppable force in Indonesia, able to dictate directions to all parties within the state. Such a united military had served him well in challenging Sukarno and the civilians for power. However, in the absence of a viable civilian threat, it could prove to be an insurmountable obstacle to his plans. He still needed the military's support, but he could not allow the latter to become overly powerful politically. Suharto's initiatives against the military, and the few military contestations against Suharto will be examined in this section to demonstrate the declining military's political roles.

1. The Military's Roles in Consolidating Suharto's Power

Suharto's attention was on consolidating his power in the political arena during his early years as president. The military continued to play a crucial role in assisting Suharto towards this end. The security apparatus *Kopkamtib* was transformed to become the government's main instrument of political control. Its

functions increased from handling the *PKI* problem to dealing with a wide range of civilian dissidents, including students and Muslim demonstrators. In addition, newspapers required *Kopkamtib*'s permission to publish, and on many occasions *Kopkamtib* withdrew their permits. In 1971, Suharto entrusted *Kopkamtib* with the maintenance of "security and order" during the election campaign and made many arrests to achieve this purpose.⁹⁰

Another instrument that Suharto used extensively to maintain political control over his rivals was *Bakin* (*Badan Koordinasi Intelijens Negara* or State Intelligence Coordinating Body). The military controlled this organization which was responsible for keeping watch over internal developments in the political parties and the Chinese community as well as being alert for signs of a Communist revival.⁹¹ This apparatus became very effective in limiting the growth of democracy in Indonesia, and was often looked upon as the *Gestapo* or *KGB* of Indonesia. Thus, while not playing the independent role as in the pre-1965 period, the military continued to have a significant influence on Indonesia's political atmosphere.

In recent years, the military played a notable role in assisting Suharto subdue the threat posed by Megawati, daughter of former president Sukarno.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 223.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

First, the military attempted to influence the *PDI* (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* or Indonesian Democratic Party) congress meeting in 1993 by pressuring *PDI* delegates not to elect Megawati as chairperson. Here, the military's attempts were unsuccessful as the congress elected Megawati to that post. The resultant Megawati-led *PDI* represented an unprecedented challenge to the government. Suharto probably feared that if Megawati and the *PDI* were left unchecked, they could pose a serious threat to his re-election plans in 1998. To prevent this, Suharto used both civilian and military means to remove Megawati as *PDI* leader. Personnel from the Interior ministry and the military used intimidation, coercion and bribery to split the *PDI* and to ensure that an extraordinary party congress was held in June 1996 to determine the *PDI*'s leadership. To prevent negative reports on the governmental intervention during this *PDI* congress, the Military Information Chief Brigadier-General Amir Syarifudin called in the chief editors of major national newspapers and news magazines and instructed them to report the conflict in a manner sympathetic to Megawati's opponents and the government and not endanger Indonesia's political stability. Between June 20 and 22 the congress proceeded without disruption. Troops heavily guarded the congress site in Medan. Senior officials like *Mendagri* (*Menteri Dalam Negeri* or Interior Affairs Minister) Yogie S. M. and *Pangab* General Feisal Tanjung addressed the delegates. As expected, there was an unanimous vote to remove Megawati and replace her with former *PDI* leader Soerjadi, considered to be a

more pliable figure.⁹² Thus, the military continued to be an essential tool in quelling Suharto's political challengers. As such, Suharto could not afford to completely alienate the military in his attempts at controlling the institution.

2. Accommodating the Military

Suharto was aware that being a military general at the helm of Indonesia did not mean that the military would support him in all his policies throughout the years. He therefore had to maintain a delicate balance between accommodating and controlling the military. Suharto continued to sanction the military's *Dwi Fungsi* concept. The military continued to have representation in the cabinet, the government and in all levels of the society. In addition, Suharto did not clamp down on the military for pursuing economic interests or seeking unofficial financial aid from businessmen. On the other hand, he endeavored to control the military through various means to prevent its development again into an institution that could seriously threaten or curb his rule.

3. Controlling the Military

a. Military Appointments

By effectively exercising his powers as Supreme Commander of the military, Suharto was able to significantly influence the appointment of officers to

⁹² Ed Aspinall, "What happened before the riots?" *Inside Indonesia* (Edition No 48: October-December 1996) available at <http://serve.com/inside/edit48/ed.htm>, accessed on 9 August 98.

senior positions both within and outside the military. Rather than a hierarchical chain of command typical of military administration, Suharto fostered a more arbitrary system based on personal loyalty, which allowed relatively junior or "obscure" officers to assume senior positions.⁹³ Suharto rewarded officers who demonstrated loyalty, while shunting off others who were critical of him or threatening his hold on power. For example, Suharto did not bring back Nasution into the government during the formation of his first cabinet in 1966. Nasution could be a significant threat to Suharto's rule as he had widespread support within the military.

Suharto also became adept in marginalizing dissident officers, not sparing even his closest subordinates. One example was General Benny Murdani, who until 1988 was one of Suharto's most trusted and powerful aides. Up to and including his stint as *Pangab* from 1983 to 1988, Murdani remained fiercely loyal to Suharto and was openly dismissive of retired generals who criticized the president from the sidelines. However, he lost Suharto's trust when he broached with Suharto the subject of his (Suharto's) family's business activities and objected to Sudharmono's vice-presidency. Suharto did not accept his criticisms, although in retrospect those criticisms were valid and contributed to his downfall in 1998. As a result, Suharto removed Murdani from the powerful *Pangab* post to be *Menhankam*, a largely administrative post, in March 1988.

⁹³ Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics Under Suharto: Order, Development and Pressure for Change* (London: Routledge, 1993), 77.

Five years later, Suharto dropped Murdani from his cabinet altogether. Suharto also ordered the dismantling of the powerful intelligence agency *BAIS* (*Badan Intelijen Strategik* or Strategic Intelligence Agency) in 1994. This agency was Murdani's principal power base, and remained his strongest link to the military after 1988.⁹⁴ By sidelining even one of his closest aides, Suharto demonstrated that he would not tolerate any dissent within the military. He also proved that he had the prerogative to effect personnel changes at the highest levels. The inability of the military as an institution to contest Suharto's actions illustrated the waning political powers that it held during this period.

In recent years, the trend of appointing "loyal" officers to premier positions became clearer. For example, many of his former *aides-de-camp* (ADCs) had risen to prominent positions within the military. These included *Pangab* General Wiranto, *Kasad* (Chief-of-Staff, Indonesian Army) General Subagyo Hadisiswoyo, *Kassospol* (Chief-of-Staff, Socio-political Affairs) Lieutenant-General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and former *Kasal* (Chief-of-Staff, Indonesian Navy) Vice-Admiral Arief Kusharyadi.

Suharto had also appointed some of his close relatives to prime positions within the military. General Wismoyo Arismunandar, his brother-in-law, once held the post of *Kasad*. He elevated his son-in-law, Lieutenant-General Prabowo Subianto, rapidly through the ranks of the army, granting him important

⁹⁴ Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 284-285.

positions such as the commander of *Kopassus* (Special Forces Command) and commander of *Kostrad* (Army's Strategic Reserve Command) until being sidetracked following the downfall of Suharto.

Another method that Suharto utilized to keep the military in check was to appoint less charismatic officers to lead the forces. These included former *Pangab* and present *Menko Polkam* (Coordinating Minister for Security and Political Affairs) General Feisal Tanjung and former *Kasad* General Hartono. These officers did not have strong grassroots support within the military, thereby ensuring that they would not be able to mount strong challenges against Suharto's rule.

Throughout the 1990s, Suharto interfered extensively in determining the top military leadership. Apart from General Edi Sudradjat, who once held the three top military posts—*Menhankam*, *Pangab* and *Kasad*—briefly in 1993, the other generals who had held these posts were considered to be Suharto's loyalists. Suharto largely determined their appointments, and this aptly demonstrated the low military prerogative in deciding military appointments.

b. Political Appointments

Suharto had also ensured that the military remained a minority in his cabinets. In fact, the number of cabinet positions occupied by the military has decreased gradually through the years. In 1983, it held 13 out of the 32 cabinet positions. In 1988, this figure had dropped to 11 out of 38 positions and it further

slid in 1993, with the military occupying 10 out of the 41 cabinet positions. In addition, these 10 officers have considerably less clout than their cabinet-level counterparts in the 1980s simply because the military had become less able to formulate and disseminate its own political opinions.⁹⁵ Rather, it had become more subservient to Suharto and had been transformed into a mere executioner of Suharto's political directions.

Suharto also reduced the number of officers in the legislative *DPR* (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or People's Representative Council) in recent years. Prior to 1993, the military was allocated 100 out of the 500 *DPR* seats. However, in 1993, this was reduced to 75 seats.⁹⁶ The military was unable to resist this move, primarily because of the deferential nature of its leadership towards Suharto. Here, the military demonstrated a low level of military contestation against the political master, Suharto.

c. *Exploiting the Military's Disunity*

Over the last five decades, different factions have existed in the Indonesian military. Suharto exploited this factionalism in his attempts at controlling the military. By allowing such factions to exist, Suharto ensured that the military's attention was focused on its internal problems and not on his rule. In addition, he used the rivalries among the different factions to eliminate opponents

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 284.

⁹⁶ *Komposisi & Daftar Nama Anggota MPR: Komposisi Keanggotaan*, available at <http://mpr.wasantara.net.id/komposisi.htm>, accessed on 25 September 1998.

of his policies. One prime example was the *Malari* (*Malapetaka Januari* or January Disaster) Incident in 1974, when General Ali Murtopo, one of Suharto's most trusted officers, succeeded in ousting the faction led by General Sumitro, a critic of Suharto's policies. After this incident, officers understood that personal loyalty to Suharto counted a great deal more than institutional clout.⁹⁷

Another method that Suharto utilized to reduce the military's ability to contest his policies was by constantly pitting the generals against each other. This was facilitated by the creation of intelligence bodies that, besides their stated internal security role, investigated the military's sentiments. Suharto ensured the loyalty of these bodies by employing his trusted generals like Ali Murtopo, Yoga Sugama and Benny Murdani as heads of these bodies through the years. These bodies were able to weave an intelligence network so intricate that the officer corps was mistrustful of one another and incapable of uniting against him.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ By 1974, disillusionment among some of Suharto's military supporters was on the rise. Contrary to popular belief, corruption was not a central priority of the government and in fact became institutionalized within the military. Suharto's top two advisors, Ali Murtopo and Sudjono Humardhani, were considered to be the leaders of these "financial generals." (Schwarz, 35) These "financial generals" were considered to be bringing the army into disrepute and detracting from efforts to modernize the armed forces. As such, a group of "professional soldiers" looked towards General Sumitro (head of *Kopkamtib*) to oppose them. Sumitro employed his considerable powers to stir up student protests, prompting mass demonstrations and the burning of cars during a visit by Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka in January 1974. The result was a triumph for the "financial generals," as Sumitro was blamed for inciting the students. He and his supporters were relieved from their posts. See Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting*, 33-35; Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics Under Suharto*, 75.

⁹⁸ Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics Under Suharto*, 76.

4. Suharto's Cultivation of Islamic Faction

Murdani's criticisms of Suharto and his family probably showed Suharto that he could not totally rely on close military subordinates to follow his policies blindly. Thus, in addition to employing "divide and rule" tactics in the military as a means of control, Suharto began to turn to other organizations as a balancing force to the military's influence—a tactic used by Sukarno in the early 1960s. Suharto exploited the military's suspicions of Islamic fundamentalists when he turned towards the Muslims to play this role in the early 1990s. He was certain that the military would not join forces with any large Islamic organizations but would in fact contain it. Suharto allowed and even strongly sponsored the formation of *ICMI* (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* or Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals) in 1990, headed by then *Menristek* (Minister for Research and Technology) B.J. Habibie. This organization includes among its membership critical non-governmental Muslim leaders and long-serving cabinet members. *ICMI* was set up as a sounding board for Muslim input into public policy, supported by its own think-tank, the Center for Information and Development Studies, and even had its own newspaper, *Republika*, to help formulate and broadcast Muslim views.

The military's weak leadership did not successfully oppose the formation of *ICMI*, despite its traditional suspicion of Islamic organizations. Again, this

demonstrated the inability of the military to counter civilian initiatives, another indication of the low level of military contestation it could exercise in Suharto's era.

5. Military Acquisitions

The military did not always have total autonomy in determining its acquisition plans during *Orde Baru*. Civilians sometimes determined military hardware purchases, and these decisions did not necessarily conform with military requirements. One example was the acquisition of aircraft in 1993. The Indonesian Air Force wanted fighter aircraft like the F-16s to augment its air defense, and ground-attack aircraft like the Hawk 100/200. However, the government's subsequent decision was to acquire 24 Hawk 100/200 aircraft. This decision was attributed to the influence exerted by former *Menristek* (and now president) B.J. Habibie. As *Menristek*, Habibie had his own agenda in that he wanted to raise the technological levels of *IPTN* (*Industri Pesawat Terbang Nusantara* or National Aircraft Industry). In this case, British Aerospace was willing to transfer technological knowledge as part of the deal. In addition, Habibie secured the licence to manufacture Hawk 100/200 parts for sale back to British Aerospace. These represented lucrative commercial and technological advantages for Habibie and *IPTN*. Using his strong personal relationship with Suharto, Habibie was able to bypass the Air Force's requirements and persuaded Suharto to acquire the Hawk 100/200 aircraft.

Another example where civilians were able to determine military acquisitions was the purchase of 39 ex-East German warships in 1992.⁹⁹ Apparently, only Suharto and Habibie were involved in the decision to acquire these ships.¹⁰⁰ Habibie clearly did not consult the Indonesian Navy in the acquisition process; it did not even have the required infrastructure to accommodate these ships or manpower to crew the ships. Nor did the navy want these ships as they had bad experiences with Soviet designed and manufactured hardware in the 1960s. However, Habibie was able to convince Suharto that this was a good buy—the total cost of the 39 ships was about US\$120 million. Again, Habibie had his own agenda for promoting this purchase. PT PAL shipyard, an important component of his strategic defense industries, stood to benefit from this acquisition. This shipyard would be involved in the refitting, customizing and acclimatizing of these ships for use in the tropics.

The purchases of the Hawk 100/200 attack aircraft and the 39 ex-East German ships are the only significant capital equipment purchases by the military in the 1990s. Habibie, who had a close relationship with Suharto, heavily influenced both of these acquisitions. While this had not occur frequently, it nevertheless shows the vulnerability of the military to civilian initiatives during

⁹⁹ These are 16 *Parchim* class corvettes, nine *Kondor* class minesweepers and 14 *Frosch* class landing ships.

¹⁰⁰ Lowry, *Armed Forces of Indonesia*, 98.

Suharto's era. One can consider the level of military prerogative in determining military acquisition to be low in recent times.

6. Successful Military Prerogative Against Suharto

One of the successful military prerogative against Suharto was in the choice of the Vice-President in the 1993 elections. The military pre-empted Suharto in nominating *Pangab* General Try Sutrisno as their choice of vice-president in 1993 even though Suharto had yet to make his wishes known. The other *MPR* (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* or People's Consultative Assembly) factions quickly backed the military choice. As such, the military forced Suharto to accept Sutrisno, as he did not want to be seen rejecting the stated views of the *MPR* that is constitutionally responsible for selecting the nation's top leaders. Since then, Suharto has taken steps to prevent such an occurrence. He dropped two leading military politicians, *Menhankam* Murdani and *Mendagri* (Interior Affairs Minister) General Rudini, from his 1993 cabinet. In addition, several officers close to Murdani like then-*Kassospol* Harsudiono Hartas and Teddy Rusdy, a top aide to Sutrisno, were unexpectedly overlooked for cabinet jobs in 1993. This probably was Suharto's response to the military officers presumptuous enough to restrict his latitude in choosing a vice-president.¹⁰¹ Thus, while the military successfully exercised their prerogatives against Suharto, Suharto was still able to retaliate against the military's initiative in other ways.

¹⁰¹ Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting*, 286.

F. 1998 - THE FALL OF SUHARTO

1. Military Involvement in Suharto's Resignation

The extent of military involvement in shaping the recent events in Indonesia that led to the 21 May 1998 downfall of Suharto remains unclear. Some reports painted an impression that the military was unable to influence events. For example, in mid-May, *Pangab* General Wiranto refused to back a call by Parliament Speaker Harmoko for Suharto to resign, saying that it had no basis in law.¹⁰² However, this did not appear to have much effect as Suharto was forced to relinquish his leadership to Vice-President Habibie, another indication of the low military influence in politics. Other reports indicated that it was an ultimatum from the military that forced Suharto to resign as President.¹⁰³ If so, the military would have demonstrated a high level of contestation against Suharto. In any case, the military still wielded an influence over the national leadership issue, and various reports have indicated that the military's consent was a crucial factor in allowing key leadership changes—Habibie assuming presidency and Akbar Tandjung assuming chairmanship of *Golkar*.

¹⁰² "Suharto resign call 'illegal'," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea1_0519.htm, accessed on 19 May 1998.

¹⁰³ "Did military tell Suharto to step down?" *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea4_0523.htm, accessed on 23 May 1998.

2. *Kopassus* Involvement in the May 1998 Riots

Recent reports have indicated that some *Kopassus* members under the orders of Lieutenant-Generals Prabowo and Muchdi were involved in the kidnappings of political activists and the shooting of protesters during the May 1998 turmoil in Indonesia. This represented a clear attempt to influence the political situation then, although the aims of these initiatives are debatable. It is possible that Prabowo was creating a situation in which he, as the *Kostrad* commander, would be able to engineer a coup attempt against *Pangab* Wiranto, or even against Suharto. Alternatively, he could be under the instructions from Suharto to intimidate his political opposition. The military leadership and the institution probably did not orchestrate these kidnappings and shootings, rather, these unfortunate actions were masterminded by one individual officer—Prabowo. This appeared to be the position advocated by *Pangab* General Wiranto to absolve the military institution (and himself) of these acts. As such, this event may not be indicative of the level of military's prerogative against civilians.

3. Initiative to Reduce the Military's Political Influence

There had been several indications that the military would limit its political interventions in the post-Suharto era. *Kassospol* Lieutenant-General Bambang Yudhoyono stated in June 1998 that "the idea of *ABRI* (Indonesian Armed Forces) now is to readjust its role, to build a new political role-sharing." One such response, he said, would require the armed forces to begin pulling back from their

traditional "dual function" involvement in politics, influencing society indirectly instead of directly.¹⁰⁴ President Habibie in his Independence Day speech on 15 August 1998 echoed the same sentiments. He called for a new bottom-up approach in readjusting the military's social-political roles, and to move away from the security approach—using security forces—to ensure stability in Indonesia.¹⁰⁵

This was further affirmed by *Pangab/Menhankam* General Wiranto, when he announced on 21 August 1998 that the military would adopt new principles in redefining *Dwi Fungsi*. These principles included "political role-sharing with non-military partners" and ending its policy of "occupying" troubled territories. However, he also mentioned that the military did not intend to relinquish its social-political role, although it would no longer attempt to dominate political life in the new reform era. The military still saw itself as the national savior, and would in the short term continue to ensure that Indonesia "recover from the economic crisis, engage in and control the reformation process, to guarantee the continuity of development."¹⁰⁶

It is unlikely that Habibie will be able to dictate any changes to the military's socio-political role as he did not have a strong political base and in fact had to

¹⁰⁴ Lieutenant-General Bambang Yudhoyono, quoted in "Abri will ease out of political role" *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea4_0622.htm, accessed on 22 June 1998.

¹⁰⁵ "Indonesia 'in an era of democratic resurgence'," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea1_0816.htm, accessed on 16 August 1998.

¹⁰⁶ "Wiranto outlines new roles for the armed forces," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea1_0822.htm, accessed on 22 August 1998.

rely on the military to support his initiatives. It is therefore more likely that the military exercised its prerogative in initiating this review of its *Dwi Fungsi* roles. The reasons for such a move are still unclear; perhaps the military foresaw that a reduced military presence in the political arena is a pre-requisite for the democratization of Indonesia, and as such, is taking the necessary steps to gracefully reduce its involvement in Indonesian politics. Or perhaps the military is trying to recover its prestige as the leader of Indonesian society after its excesses during Suharto's *Orde Baru*—its heavy-handed suppression of separatist problems in Aceh, East Timor and Irian Jaya—and especially its poor handling of the riots in May and June of 1998.

G. SUMMARY

The military has continuously exercised its *Dwi Fungsi* roles in the Indonesian society since the struggle for independence. However, the above analysis has determined that the levels of its political influence have fluctuated through the years. The 1940s and 1950s represented the formative years of the military's political posture. This period saw the military exercising its prerogatives and contestations against civilian decisions affecting mainly military matters, for example, its leadership and structure. Even so, it had experienced failures in its contestation attempts.

The *Orde Lama* period (1959-1965) saw the expansion of the military's influence in the political arena. Significantly, the military began to interfere

extensively in areas beyond military affairs. It successfully countered Sukarno's moves to sideline its influence, eliminated the *PKI* and eventually forced Sukarno out of office. Military initiatives also successfully shaped foreign affairs during *Konfrontasi*. Its successes shaped the behavior of all political players, as civilian leaders subsequently had to factor in the military's potential reactions to political decisions. The frequency and scope of military prerogatives and contestations during *Orde Lama* thus illustrated a leap from those previously undertaken.

Orde Baru (1966-1998) saw the general decline of the military's influence in politics, although it continued to play an important role exercising its social roles at the lower levels of Indonesian society. Suharto's intimate knowledge of the military enabled him to exercise a relatively successful "checks-and-balances" strategy in containing the military's political role. His continued employment of loyalists in key positions ensured that he maintained effective control over the military. By the 1990s, he had rendered the military leadership basically impotent, unable to counter Suharto's and Habibie's initiatives. Even the recent events leading to and following the downfall of Suharto proved that the military was unable to exercise its prerogatives or contestations at pre-*Orde Baru* levels.

In summary, the levels of military prerogatives and contestations against civilians are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of the Levels of Military Prerogatives and Contestations

Period	Level of Military Prerogative and Contestation	Remarks
<i>Pre-Orde Lama</i> (1944-1959)	Medium-high	Prerogatives and contestations conducted mainly to assert control over military affairs.
<i>Orde Lama</i> (1959-1966)	High	Frequency of military prerogatives and contestations increased. The military did not confine its interference to military affairs. It also actively sought to influence outcomes in both Indonesia's domestic politics as well as foreign affairs.
<i>Orde Baru</i> (1966-1998)	High-medium	The military still played a pivotal part in Indonesia's politics. However, Suharto was successful in limiting the military's influence by 1990s. The frequency and scope of military interference also decreased.
<i>Post Orde Baru</i>	Medium?	The extent of military interference in the downfall of Suharto is still unknown.

The next chapter will put forward some reasons for the decline of the military's socio-political role in Indonesian society. The motives of Suharto—the main player in instigating this decline—will be examined. In addition, the possibility that the military would voluntarily relinquish some of its political initiatives exists. As Indonesia matures, it is natural that the military would want to retreat to the background of the socio-political arena and allow civilians take the lead in these areas, unless the civilians seriously threaten its basic ideals. This aspect will be examined.

IV. REASONS FOR THE DECLINING SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE

Chapter III demonstrated the fluctuations in the military's socio-political participation throughout the years. The military's political involvement matured during the *Orde Lama* period, resulting in extensive interventions in both domestic and international politics. However, this trend did not continue into Suharto's *Orde Baru* period. From its successes in the constant struggle against the civilian leadership during the *Orde Lama* period, the military's ability to successfully contest Suharto's initiatives saw a gradual decline in recent years.

This chapter will put forward some of the possible reasons for the decline in the levels exercised by the military in the socio-political arena. There is no single answer that can explain the decline; rather, it is a very complex process that cannot be oversimplified. Several avenues will be explored, examining any pressures within and outside the military that are compelling the decline in these roles.

A. SUHARTO'S INITIATIVES TO MARGINALIZE THE MILITARY

Most western scholars largely ignored Suharto's manipulation of the military as they saw him and the military as a seamless team and his government as a military regime. However, this section contends that Suharto had played a

pivotal role in marginalizing the military in the political arena. Prior to his resignation in May 1998, Suharto had been largely successful in molding the military to meet his requirements. He treated the military in the same manner as other political apparatus—using the institution effectively in accordance to his desires, and at the same time ensuring that the military remained firmly in his control. Being a former army general, Suharto knew the intricacies of the military's organization and internal affairs. He was able to develop the skills he had gleaned from handling the 1965 coup and its aftermath. Specifically, he was able to utilize his power and resources as the military's *Pangti* (*Panglima Tertinggi* or Supreme Commander) to directly influence military appointments, promotions and developmental directions. It is not surprising that Suharto directed his attention at containing the military, given the fact that it was the most organized and competent player in Indonesia's political scene. The following section will present some feasible explanations for Suharto's attempts at limiting the military's political influence. The following are only possible reasons, as the analysis entails the studying of one man's mind—Suharto's—and assumes that he was a rational player in deciding his courses of action.

1. The Military as a Potential Political Rival

The successful elimination of the *PKI* after the 1965 coup left the military as the only organized body capable of mounting political challenges against the civilian leadership. Suharto no doubt was aware of this fact as he was one of the major proponents of an active political role for the military to confront Sukarno. In

addition, it was his skillful manipulation of the military's socio-political role that had initially provided him with the legitimacy to wrest the ruling powers from Sukarno. However, he was aware that a strong and united military could potentially become a significant rival to his rule if he was unsuccessful in controlling the institution. Thus, he could not simply strip these roles from the military, as such an action would alienate the latter and possibly turn the military against him. As such, Suharto had to continually seek to contain the political ambitions of the military while at the same time allowing it to exercise its socio-political role in order to eliminate the institution as a potential political rival.

2. Fear over Possible Military Coups

Another plausible reason that could explain Suharto's decision to reduce the military's political influence was his fear of military coups. While the military leadership had always emphasized that it would never conduct a coup against a legitimate civilian government, the possibility was always present given the strength of the military and its extensive involvement in politics. As Suharto became increasingly authoritative in his rule and his attempts at marginalizing the military became more apparent in the 1990s, the risk of a military coup against him undoubtedly increased. Suharto therefore had to continue his efforts in containing the military, even courting the Muslim faction in the 1990s as a "balancer" against the influence of the military.

3. Cronyism and Nepotism

Another possible reason for marginalizing the military could be that Suharto was aiming to protect his family's and friends' business interests. By the 1980s, the business tentacles of the First Family had spread throughout the Indonesian economy, dabbling into the financial, investment, production and distribution sectors. Before the downfall of Suharto, the conglomerates formed by his children were among the largest in the country.¹⁰⁷ These conglomerates benefited from the licenses and concessions granted to them and their companies by their father's government.¹⁰⁸ Economists who have studied the family's business operations say there has rarely been even the pretense of competitive bidding when businesses owned by the president or his children have been awarded government contracts.¹⁰⁹

In addition to the obvious nepotism, Suharto also had to ensure that the military did not interfere in the crony capitalism he was pursuing. Benefiting from close connections to the president, these "crony businessmen" like Liem Sioe

¹⁰⁷ *Bimantara Citra*, owned by Suharto's son Trihatmodjo, was one of Indonesia's largest companies, with subsidiaries in hotels, telecommunications, chemicals and food. The president's eldest daughter, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana (widely known as Tutut), also built up a business empire with her sisters in 1983, and later with her husband. The *Humpuss* Group belonging to sons Hutomo and Sigit Harjojudanto also benefited from Suharto's patronage.

¹⁰⁸ *Humpuss* and *Bimantara* were granted concessions for the overseas distribution of petrochemical products manufactured by the government oil company, while Mrs. Rukmana was awarded the right to build toll roads through Jakarta. In the 1990s, television licenses were granted to both Trihatmodjo and Mrs. Rukmana. In addition, a group of investors led by Trihatmodjo took control of the state-owned Palapa commercial satellite network.

¹⁰⁹ Philip Shenon, "For the First Family of Indonesia, an Empire Now in Jeopardy," *The New York Times*, January 16, 1998, available on Internet at <http://www.nytimes.com/yr/mo/day/news/world/> accessed on 16 January 1998.

Liong and Mohammed "Bob" Hasan were able to build vast conglomerates, amassing wealth through government-granted import and trading monopolies, privileged access to government contracts and state bank credit, and the ability to bend government policies in their favor. In return, they would bankroll a good measure of Suharto's patronage activities and stand ready to provide emergency funds in crisis situations.¹¹⁰

The Indonesian military had traditionally relied on its participation in the economy to supplement the meager defense budgets. Through appointments in the various civilian corporations, the military was able to siphon off a substantial amount of funds for its use. In addition, the military's stretch into the economy is extensive, both through official foundations and enterprises as well as on the individual basis.¹¹¹ The First Family's and friends' business practises thus threatened the military's sources of revenue. The Indonesian economy, though large, was still a finite pie and the military in the 1980s began to find its share of the pie gradually diminishing as the First Family expanded into its domain. This

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ By appointing officers to non-military corporations such as *Pertamina* (the state oil corporation) and *Bulog* (National Logistics Board), the military was able to siphon off a substantial amount of funds for the military's usage. In addition, the military also set up various foundations and enterprises like *Yayasan Dharma Putra* Kostrad and *PT Tri Usaha Bhakti* which expanded its economic reach to the various sectors in the economy—an automobile assembling plant, a battery factory, clothing and shoe factories, rice mills, banks, hotels, food exporters, forestry projects in Kalimantan and Ambon and even airlines (*Mandala*, *Seulawah* and *Zamrud Airlines*). Individually, officers also entered the economy to improve their financial status, through both legitimate as well as illegitimate avenues. Often, these officers exploited their influential positions within the society to facilitate their economic ventures, or to obtain "commissions" from applicants of contracts and licenses. Here, the military leadership apparently adopted the view that it was perfectly natural for officers to exploit their official positions for personal gain. For a more detailed account, see Crouch, *Army and Politics*, 273-303.

hurt both the institution's financial position as well as the individual officer's income. Such developments would promote a sense of dissatisfaction among the military officers. Some would consider the First Family and their friends as benefiting at the military's expense—it was primarily the military that created the stable conditions for economic growth and these conglomerates were denying the military opportunities to benefit from its hard-earned successes. Officers used to enjoying a certain standard of living through extra-military economic activities would be enraged as opportunities for increasing their personal wealth became threatened. Thus, as Suharto allowed his family and friends to expand their commercial enterprises, he also had to forestall any resistance from the military. The fact that he succeeded in protecting the economic interests and that nepotism and cronyism prevailed extensively during *Orde Baru* signified his mastery in stifling the military's ability to contest his policies.

4. Reduced Usefulness of the Military

In a sense, the military was a victim of its own success. Since 1965, it had effectively wiped out political opposition to the Suharto regime. As such, by the late 1980s, the president did not need the military as much as in the early years of his rule. He thus could afford to alienate the military to a certain extent without adversely affecting his political position.

5. Legitimacy in the International Arena

During the Cold War, western countries like the United States muted their criticisms of military or authoritative regimes if such regimes took an anti-Communist stance. However, the end of the Cold War saw an increase in both the volume and tenacity of these criticisms by both governmental and non-governmental personalities. Being the leader of the world's fourth most populous nation and the largest country in Southeast Asia, Suharto would want an international stature befitting Indonesia's size and potential influence. He would not want to be viewed merely as the military leader of a third world nation. Thus, this desire to achieve an acceptable world status in the post-Cold War era could be a reason for Suharto to deliberately distance himself from the military so as to enhance his own legitimacy internationally. A maneuver in marginalizing the military politically would demonstrate to the world that his government had progressed beyond its formative phase and had transformed into a non-military regime.

B. INTRA-MILITARY PRESSURES

By the late 1980s, the military as an institution did not actively resist Suharto's initiatives in marginalizing its socio-political positions in society. The weak and subservient military leadership comprising mainly Suharto's loyal appointees, largely followed Suharto's directions without question. During *Orde Baru*, the military as an institution did not actively promote a reduction in its socio-political involvement. It was still reaping the benefits of the system and therefore

had no impetus to adjust its perception of its socio-political role. It was only after the resignation of Suharto that military initiatives to examine and reform its socio-political participation surfaced. Certainly, the tumultuous events of 1998—the push for democracy, the society's rejection of the Indonesian military's traditional societal roles, the military's "dirty war" against political activists¹¹²—prompted the military to rethink the relevancy of its socio-political role.

Under the new leadership of a new generation of officers like *Pangab* General Wiranto and *Kassospol* Lieutenant-General Bambang Yudhoyono, the military has openly signaled its intention to reduce its socio-political influence. *Kassospol* Yudhoyono stated that the military would "remain above" *GOLKAR* and other political parties and refrain from intervening in their activities as it had done in previous years.¹¹³ *Pangab* Wiranto had also announced plans to separate the police from the military.¹¹⁴ Other initiatives planned include the reduction of military officers in other governmental ministries.¹¹⁵ The following section will

¹¹² There had been unconfirmed reports and revelations of human-rights abuses -- such as kidnapping of student activists and atrocities in Aceh, East Timor and Irian Jaya. In addition, members of the military were involved in kidnapping and killings of activists during the 1998 political upheaval, although these military personnel were apparently pursuing their own agenda and do not appear to have been following directions from the military headquarters.

¹¹³ "Abri to review its ties with Golkar and the President," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea7_0925.htm, accessed on 25 September 1998.

¹¹⁴ "Police to break away from Abri," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea9_1005.htm, accessed on 5 October 1998.

¹¹⁵ "Abri to reduce number of men in ministries," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea1_0904.htm, accessed on 4 September 1998.

proffer some reasons for these recent military moves to reduce its socio-political role.

1. Maintaining Legitimacy After Orde Baru

Evidently, the Indonesian population deeply resent the military's heavy-handed methods in quelling social disorders during *Orde Baru*. Thus, it is logical that in the post-Suharto era, the military would seek to deflect criticisms of its past actions and put the blame on the policies of the old regime. This would help salvage whatever legitimacy it once possessed. Already, the military had admitted it was used as a political tool by former President Suharto to further his political and other interests when he was in power. The military further acknowledged that it had exceeded its dual-function role during *Orde Baru*.¹¹⁶ Thus, an effective method to achieve the above aim is to declare a re-examination of its socio-political role and unilaterally offer to reduce its involvement in the political arena. This would help satisfy the population to some degree and yet allow the military to maintain its socio-political role in society.

The decision to separate the police from the military structure could also be predicated on the military's attempts to maintain legitimacy in society. The police force was incorporated into the military in 1963,¹¹⁷ thereby allowing the military to have a legitimate role in ensuring the domestic security in addition to its

¹¹⁶ "Abri concedes it was tool of Suharto," *The Straits Times Interactive*, available at http://www.asia1.com.sg/straitstimes/sea5_1007.htm, accessed on 7 October 1998.

¹¹⁷ Singh, *Dwi Fungsi ABRI*, 33.

external defense role. However, its oppressive methods in curbing social unrest through the years were less-than-welcome by the population, and its stature and legitimacy built up during the independence struggle gradually diminished. By once again reinstating the police as an independence force, any subsequent police actions could not be attributed to military policies. In this way, the military could hope to regain its legitimacy and stature in society.

2. A Reduced Role in Democracy

The military probably realized that its strong presence throughout all sectors of society had stifled the growth of effective non-governmental agencies and political parties. These organizations are necessary to foster healthy social and political environments in a truly democratic Indonesia. A responsible military in the post-Suharto era would therefore want to prevent repeating the same mistakes made during *Orde Baru* and not suppress the development of these organizations. Thus, the military leadership could have initiated the recent reforms to help divorce the military from direct intervention in domestic political affairs, thereby allowing the proper growth of political parties and non-governmental organizations.

3. Professionalism and Discipline

The Indonesian military that emerged in the post-Suharto period was lacking both in skills and equipment to effectively confront an external military threat. It had to rely on decades-old war fighting doctrines developed during its

independence struggle against the Dutch. Thus, a retreat from non-military affairs would allow the military to concentrate on professional development to update and upgrade the military into a modern war-fighting machine.

The Asian economic crisis of 1997 severely affected Indonesia in all aspects. As a result, the military suffered a reduction in the military budget. This lack of funds, coupled with the scaling back of bilateral training exercises as regional countries like Malaysia also began to feel the pinch of the crisis, meant that opportunities for professional training were also drastically reduced. Thus, the military would have to concentrate on professional training rather than expanding its socio-political role to maintain its level of professionalism. A desire to maintain its professionalism in this economic hardship period could therefore contribute to the military leadership's decision to reduce its socio-political involvement.

Clearly, the present military leadership—western-trained and considered to be highly professional—would not condone the rampant corruption within the military during *Orde Baru*. Only a reduction in the military's socio-political participation, thereby reducing its influence in society and economy, could help re-establish some degree of discipline and decrease the levels of corruption. Thus, the end of *Orde Baru* presented an opportunity for the military leadership to advocate a reduction in the level of socio-political participation and to re-instill a sense of discipline and professionalism in the military.

C. OTHER DOMESTIC PRESSURES

1. Pressures from Civil Organizations

In spite of the relentless crackdown on errant political parties and social organizations during *Orde Baru*, certain organizations like *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum* (LBH or Legal Aid Foundation) and Human Rights Commission were allowed to operate in Indonesia. These organizations were instrumental in highlighting the human rights abuses in-country, particularly those conducted by the military in Aceh, East Timor and Irian Jaya. The exposure of these excesses towards the end of *Orde Baru* (in 1998) certainly added pressure on the military to consider reforming its approach towards internal security in the post-Suharto era. Already, the military is likely to abandon its "security approach" towards resolving domestic disturbances. Undoubtedly, military reforms initiated in the near future would seek to reduce further criticisms of its policies and actions by such organizations.

2. Push from the Population

Apart from organized non-governmental institutions, the military also faced mounting pressure from the population to initiate reforms. As a "people's army," the Indonesian military has to consider the general wishes of the people in order to retain its legitimacy in society. The opportunity for the military to appease the population arose with the resignation of Suharto. Again, this would relieve some

pressure off the military and at the same time allow the military to regain the population's trust and its stature in society.

D. INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES

The resignation of Suharto took place in the midst of an economic crisis. While the extent of the military's involvement in Suharto's downfall is still unclear, its behavior in the post-Suharto appeared to demonstrate a certain degree of responsibility in handling the deteriorating political and economic situations. The military leadership probably realized that that international opinions are against military regimes like *Orde Baru* Indonesia. In addition, it would also assess that further Western financial and military aids provided to Indonesia would call for some degrees of political reforms. These reforms would ultimately affect the military's socio-political role. As such, the military could have decided to pre-empt such western pressures by reducing its socio-political role before being forced to take these reforms. This would allow the military to retain "face" domestically and internationally, by proclaiming that it was acting on its own initiatives. It would also allow the institution to better maintain its credibility in the domestic political scene.

Here, the decision to separate the police from the military would be a positive step towards rehabilitating Indonesia's tarnished image. Firstly, the image of the Indonesian government as a military regime would be diminished, as the military is no longer responsible for internal security. In addition, such a move would also present an impression that the military was returning to its

professional roots. These impressions are important in improving Indonesia's international image, as well as the professional image of the military. In turn, it would facilitate Indonesia's attempts to solicit foreign financial and military aid during this economic crisis and beyond.

Many people expected the Indonesia to step in decisively and seize power from Suharto during the tumultuous first half of 1998. The situation in Indonesia then was certainly chaotic with full-scale riots occurring in the major cities in the archipelago. However, the Indonesian military did not step in to seize direct power. Here, it acted responsibly and allowed the existing civilian apparatus to control the domestic political situation, including the change in the country's leadership. By not conducting a military coup but instead supporting democratic reforms, the military was able to maintain its credibility and its legitimacy in the Indonesian society in the post-Suharto era.

The above analysis has offered some possible reasons for the reduction of the military's socio-political influence during *Orde Baru* and in the immediate period after Suharto's resignation. Suharto's own mandate in ensuring his rule and the prosperity of his family probably dictated the military's directions during *Orde Baru*. This state of events remained until the economic downturn in 1997 and 1998, which unleashed a wave of discontent in Indonesia that Suharto could not suppress and ultimately leading to his resignation. A consequence of this

crisis also released the military from Suharto's grasp, allowing it to exercise its own initiatives in the post-Suharto era. Till now, the military leadership apparently had decided to continue with the reduction of the institution's socio-political role, although it had emphasized that it would not consider a total elimination of these roles. The possible reasons for this military's decision are listed above. The next section will postulate the impact on Indonesian society of such a reduction in the military's socio-political role.

E. IMPACT OF THE REDUCED LEVEL OF MILITARY SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE

1. Impact on the Military

a. *A Return to Professionalism*

Since the end of *Konfrontasi*, the Indonesian military's attention had been deflected away from the development of a modern fighting force designed to combat external threats. Thus, a reduced role in the socio-political arena would allow the military to focus its attention on the professional aspects of soldiering. The abilities to effectively contain and repulse external military threats would enhance the security of Indonesia and would also contribute to regional stability.

In addition, the impending separation of the police from the military will contribute towards the development of a more professional military. By relieving the military of the onerous task of ensuring internal domestic stability, the separation would also allow the police to develop its own forces

independently in accordance with internationally accepted police practises. This would result in the development of a professional police force.

b. *Manpower Deployment*

The military would reduce the number of senior officers deployed to the non-military organizations, ministries and in the political system (both in the *MPR* and *DPR*) under the new military initiatives to limit its participation in the socio-political arena. This would likely create problems for the military as the institution had often use these non-military posts as career positions for its officers. In the short term, one potential problem is that the military cannot find enough positions to re-deploy these officers. In the long term, the military will have to restructure its organization to account for the reduction in deployment positions. While the military officers now would be at a higher risk of being made redundant, the organization as a whole could benefit from this excess pool of officers. It can now afford to choose the best officers to fill the limited number of posts; officers who can contribute towards increasing the level of professionalism within the military.

c. *Reduction in Finances*

The withdrawal of military officers from their non-military posts would deny them the opportunities to obtain financial gains from these positions in the form of official allowances and unofficial bribes. This would create a group of dissatisfied senior officers whose incomes are being reduced. The morale of

the officer corps would likely to be negatively affected by the diminishing prospects of earning additional incomes. Thus, while there is apparently a desire to reduce the socio-political involvement, the loss of supplementary income would be a factor for resisting such moves. Again, this is a problem that the military leadership has to confront and resolve before taking concrete steps towards the reduction of these roles.

2. Impact on Society

a. *A Potential Power Vacuum*

The military has been deeply involved in the Indonesian society since the independence struggle. The sudden withdrawal from participating in these roles could impact negatively on society. There will be a vacuum in the Indonesian society where the military has traditionally existed, for example, in developing backward villages through the *ABRI Masuk Desa* programs. Unless the withdrawal is gradual and other agencies are allowed to be developed to replace the military in these areas, this would become a major problem for the Indonesian population. The ensuring vacuum would likely mean that social developments could be stunted with the lack of direction and supervision. As such, a responsible military would want to limit the extent of the reduction in socio-political role in order to minimize the potential disturbances to society. In addition, it would have to assist in the development of civil institutions that could fulfill these social roles. The military could second personnel to such

organizations to help develop the necessary infrastructure as well as to impart its experiences in order to accelerate the learning curve.

b. *True Democracy or "Liberal Democracy?"*

The euphoria after Suharto's resignation, and the expectations of true democracy in Indonesia would likely result in an explosion of political parties in Indonesia. While this would demonstrate that democracy in the western sense has prevailed, it could also result in a relapse of the Indonesian political system to the "Liberal Democracy" environment experienced during Sukarno's era. Then, the multitude of political parties resulted in coalition governments that were ineffective in governing the country, and it was the resultant instability that prompted the military together with Sukarno to actively intervene in the political system. This is a situation that a responsible Indonesian military would seek to prevent, as such a climate would prove to be socially and politically destabilizing. As such, this concern would likely temper the level of withdrawal the military is contemplating in the near future.

It was through the turbulent times of the independence struggle that the Indonesian military cemented its socio-political role in the society. It is again through social and political upheavals in 1998 that the Indonesian military is contemplating a change in directions with regards to these same roles. The discontents that led to the removal of President Suharto had initiated a desire for

social changes and style of governance in Indonesia. Both existing and emerging political players together with the educated are demanding widespread political changes to replace the authoritarian regime of *Orde Baru*, and at the same time threatening the military's traditional socio-political role. Pressures from the social, political and international sectors as well as internal desires are forcing the Indonesian military to reform its approaches towards these roles. This is a critical time for both the military and the country; a wrong calculation by the military could possibly throw the country into chaos, or revert it back to the old authoritarian system.

V. CONCLUSION

A. THE FUTURE OF THE MILITARY'S SOCIO-POLITICAL ROLE

"The needs and aspirations of the people are growing. I think that the dual function needs to be readjusted. In the past we have held civilian posts. In the future, the number can be decreased," said *Kassospol* Lieutenant-General Bambang Yudhoyono in an interview with *Asiaweek* in July 1998.¹¹⁸ Given Yudhoyono's position, this view will set the tone of the military's initiatives concerning its socio-political role in the near future. In the following months, there were further statements by both prominent military and civilian leaders regarding this issue. However, to date, there have been no concrete plans on how the military would reduce its socio-political involvement in the Indonesian society until *Pangab* General Wiranto announced plans to separate the police from the military in October 1998. This chapter speculates on how this reduction will play out.

1. A Reduction in Political Influence

What does the future hold for the military in its involvement in the socio-political arena? Politically, the military is likely to fulfill its promise to reform its approach to political interference. However, it is unlikely to totally abandon its exercise of these functions and "return to the barracks." Instead, it will still retain

¹¹⁸ Quoted in Jose Manuel Tesoro, "A Matter of Force," *Asiaweek Online* 3 July 1998, available at http://www.pathfinder.com/asiaweek/98/0703/nat_8_indomilitary.html, accessed on 13 October 1998.

some influence on Indonesia's political stage, although it is likely to refrain from exerting direct influence on the directions of political developments or hinder the formation of political parties in the same fashion as in *Orde Baru*. This may take the form of a reduced presence in the political apparatus, for example, a reduction in the number of allocated seats both in the *DPR* and the *MPR* as well as in the number of military officers employed in non-military positions in the various ministries. The military is also expected to remain above all the political parties, and in the process abandon its linkages with *Golkar* to promote greater democracy in Indonesia. It is also likely not interfere in normal governance and political interplay among the various parties, but is likely to retain its option to intervene in case if there were political chaos or instability. This will be in line with the military's duty to maintain security and stability in the country, as well as to prevent a repeat of the debacle of the "Liberal Democracy" phase of the 1950s.

2. Status Quo in its Social Roles

In the social arena, the military in the near future is likely to maintain its prominence. This is mainly due to the fact that there are presently no established governmental and non-governmental organizations capable of replacing the military in these roles. This situation is likely to persist until the present economic crisis eases and when the government can provide sufficient funds for such organizations. Even so, the military is unlikely to relinquish these social roles, as its origins were closely tied to the Indonesian people. Thus, any development of non-military organizations is likely to supplement the military in conducting social

duties, rather than replacing it. Towards this end, the military through its think-tank *Lembaga Pertahanan Nasional* (*Lemhanas* or National Defense Institute) has initiated dialogues with pro-democracy and human rights non-governmental organizations even before the fall of Suharto.¹¹⁹ These efforts will undoubtedly continue into the future.

At present, *Pangab* General Wiranto appeared to be instrumental in charting the new directions for the military. Under his leadership, the military had announced some initiatives to reduce its involvement in domestic politics. He has publicly announced that the military would implement reforms to its socio-political participation by 1999. So far, he has appeared to be supportive of pro-democracy reforms in Indonesia. With like-minded senior military officers such as *Kassospol* Lieutenant-General Bambang Yudhoyono, Wiranto would have the power, the resources and support to pursue these military reforms.

Habibie is widely seen as a product of the Suharto era, being a minister in Suharto's cabinet as well as a close confidant to the former president. As such, his position as president in this new era is always under pressure and scrutiny, especially when he did not have a strong support base when he became president. Habibie therefore has little choice but to champion pro-democracy reforms in order to maintain his position and to win grassroots support for himself.

¹¹⁹ A one-day seminar on "Strengthening People's Participation for the Formation of Civil Society in Indonesia" was organized by the military on 22 September 1997. The discussions can be found in *Menuju Masyarakat Madani* (Jakarta: PT Penebar Swadaya, 1998).

This situation will continue at least until elections in 1999, after which the political situation in Indonesia will become relatively clear.

B. CONCLUSION

This thesis adapted Alfred Stepan's analysis of the levels of military prerogatives and contestations employed by the military towards the civilian authorities in its analysis.¹²⁰ This model proved to be well suited in the analysis of the Indonesian military's involvement in the socio-political sphere, providing a balanced road map in looking at significant events both objectively and subjectively. As such, it is the writer's opinion that this method could be adapted effectively to analyze other civil-military relations.

This thesis has traced the development of the Indonesian military's socio-political role through the decades. It has demonstrated that these roles had their roots in the independence struggle against the Dutch, and the military would find it difficult to relinquish these roles without a strong extra-military impetus. It has also proved the thesis that the Indonesian military's socio-political role was in a state of decline since Suharto came into power in 1966, with the decline most significant since the late 1980s. Possible reasons are also presented, notably the role played by former president Suharto.

An understanding of the circumstances leading to the crystallization and decline of the Indonesian military's socio-political role provides a better insight

¹²⁰ See Chapter I for a detailed description of the methodology.

into Indonesia's extremely dynamic political situation. The coming years will be crucial in the formation of Indonesia's new political landscape, and the military's initiatives in this area will have a definitive effect on the development. Even with the implementation of more democratic reforms, the military will still likely maintain a stake in the new system. This is to ensure the stability of the social and political situation domestically, as well as to safeguard its own interests.

The Indonesian military will remain engaged in the socio-political arena in the near future. Without its mitigating influence, there is a possibility that Indonesia will revert to the chaotic times of the 1950s. Growth of the backward regions of the archipelago will also be severely hindered if the military does not participate in social programs in these areas. In the medium to long term, the situation may change with the maturing of the democratic movements and the establishment of non-military social organizations. Then, the military can concentrate its attention on developing a professional armed force befitting its size and influence in the Southeast Asian region.

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