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U.S. Embassy Tracked Indonesia Mass Murder 1965



General Suharto in the days after the September 30th Movement

Newly Declassified U.S. Embassy Jakarta Files Detail Army Killings, U.S. support for Quashing Leftist Labor Movement

See Indonesian translation

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Edited by **Brad Simpson**, Founder and Director of the Indonesia and East Timor Documentation Project, Associate Professor of History and Asian Studies, University of Connecticut

For further information, contact: 609-751-8206

Subjects: **Cold War - General
Human Rights and Genocide
Third World and Decolonization**

Regions: **Southeast Asia**

Project: **Indonesia**

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An alleged PKI member after his arrest by Indonesian security forces, October 1965.

Washington, D.C., October 17, 2017 - The U.S. government had detailed knowledge that the Indonesian Army was conducting a campaign of mass murder against the country's Communist Party (PKI) starting in 1965, according to newly declassified documents posted today by the National Security Archive at The George Washington University. The new materials further show that diplomats in the Jakarta Embassy kept a record of which PKI leaders were being executed, and that U.S. officials actively supported Indonesian Army efforts to destroy the country's left-leaning labor movement.

The 39 documents made available today come from a collection of nearly 30,000 pages of files constituting much of the daily record of the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 1964-1968. The collection, much of it formerly classified, was processed by the National Declassification Center in response to growing public interest in the remaining U.S. documents concerning the mass killings of 1965-1966. American and Indonesian human rights and freedom of information activists, filmmakers, as well as a group of U.S. Senators led by Tom Udall (D-NM), had called for the materials to be made public.

The documents concern one of the most important and turbulent chapters in Indonesian history and U.S.-Indonesian relations, which witnessed the gradual collapse of ties between Jakarta and Washington, a low-level war with Britain over the formation of Malaysia, rising tension between the Indonesian Army and the Indonesian Communist Party, the growing radicalization of Indonesian President Sukarno, and the expansion of U.S. covert operations aimed at provoking a clash between the Army and PKI. These tensions erupted in the aftermath of an attempted purge of the Army by the September 30th Movement – a group of military officers with the collaboration of a handful of PKI leaders. After crushing the Movement, which had kidnapped and killed six high-ranking Army generals, the Indonesian Army and its paramilitary allies launched a campaign of annihilation against the PKI and its affiliated organizations, killing up to 500,000 alleged PKI supporters between October 1965 and March 1966, imprisoning up to a million more, and eventually ousting Sukarno and replacing him with General Suharto, who ruled Indonesia for the next 32 years before he himself was overthrown in May 1998.

In an unprecedented collaboration, the National Security Archive worked with the National Declassification Center (NDC) to make the entirety of this collection available to the public by scanning and digitizing the collection, which will be incorporated into the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) digital finding aids. When completed, scholars, journalists, and researchers will be able to search the documents by date, keyword, or name, providing unparalleled access, in particular for the Indonesian public, to a unique collection of records concerning one of the most important periods of Indonesian history.

Of the 30,000 pages processed by the NDC, several hundred documents remain classified and are undergoing further review before their scheduled release in early 2018. While some of the documents in this collection were declassified and deposited at NARA or the Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library in the late 1990s, many thousands of pages are being made available for the first time in more than 50 years.

THE DOCUMENTS

The documents in the files of the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta range widely, from the daily operations of the Embassy to observations on Indonesian politics, economics, foreign policy, military affairs, the growing conflict between the United States and Sukarno, the conflict between the Army and PKI, the September 30th Movement and the mass killings that followed, and the consolidation of the Suharto regime. While most of the documents in this briefing book concern the events of September 30, 1965, and their

aftermath, we have included a handful of others to give a sense of the range and historical significance of the larger collection for an understanding of the broader consolidation of the Suharto regime.



Document 1

U.S. Consulate in Medan, Telegram 509 to Jakarta, Limited Official Use

Jun 8, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 12, Folder 8 Pol 12
PKI-Army

The U.S. consul in Medan, Robert Blackburn, reports that Army officials in Medan have overruled local authorities using powers claimed under the DWIKORA Commands issued by President Sukarno to extend additional powers to the Armed Forces in the context of the military confrontation with Britain over the formation of Malaysia. On October 1, as historian Jess Melvin has shown, local military commanders in Medan would use the same powers to declare martial law and launch the first mass killings against alleged PKI supporters.



Document 2

Copy of Letter from Sjafruddin Prawiranegara to Edwin L. Fox, Enclosure 1, Airgram A-125 from U.S. Embassy Jakarta to State, Secret

Aug 5, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 3, Folder 22 - POL - POLITICAL AFF. And REL. 1965 general

In this letter to former USAID administrator Edwin Fox, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara (former finance minister and prime minister of the PRRI government during Indonesia's civil war from 1958-1961) offers a full throated defense of the U.S. war in Vietnam. The then-imprisoned Sjafruddin, a member of the Moslem Masjumi party, argues that the United States "is following the only right path which leads ... to a necessary containment of aggressive Communism" in the region. Sjafruddin's enthusiastic support for the Vietnam War was extraordinary given the widespread opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the region even among anti-

Communist Indonesian military leaders, many of whom deeply sympathized with the Vietnamese fighting the United States.



Document 3

Telegram 542 A from Secretary of State to American Embassy in Jakarta Sep 15, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 5, Folder 13
Assistance to US citizens - Lovestrand 1965

This telegram comments on conditions in West Irian (West Papua) in mid-September 1965, as recounted by a Dutch Protestant missionary reporting on the case of imprisoned U.S. missionary Harold Lovestrand. The missionary reported “talk of open rebellion by Papuans” and a brutal crackdown by Indonesian military forces after three soldiers were shot at a flag-raising ceremony. “Soldiers next day sprayed bullets at any Papuan in sight and many innocent travelers on roads gunned down.”



Document 4

US Embassy in Jakarta, Telegram 971 to Secretary of State, Secret Oct 12, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 4, Folder 7 pol 23-9
rebellion. Coups. 30th September Movement 1965

The U.S. ambassador to Indonesia, Marshall Green, reports on a conversation with the German ambassador to Indonesia, according to whom “Indo Army is now considering possibility of overthrowing Sukarno himself and is approaching several Western Embassies to let them know that such a move is possible.” An Indonesian army representative approached the German ambassador after Sukarno appeared to dismiss Army efforts to present him with evidence of “PKI complicity in Sept. 30 Movement.”



Document 5

Telegram 779A from American Embassy in Jakarta to Secretary of State in Washington, Secret

Oct 18, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 3

This document records a conversation between Embassy staff and Surtarto, special assistant to Ruslan Abdulgani. It notes “anti-PKI actions” were now occurring in Medan, South Sumatra, and Makassar while Central Java was in “turmoil.” This “anti-PKI action” is reported as being led by “Army/Moslem [groups].” Surtarto freely discusses the interrogation of Untung (one of the leaders of the September 30th Movement) and suggests “we will probably have to string up” key PKI leaders and “kill” Air Force Commander Omar Dani. American Embassy staff are recorded asking what actions the Army will take “beyond” current mass anti-PKI demonstrations and “sacking” of PKI-associated establishments and residences. Army plans to conduct actions at the Chinese Embassy are also reported.



Document 6

US Embassy in Jakarta, Telegram 1168 to Secretary of State, Secret

Oct 23, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 1-POL 23-9 Rebellion Coup 30 September Movement Oct.20-25, 1965

This report from U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Marshall Green describes the Army’s efforts to ban the PKI-affiliated Central All-Indonesian Workers Organization (Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia, or SOBSI), which the Army publicly accuses of complicity in the September 30th Movement, and to remove Labor Minister Sutomo. The memo discusses the Army’s (and the United States’) dilemma in deciding how to deal with the labor minister, who was not fully cooperating with the Army in attacking SOBSI. Though Green considers it “improbable” that SOBSI had any knowledge of – or involvement in – the September 30th Movement, he notes that the Army

considers it a possible “independent political force” and therefore a threat to its plans to consolidate power.



Document 7

US Embassy in Jakarta, Telegram A 298 to Secretary of State, Secret; Memorandum of Conversation: The Situation in Indonesia After the Coup Attempt and Efforts of Indonesian Moderates to Assist the Army to Destroy the PKI.

Oct 23, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 1-POL 23-9 Rebellion Coup 30 September Movement Oct.20-25, 1965

This memorandum recounts a conversation between Second Secretary of the Embassy Robert Rich and Adnan Buyung Nasution, an assistant to the attorney general, and later a critic of Suharto and founder of Indonesia’s first human rights organization. Nasution tells Rich that this is a critical moment for Indonesian moderates, such as members of the PNI and Masjumi, who must “continue to crack down on the Communists in order to break the back of the PKI power...” Nasution said that “the Army had already executed many communists but this fact must be very closely held” and that “the extent of Army repression of the PKI was being carefully kept from Sukarno.” The memo suggests just how widespread support for the Army-led mass killings was even among moderate political forces in Indonesia.



Document 8

Letter from Norman Hannah, CINCPAC to Marshall Green, Secret

Oct 23, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 5 pol 23-9 Sept 30th Mvt Nov 10-19 1965

In this letter, Hannah, the political advisor to the commander-in-chief for the Pacific (CINCPAC) asks U.S. Ambassador Green how CINCPAC and the United States should respond to the “reasonable possibility that the Indonesian Army might request our help against a PKI insurgency.” Such a request, he speculates, “might include anything from covert operations and assistance

on up through the spectrum, including transport, money, communications equipment, or arms." A week later, Green would request that the Johnson administration "explore [the] possibility of short-term one shot aid on covert, non-attributable basis" as a sign of U.S. support, precipitating an expansion of U.S. covert support for the Army which would include money, communications equipment, and arms.



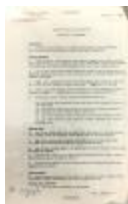
Document 9

Telegram 1290 from American Embassy Jakarta to Department of State, Confidential

Nov 1, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 4 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt November 1-9, 1965

In this telegram from early November 1965, U.S. Ambassador Marshall Green describes conditions in North Sumatra (site of some of the worst massacres after October 1) and the Indonesian Army's efforts to dismantle the PKI-affiliated oil workers union, PERBUM. It notes that "reportedly 600 communists already jailed and arrests continuing," including "all leaders communist oil workers union PERBUM." Green also notes that "Top SOBSI officials at both Shell and Stanvac refineries and at PURSI Fertilizer Plant among those picked up." At the time, both Stanvac and Shell, two of the three largest foreign oil companies operating in Indonesia, were negotiating to complete the transfer of ownership of local refining capacity to the Indonesian government, a plan scuttled later in the year under intense pressure from U.S. officials.



Document 10

Report from the Director of Intelligence, Indonesian Air Force on the situation in East Java (No. 51/ch/Pr/i/65)

Oct 29, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 4 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt November 1-9, 1965

This report, written in Indonesian by the director of intelligence of the Indonesian Air Force, provides a rare glimpse into the Armed Forces' internal reporting of its activities in the wake of the September 30th movement. It describes the activities of the Army's RPKAD (Regimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat, or Army Para-Commando Regiment) in the area around Surakarta, in particular SOLO, which was treated as a war zone by the Army because of the popularity of the PKI in the area. RPKAD troops were previously assigned to the Konfrontasi campaign with the British over the formation of Malaysia, and the report describes the reassignment of these units to help spearhead the attack on the PKI.



Document 11

Telegram 194 from American Consul in Surabaya to Jakarta, Limited Official Use

Nov 4, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This telegram describes Indonesian Army repression of the PKI in various parts of East Java as the mass killings are getting underway. It describes East Java as largely under control.



Document 12

Telegram 1425 from American Embassy Jakarta to Secretary of State, Secret

Nov 12, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 5 pol 23-9 Sept 30th Mvt Nov 10-19 1965

This telegram from U.S. Ambassador Marshall Green summarizes the political and security situation in Sulawesi, Central and East Java, as Army-supported and organized repression of alleged PKI supporters, as well as Chinese-Indonesian residents, continues to expand. According to Green, a Sulawesi Protestant leader reported "90% of Chinese shops in Makassar raided and contents destroyed during November 10 riot which reportedly

involved virtually entire population." The same Protestant leader "also reported extensive anti-PKI violence in Buginese area of Sulawesi. Moslems in Bone reportedly broke into a detention camp and killed 200 PKI prisoners."



Document 13

Telegram 1485 from American Embassy in Jakarta to Secretary of State in Washington, Secret

Nov 18, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 4

This telegram reports that while the embassy had not yet heard of specific attempts by the Army to bring Moslem parties in Jakarta "under the umbrella organization 'Action Committee to crush 30 September Movement,'" it is understood the Army is building a coalition with Moslem and Christian parties and the right wing of the PNI. It is additionally reported that the inter-regional military commander for Sumatra, Mokoginta, has expressed the view that the Army will not tolerate "free political party politics or free trade unionism."



Document 14

Telegram 1516 from American Embassy in Jakarta to Secretary of State, Secret

Nov 20, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 6 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, November 20-30, 1965

This important cable reports on conversations between Western observers and PKI activists in Jakarta and Central Java, including Jogjakarta. According to a "Reliable Australian journalist" recently returned from Central Java, "PKI source who said he was on fringes of top 50 PKI in Jogjakarta who are 'in know' claimed that Jogjakarta PKI had no advance word on September 30 Movement and that there was great confusion in Party ranks on what they were supposed to do." The Australian, fluent in Indonesian, "was first

Western journalist to visit Central Java on October 10” and found local PKI cadres “thoroughly confused and claiming lack of any foreknowledge of Sept. 30 Movement.” The cable suggests U.S. officials were well aware that alleged PKI supporters and members being arrested or killed in an Army-led campaign of repression and mass murder had no role in – or even knowledge of – the September 30th Movement, even as the United States began moving to offer substantial covert support for the campaign.



Document 15

Action Telegram 183 from American Consul Surabaya to Jakarta, Confidential

Nov 26, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 6 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, November 20-30, 1965. (This cable appears in the State Department Central Files as Telegram 41 from Surabaya to State, November 27, 1965, RG 59, Central Files, 1964-1966, POL 23-8, NARA)

This detailed cable from a U.S. consular officer in Surabaya offers some of the most detailed (and bloody) reporting on the Army-led campaign against the PKI. The officer notes that “we continue receive reports PKI being slaughtered many areas East Java. Missionary, who returned from Kediri Nov. 21 heard largest slaughter had taken place at Tulungagung where reportedly 15,000 Communists killed.” The killings in East Java “have coloration of Holy War: killing of Infidel supposed give ticket to heaven and if blood of victim rubbed on face path there even more assured.” Even discounting for exaggerations, the consulate reports that a “widespread slaughter” is taking place.



Document 16

Airgram A-353, Joint Weeka No. 45 from U.S. Embassy Jakarta to State, Secret.

Nov 30, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 10, Folder 12-POL 2-1 Joint Weeks Sept. 1-December 31, 1965

This Joint Weeka, a weekly summary of events, offers one of the first acknowledgements of Suharto's support of, or orders for, mass killings of PKI supporters. The Embassy reports that "In a series of meetings with youth leaders from several parties General Nasution expressed his determination to continue the campaign to repress the PKI, which has reached the stage of mass executions in several Indonesian provinces, apparently at the behest of General Suharto in Central Java at least." "Both in the provinces and in Djakarta, repression of the PKI continued, with the main problem being that of what to feed and where to house the prisoners. Many provinces appear to be successfully meeting this problem by executing their PKI prisoners, or by killing them before they are captured, a task in which Moslem youth groups are providing assistance."



Document 17

Telegram 1025 A from American Embassy Jakarta to Secretary of State, Confidential

Nov 30, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9
September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This extraordinary document describes a meeting between Embassy staff and the Polish First Secretary Andrzej Gradziuk. Gradziuk provides a markedly different account of the September 30th Movement to that which was being promoted by the Army. He proposes the "idea originated outside the PKI" and that it was intended to be an "intra-government operation to seize limited group of top generals." There was no intention, he explains, to kill the generals. Gradziuk additionally notes that the Soviets are disturbed that the Army's targets have extended beyond the PKI itself to "other progressive groups" within Indonesian society. He cannot understand, it is reported, why the PKI "did not act in the face of repression of Army." It is speculated that perhaps the PKI was too used to taking orders from Sukarno to know how to act independently once the original plan went off course. The author of the report suggests it is possible that this account from the Polish Embassy (that the September 30th Movement was indeed planned as an internal army affair) may be "doctored," however the author appears to be unsure whether there might be some merit to the account, suggesting not all Embassy staff fully believed the Army's official propaganda version of events (or knew that it was indeed fake).



Document 18

Telegram 184A From American Consulate in Medan to the American Embassy in Jakarta, Confidential

Dec 6, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This report reports that the Islamist group Muhammadiyah in Medan is issuing instructions that it is a religious obligation to kill "PKI." These instructions (that PKI members are the lowest level of infidel "the shedding of whose blood is comparable to killing chicken[s]") are being disseminated at mosques. These instructions, it is reported, are being interpreted as a "wide license for killing." The Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is said to hold a similar position.



Document 19

Telegram 183 A From American Consulate in Medan to American Embassy in Jakarta, Confidential

Dec 6, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This report explains the military is "strengthening its grip on all aspects of political life" on Sumatra. It reports that the islands' governors and district governments are now under military control. The military is also establishing a "Moslem umbrella organization to embrace and control all Moslem organisations." It is noted the military wishes for political parties to remain suppressed, as it prefers to govern through the functional groups established under Guided Democracy. Indeed, the military is taking this process further. The National Front, the report explains, will now become an "army instrument for controlling parties and mass organisations." The press is under Army control. The Army is also continuing to arm Hansip units in order to "extend direct military chain of command into every village on Sumatra." There is no viable opposition to this on the ground due to the emasculation of political parties. The report remarks that regardless of

development on Java, it is likely the military will continue to maintain its iron grip over Sumatra.



Document 20

Airgram A-373, Joint Weeka No. 46 from U.S. Embassy Jakarta to State, Secret.

Dec 7, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 10, Folder 12-POL 2-1 Joint Weeks Sept. 1-December 31, 1965

This Joint Weeka reports on the ongoing campaign against the PKI, noting the arrest of up to 34,000 alleged PKI members in Java alone and the arrest or extrajudicial execution of leading PKI politburo members. The report notes that “liquid assets of Chinese-origin residents of Indonesia were confiscated in several provinces” and that “regional military commanders would take over all rice mills and textile enterprises owned by members of the Chinese Community Association Baperki,” an act of opportunism undertaken in the guise of associating local Chinese with the September 30th Movement.



Document 21

Telegram 187 from American Consulate Surabaya to American Embassy Jakarta, 'Joint sitrep 19', Confidential

Dec 10, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This telegram details military “cleanup” operations in East Java. It reports that the “PKI mass following” in Kediti has been “decimated” and that, as a result, the Army is now “seeking [to] put stop to killing.” The report describes the killings as having been led by “Moslems.” The cleanup operation in Surabaya is reported to be taking longer due to the large number of PKI sympathizers in the area. East Java’s deputy PKI governor Satryo is reported to be “staying quietly at home” while purges occur.



Document 22

Telegram A-386 From American Embassy Jakarta to Secretary of State, 'The PKI Hunt in Central Java', Confidential.

Dec 10, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This report provides an overview of Army operations in Central Java. It explains the RPKAD brought together the Catholic party, IP-KI, and NU to "root out" PKI elements. The NU is said to provide the "bulk of support" to this operation. It is reported that the Army has had some difficulties controlling NU's youth arm Ansor, which is said to have been violently attacking not only "PKI elements" but also "non-PKI victims" who are said to have been involved in "personal feuds with Ansor members." The Chinese community, it is reported, is also being attacked. A list of "200 Baperki members" has been given to the Army. This list is said to be a "Who's Who" of the Kudus's business community. The Army is reported to have announced that these listed individuals will be interrogated and jailed indefinitely if found to be Baperki activists. Many have "disappeared." Kudus is said to now be "free of PKI elements."



Document 23

US Department of State, Airgram A-398 to U.S. Embassy Jakarta, Secret Dec 17, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 12, Folder 9 PKI 1965

This extraordinary document, compiled by Embassy First Secretary Mary Vance Trent, reports on the fate of PKI leaders at the height of the mass killings, suggesting an intimate knowledge of Army operations to arrest or kill ranking PKI members. The report also notes the "widespread falsification of many documents such as alleged confessions," citing the case of PKI Politburo member Njono, who had been arrested by the Army and was being held prisoner in Jakarta.



Document 24

Airgram A-408, Joint Weeka No. 48 from U.S. Embassy Jakarta to State, Secret.

Dec 21, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 10, Folder 12-POL 2-1 Joint Weeks Sept. 1-December 31, 1965

In this Joint Weeka, compiled by Embassy First Secretary Mary Louise Trent, the Embassy notes the “striking Army success” of its efforts to accumulate power under the auspices of its recently formed Supreme Operations Command, or KOTI, greatly limiting Sukarno’s power and asserting itself over him. The report goes on to note that at least 100,000 people have been killed in the Army-organized campaign against alleged PKI supporters, including at least 10,000 in Bali. According to most scholars, the killings in Bali began in early December when the Army Para-commando Regiment and Brawijaya units under the command of Sarwo Edhie Wibowo arrived. The killings would continue for several more months, resulting in an estimated 80,000 dead.



Document 25

Telegram 203 from American Consul in Surabaya to Jakarta, Confidential

Dec 22, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This telegram reports that while “indiscriminate killings” are alleged to have ceased in East Java, the “army is quietly releasing nightly 10 to 15 prisoners to Moslems for execution.” Similar reports are said to have been heard from other sources. This technique, it is reported, is apparently being used so that the Army can claim it has the situation under control while “allowing” Moslems to “carry out their determination to wipe out the PKI.” This statement is disingenuous – Moslem groups are clearly helping the military to implement its own policy while allowing the military to deflect its responsibility for the violence. The report also documents the burning of

Chinese stores on Bali. This violence has not been confined to only “Red Chinese,” though there are official attempts to protect pro-Kuomintang Chinese. “Bali Chinese communists” are reportedly seeking evacuation to mainland China.



Document 26

Telegram from 212 American Consul in Surabaya to Jakarta, 'Joint Sitrep 22', Confidential

Dec 28, 1965

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 14, Folder 7 pol 23-9 September 30th Mvt, dec 1-31, 1965

This telegram reports that “[k]illings of PKI suspects continue” in East Java but “on lesser scale and in more discreet manner.” It describes the process by which victims are killed – victims, it is reported, are now being “taken out of populous areas before being killed” and their bodies are being “buried rather than thrown into river.” It is reported that the NU is helping to lead this “campaign to exterminate the PKI” in East Java. In Madiun, PKI prisoners are now being “delivered to civilians for slaughter.” The East Java Police Chief Sumarsono is reported as saying “it is very difficult to stop killings.” This comment should be taken in context. Some PKI leaders are alleged to still be hiding in Surabaya. Due to the effects of inflation, rice is “virtually unobtainable.”



Document 27

Telegram A-503 from American Embassy Jakarta to the Secretary of State in Washington, Secret

Feb 7, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 23, Folder 4 POL INDO 1966

Written one month before the formal transfer of power from Sukarno to Suharto, this report notes the “palace games” Sukarno and his top leadership are engaged in. Mass mobilization as a way to depose Sukarno is discouraged due to the alleged “apathy of the Indonesian masses” which, it

is noted, have “demonstrated their unwillingness to move without some Army guns behind them.” Exactly how the transfer of power will occur appears to remain unknown. There is concern that Army leaders are also being drawn into the intrigues of the palace and may no longer push for Sukarno’s removal. The report provides a detailed overview of the balance of forces in Indonesia at the time.



Document 28

Telegram 222 from American Consul General Hong Kong to American Embassy Jakarta, Limited Official Use

Apr 27, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 27, Folder 14 Pol 23-9 rebellions and coups 1966

This report confirms that information circulating during the aftermath of October 1, 1965, that Mao and the Peoples Republic of China had been involved in the actions of the September 30th Movement was a “hoax.” The author explains an article appearing in the military-sponsored newspaper Angkatan Bersendjata on April 26, 1966, was an “almost word for word reproduction” of an article that had appeared in a Hong Kong based Chinese-language fortnightly on December 16, 1965. The original article, the author notes, had been “expressly written to ridicule the Peking regime.” Both articles portray Mao as having helped PKI Chairman Aidit plan the September 30th Movement’s coup attempt, including its timing. Mao is also noted as having urged Aidit to “be resolute in removing the generals.” Both articles furthermore suggest Mao indicated that the killing of “cadres and soldiers” may be necessary – as he himself had “killed more than 20,000 cadres and soldiers” during his own rise to power. This misinformation not only supported the military’s claim that Mao had helped the Aidit plan the September 30th Movement’s “abortive coup,” but that the PKI was planning to carry out mass killings of its opponents, thus justifying the military’s own killing campaign.



Document 29

Enclosure 1: A-666, Djakarta',

Apr 27, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 27, Folder 14 Pol 23-9 rebellions and coups 1966 'The History of the Gestapu Abortive Coup, Engineered in Peking'

This report reproduces an article published in the military-sponsored newspaper Angkatan Bersenjata on April 25-26, 1966. Through this article, Mao is depicted as having ordered Aidit to carry out the September 30th Movement during the evening of September 30, "in order that the national day of the would-be Indonesia People's Republic of the Chinese would fall on October 1, the national day of the CPR." It is here suggested that Indonesia would have become subordinate to China had the September 30th Movement been successful. Aidit, meanwhile, is depicted as having been hesitant to carry out the action. He is alleged to have telegraphed Mao requesting the action be delayed due to the unpreparedness of the plotters. Mao is said to have explained his refusal to allow such a delay as a means of making sure Aidit would follow through with the plot. In addition to depicting Aidit in a subordinate position to Mao, this account may have been intended to explain the ultimate disorganization and failure of the Movement.

The article additionally proposes that Mao had ordered the killing of the generals. Mao is said to have encouraged Aidit to kill "all reactionary senior officers such as Nasution, Yani and Suharto in one stroke" such that the Armed Forces would become "like a dragon without a head" that would then "yield" to Aidit. In addition to proposing that both Mao and Aidit had planned the killings – and had intended to kill more had they not been stopped by the Army – this account acts to explain that Suharto had been an original target of the September 30th Movement. That Suharto had not been targeted by the Movement and had instead acted so quickly to establish his own control over the armed forces has long been viewed as evidence that Suharto may have been complicit in the actions of the Movement. The article additionally proposes that Mao had ordered the killing of the generals. Mao is said to have encouraged Aidit to kill "all reactionary senior officers such as Nasution, Yani and Suharto in one stroke" such that the Armed Forces would become "like a dragon without a head" that would then "yield" to Aidit. In addition to proposing that both Mao and Aidit had planned the killings—and had intended to kill more had they not been stopped by the Army—this account acts to explain that Suharto had been an original target of the 30 September Movement. That Suharto had not been targeted by the Movement and had instead acted so quickly to establish his own control over the armed forces has long been viewed as evidence that Suharto may have been complicit in the actions of the Movement.



Document 30

Telegram A-673 from American Embassy to Department of State, Confidential. 'Example of Anti-Chinese Propaganda'

Mar 4, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 27, Folder 14 Pol 23-9 rebellions and coups 1966

This report introduces an enclosed copy of a newspaper article used to spread the military's propaganda line that the PKI and China had been behind the September 30th Movement. The author, Ambassador Green, acknowledges that the allegations have been manufactured to serve "the propaganda needs of the moment." The military, Green explains, wanted to deflect blame away from Sukarno while fostering the notion that "the whole pro-Communist movement ... should be considered guilty 'in principle'." Green states clearly that "we do not think the Chinese were a primary factor in the September 30 Movement."



Document 31

Airgram from American Embassy in Jakarta to Department of State, 'Public Finance: Foreign Exchange Fragmentation', Secret

Jun 22, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 4

This long report, drafted by the Embassy but never sent to the Department of State, details foreign exchange fragmentation within Indonesia. The report notes that certain officials and Army officers "continue to operate sectors of the economy as personal fiefdoms." The Embassy notes that it is difficult to confirm these accounts without access to Central Bank records and hopes the IMF would attempt to address the problem. After October 1965, U.S. officials observed (and approved of) Indonesian military officials allied to General Suharto approaching foreign firms and requesting that they deposit royalties and rents into Army-controlled bank accounts as a means of depriving the Sukarno regime of foreign exchange and

accelerating Indonesia's collapse, in order to legitimize their assumption of power.



Document 32

Telegram A-808 from American Embassy to Department of State, 'Army Military Police Corps Assuming Role as Thought Police?', Confidential Jun 29, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 23, Folder 12 - DEF6 Armed forces 1966

This report outlines a new process for formalizing the purging of Indonesia's civil service. Civil servants are "tested" and given a series of questions that they must complete, including reporting any political affiliation they might have, any "mistakes" they might have made prior to 30 September 1965, and how they proved their loyalty to anti-September 30th Movement forces. It is observed that while this process is incredibly thorough, such a testing might be difficult to administer outside of Jakarta. The test, it is noted, is being administered by the Army Military Police Corps, who see their role as to "safeguard the ideology of the state." Their role, it is explained, is to become a form of "thought police" – a role that under Sukarno was increasingly being played by the Tjakrabirawa regiment.



Document 33

Telegram A-65 from American Embassy to Department of State, 'Conditions and Attitudes in East Nusatenggara', Confidential Aug 3, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 27, Folder 14 Pol 23-9 rebellions and coups 1966

This report recounts the observations of an American anthropologist, Mr. James Fox, and his wife who had contacted the Embassy to describe local events in Roti, where they lived, during the time of the killings. Mr. Fox reports that in January or February 1966 an Army detachment had arrived in Roti and executed the local PKI leader and a party cadre from Jakarta named Sukirno. The Army then returned in mid-March and executed "between 40

and 50 local Roti communists plus another 30 communists” from the neighboring island of Sawu. From his discussions with locals, Mr. Fox believed between 800-1,000 alleged communists were executed by the Army in East Nusatenggara.



Document 34

Telegram A-218 American Embassy Jakarta to Department of State, 'The Army Takes Hold in Central Java', Secret

Nov 5, 1966

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 23, Folder 12 - DEF6
Armed forces 1966

This report records a trip Embassy officials took with a New York Times reporter to Central Java. This was an example of “imbedded” journalism as Army representatives also accompanied them. The idea was for the Army to show the visitors several examples of “model” Indonesian villages that had been brought under military control. The author notes that the Army has imposed an “ironclad grip” on the province. Details are given about the use of roadblocks, ID cards, a ban on meetings of five people or more and house-to-house searches as a means to bring the area under control. The military’s activities, it is noted, have extended from the “affairs of basic security” to an attempt to “re-direct political life.” The military is also running a socialization program to disseminate the military’s political program as formulated at the Bandung Army Seminar. Civilians who attend these meetings are asked questions about the “new order” [a term that remained new]. The author notes that political parties have been suppressed and that a large political prisoner population has been created. The military is described as the “new political arbiter, economic innovator and local educator.”



Document 35

Telegram 1626 from American Embassy in Jakarta to Secretary of State in Washington, Secret

Jan 20, 1967

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 5

This telegram records a discussion between Embassy staff and Major General Sjarif Thajeb. Sjarif notes that although Suharto is taking longer to oust Sukarno than is desired by him and other “hawks,” that he will soon act to formalize the transition. Sukarno was expected to give an address to the MPRS in the next few days, through which he would attempt to play down alleged PKI complicity in the actions of the September 30th Movement. Sjarif suggests Sukarno planned to place greater blame of “Nekolim” (meaning the CIA) and “its local Army friends,” and thus, by extension Nasution. This, Sjarif suggests, would help harden military opinion against Sukarno. Sjarif planned to use this momentum to move against Sukarno and predicted further bloodshed if Sukarno resisted.



Document 36

Telegram 2997 from American Embassy in Jakarta to Secretary of State in Washington, Confidential

Jun 20, 1967

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 5

This telegram records a discussion between Embassy staff and Foreign Minister Adam Malik regarding the appointment of “ex-Sukarno henchman-propagandists” and PNI member Ruslan Abdulgani as Indonesia’s permanent delegate to the United Nations. Malik expresses unhappiness in the appointment, suggesting Suharto was being too friendly to someone so closely associated with the “Old Regime.” Malik believes Suharto was coming to see the PNI as the only political party large enough to act as a “counterpoise” to “Moslem groups” which he was increasingly coming to view as his greatest domestic threat. It is noted elections are not anticipated before 1970.



Document 37

Airgram A-12 from American Embassy in Jakarta to Department of State, Basic Problems in our Dealings with Indonesia, Secret.

Jul 21, 1967

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 38 (Dummy Box), Folder 5

This eleven-page report sets out the Embassy's opinion of the Indonesian regime. Steeped in the language of contemporary development and modernization theory, it draws on cultural tropes of "the Javanese" to propose deep cultural differences to divide Indonesian and American attitudes. The aim of the U.S. government, the report suggests, should be to "identify and support 'modernizing' elements within the national leadership" while avoiding cultural misunderstandings. It proposes different suggestions for productively dealing with Indonesian officials. It explains that the U.S. has a "heavy stake in the outcome" of the present government's success.



Document 38

Telegram A-521 from the American Embassy in Jakarta to the Department of State, Limited Official Use.

May 10, 1967

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 31, Folder 10 TP 15 trade and investment opportunities 1967 (m-z)

This document and the next concern the Suharto regime's efforts to induce Western firms back to Indonesia through the drafting of a new foreign investment law, as well as the signing of concession agreements with oil, mining, and timber companies. The first records the activities of the Greater San Francisco Chamber of Commerce Pacific Trade Mission that arrived in Jakarta on April 18, 1967, for a week-long stay. It offers an unusually detailed and candid view of the thinking and strategy of U.S. businessmen and Indonesian officials as the latter sought to lure Western investors back to Jakarta.



Document 39

Elliott Haynes' Indonesian Diary', Unclassified

Dec 1, 1967

Source: RG 84, Entry P 339, Jakarta Embassy Files, Box 31, Folder 10 TP 15 trade and investment opportunities 1967 (m-z)

This remarkable document offers the observations of Business International Corporation (BIC) Chairman Elliot Haynes from more than 40 meetings with key Indonesian figures and international executives from Europe, the U.S. and Japan, held to discuss a forthcoming roundtable on investment in Indonesia. Haynes also candidly discusses his opinions about various politicians and the functioning of the new regime under Suharto. Topics of discussion included fears about corruption and “creeping militarism.” After a meeting with Marshall Green, Haynes concludes that military influence in government has increased markedly, noting that the “army has taken over provincial government down to a very low level, a grass-roots political control that could lead to Army control on a vast, long-lasting scale” (p.5) and that the country “simply isn’t ready for elections.” He records that there is interest by multinational corporations, including Uniroyal and Goodyear, to set up operations in Indonesia. Companies like Alcoa are reported to be seeking lower income tax. Most Indonesian figures he spoke to were very keen to restructure the Indonesian economy to facilitate foreign investment.

IN THE NEWS

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Declassified files outline US support for 1965 Indonesia massacre, Financial Times, October 18, 2017

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Files show new details of US support for Indonesia bloodbath, AP, October 17, 2017

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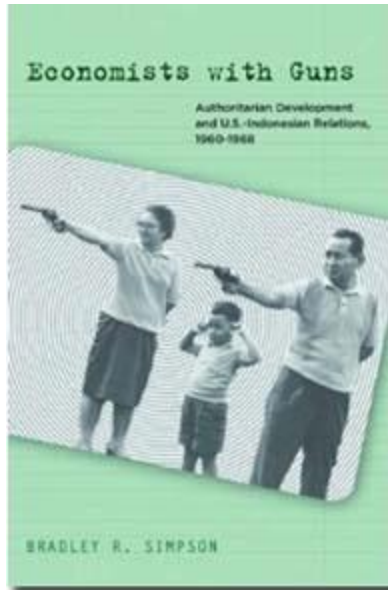
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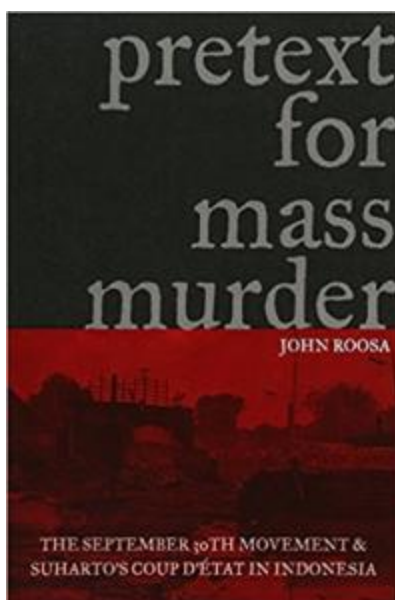
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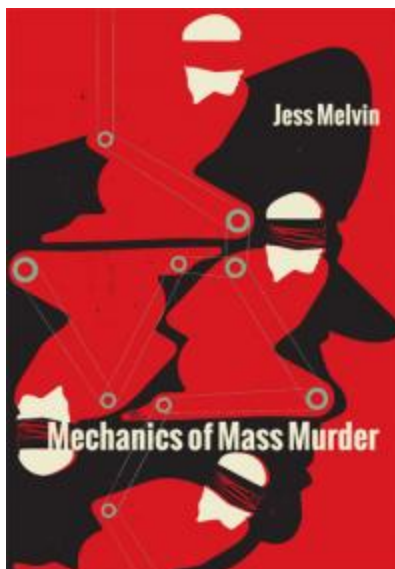
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The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000

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