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**Introduction.**

Former Soviet leader Nikita Sergeevitch Khrushchev writes in his Memoirs:

“We knew little about Indonesia and didn’t pay any particular attention to it. In many years of dealing with Stalin I don’t recall a single conversation about, or even a mention of, Indonesia. He didn’t show any interest in Indonesia, and I can’t say that Stalin had any concrete knowledge of the country. Within the Soviet leadership, nothing was ever spoken about the Indonesian people.”

Nevertheless after some of the Soviet archives, among them The Archive of Joseph Stalin were opened and original documents became available to the researchers we should completely refute this Khrushchev statement. The archival documents clearly testify to the fact that although Indonesia was not in the focus of the Soviet foreign policy after World War II, Stalin personally and through the state organs was paying sufficient attention to this Asian country.

The present book is a result of the study of newly available documents from several recently opened Soviet archives. As the well-known American historian, the famous specialist on Indonesian Communism put it: “Historians of political events can dream of that suddenly opened archive, that body of correspondence found mouldering in an attic, those diaries that cast a whole new (and preferably scandalous) light on what really happened. Very occasionally, such fantasies come true. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union provided a unique opportunity for scholars who were determined, knowledgeable, and sufficiently well-connected to open some of the archival boxes that no one had imagined would ever be made public.”

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1 Khrushchev N.S. The Memoirs. Journal “Questions of History” Moscow, 1994 № 10, c.87

The present work is based on materials and documents from a number of Russian archives.

The most important and interesting is a special Fond of Joseph Stalin, which is a part of the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History. These previously unexamined materials from the archives of the former Soviet leader include telegrams sent by Stalin under the pseudonym “Filippov” to the Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, or PKI) leadership via Chinese Communist Party intermediaries in Beijing in the early 1950s as well as a personal Stalin’s letter to D.N. Aidit two weeks before Stalin died. Extraordinary interesting and important are Stalin’ comments to the draft programs of the Indonesian Communist Party during its revival after Madiun revolt and Party’s collapse.

Very illuminating are the hitherto highly secret the Southeast Asia files of the Foreign Relations Department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party (All-Union Communist Party [Bolshevik], or AUCP[B] and later the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for the period encompassing the Indonesian war of independence and the first years following it. These documents and materials are kept at the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI, Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvenniy Arkhiv Sozialno-Politicheskoy Istorii).

The archival documents concerning Indonesia, available to the researcher, can be divided into four groups.

The first group includes documents and materials of internal correspondence of the Foreign Relations Department. Mostly these are notes of officials of Southeast Asian sector directed to higher party bureaucrats in the same department. This group of documents permits us to follow the process leading to the determination and formulation of the AUCP(B) CC position concerning the situation in Indonesia and its communist movement.

The second group comprises information materials, including some of the documents prepared by PKI leader Musso, as well as his letters to the AUCP(B) CC, written in the last period of his stay in Moscow and during his long
return journey from the USSR to Indonesia. This group of archival documents gives a clear idea about Musso’s views on the main problems and tasks of the Indonesian communist movement, as well as his attitude to the positions Soviet, Chinese, and Dutch communists had adopted regarding the Indonesian question.

The third group consists of documents connected with the Communist Party of the Netherlands (Communistische Partij Nederland, CPN). These are information materials prepared by the Foreign Relations Department of AUCP(B) CC, letters of the CPN leader Paul de Groot to Indonesian communists and to the AUCP(B) CC, and de Groot’s report of his meeting and conversation with AUCP(B) CC Secretary A. A. Suslov, who was in charge of the AUCP(B) foreign affairs. The last portion of the archival documents in this group permits us to comprehend more accurately many points connected with interrelations among the three communist parties—the PKI, CPN, and AUCP(B).

A researcher can also draw on directives to Soviet delegations dealing with Indonesia and classified correspondence from Soviet representatives traveling in Indonesia.

One more corpus of archival documents is represented by materials from Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union (Arhiv Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federazii- AVP RF) They concern mostly issues connected with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the newly emerged independent Republic of Indonesia and the USSR as well as outlines of Soviet policy towards this country.

All the documents cited in the present work were put into scholarly circulation for the first time through the publication of my book, Stalin i Indonyeziya: Politika SSSR v otnoshenii Indonyezii v 1945–1953 godakh: Nyeizvyestniye Stranitsiy. It should be stressed that the archival documents available to the researcher are rather unconnected and divided from each other chronologically. They do not give a complete and integral picture of the processes and events that were actually taking place at the time.
“Archives have their own way of representing the world, of course. They are almost always official (whatever the officialdom is); even if their material is not restricted to official reports, it has been included according to criteria thought valid for official purposes. This, of course, gives them a certain authority, but also a definite bias and a kind of tunnel vision. In recompense, they have the immense advantage that they are of their time. Memories fade and memoirs rewrite the past, but unless archives have been drastically purged, they provide us with, at least, a view of events as they were seen by one contemporary actor, or many official actors. And, given that it was never envisioned that such records as those of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union would ever be open to the general public, we may perhaps be more confident with this collection that they were kept reasonably intact. Questions of interpretation aside, these documents confront us with unexpected information and odd lacunae. How, at this stage, can we deal with the questions they raise? Perhaps the best hope is that more archival material will become available and perused.”

Prior to 1990s descriptions of the USSR policy towards Indonesia both in Soviet and Western historical literature tended to be either one-sided or speculative and sometimes very brief. Now after archives have been opened we can base our research work on authentic documents, including classified ones. Time has come to find out the truth, to discover details and nuances of well-known facts and events.

The establishment and the development of relations between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Indonesia, which proclaimed its independence on 17 August 1945, were taking place in the context of the emergence of a new system of international relations in the post-war period. The main feature of the emerging international system became the Cold War, characterized by the deepening confrontation between the USSR and Western powers. Because of that Western

scholars, as a rule, described the Soviet-Indonesian relations and the USSR policy toward Indonesia in the Cold War perspective.

Many of the scholars are of opinion, that the Soviet foreign policy, including its Asian aspect, was rooted, as Schlesinger A. M., Jr., put it, in “messianic Leninist ideology and totalitarian, Stalinist paranoia”\(^4\). The complexities of the Cold War origins and history are overlooked for a heavy emphasis on Soviet intransigence, Stalin’s brutalities, Communist ideology, and an obstructionist international Communist conspiracy\(^5\). Among specialists on Indonesia a similar approach to the Soviet policy toward Indonesia is manifested by A. Brackman, A. Vandenbosch and A. Butwell, V. Thompson and R. Adloff.\(^6\)

Other scholars maintain more moderate and objective views. As a well-known specialist in the Cold War history T.G. Paterson wrote, “Americans have made the Communist adversary into something it has never been, claiming for it a strength that it has never possessed, finding it menacingly at work where it has never existed, blaming it for troubles it has never started, depicting it as a monolith it has never resembled, and attributing to it accomplishments it has never achieved.”\(^7\) Among Indonesianists of this approach the best works are written by G. McT. Kahin and Ruth McVey.\(^8\)

Nevertheless the main weakness of both groups of scholars was that they argued without the benefit of adequate and convincing evidence. Either of their depictions may be correct, but no one could be sure. The necessarily limited evidence that they have produced to buttress their interpretations must be gleaned

\(^7\) Paterson T.G. “Meeting the Communist Threat. Truman to Reagan”, Oxford, 1988, p. IX.
from articles in the Soviet press, a few public addresses, ideological tracts, summaries of the proceedings of international conferences and the like.

Now when some Soviet archives have been opened and many (but not all!) documents of the Soviet government, particularly of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as of the Central Committee of the Communist Party have become accessible to researchers, we can verify some depictions of Western scholars and try to find out the truth. This is another purpose of the present work.

One more purpose of the book is to show the process of drawing Indonesia into the Cold War. When scholars study the Cold War in Asia they usually write about China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam. But Indonesia is a good example of the Cold War development in Asia, especially in the “third world”, because it became an arena for the struggle for supremacy between the USSR and Western powers in a new decolorized state whose allegiance both the Americans and the Russians avidly sought almost from the first days of the country’s independence. And still one more purpose of the work is to start research in a quite new but very important aspect of the Cold War history that is the problem of how Asian leaders both nationalists and Communists tried to use the confrontation between the major powers to their own benefits.

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Chapter One.


The question of Soviet post-war aims in Asia remains critical to understanding the origins of the Cold War in that part of the world. Whether they were ooted primarily in an expansionist Soviet agenda shaped during the War or resulted from a more complex interaction of various countries’ conflicting interests after the War has long been a subject of historical debate. The answer to the question is of significant importance for understanding also the origins of the Soviet policy toward Indonesia.

Main Soviet ideas on the post-war world order can be found in a number of recently published declassified documents from the Archives of the President of the Russian Federation. On 28 January 1942 the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) (CC AUCP(B)) adopted the resolution No. P 36/87 about the creation of a commission for post-war projects on state systems of countries in Europe, Asia and other parts of the world. The commission was to accumulate and systemize all more or less important information concerning the post-war world order, including projects on rearrangement of colonies, mandates and spheres of influence. The People’s Commissar (Minister) of Foreign Affairs Molotov V.M. was nominated the head of the commission, his deputies and other prominent diplomats, as well as a well-known scholar Warga E.S – an economist and a specialist in international relations – became its members.

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11 “Istochnik” No.4 1995, p.116-117.
The work in the commission was distributed among the members on the territorial basis: each member was to study the whole bulk of information and work out recommendations concerning a certain group of countries. The Pacific area and the East Asia were in the departments of two prominent Soviet diplomats – Losovskiy S.A. and Umanskiy K.A. What kind of reports and projects were prepared in the departments is still beyond the reach of scholars.

On 4 September 1943 the Politbureau of CC AUCP(b) adopted the resolution No. 41/223 about the creation in the framework of the Narkomat (the Ministry) of Foreign Affairs of a commission on questions of peace agreements and a post-war world order headed by a prominent diplomat Litvinov M.M and consisting of the Narkomat officials and well-known scholars.\(^{12}\)

Towards November 1943, when the Teheran conference took place, the Soviet program of a post-war order took the form of a distinct system of concrete proposals. The proposals were at first formulated in a Note dated 9 September 1943 prepared by Litvinov and addressed to Stalin and Molotov. The Note listed the questions which the commission headed by Litvinov planned to discuss and contained the request to approve the list.\(^{13}\)

The colonial question was included in the section 26 (the total number of sections was 34). The section 26 consisted of seven points. The first point concerned the colonial question in general, the other points concerned individual colonies: No. 2 – the colonies of Britain, No. 3 – the colonies of France, No.4 – the colonies of Italy, No. 5 – the colonies of Belgium, No. 6 – the Netherlands India, No. 7 – the colonies of Spain and Portugal.\(^{14}\) The Note contained necessary comments to some sections. To the section 26 the comment pointed out that the section was to deal only with the colonies, which were not occupied by Japan.\(^{15}\)

\(^{12}\) Ibid. p.118.

\(^{13}\) Ibid. p. 119.

\(^{14}\) Ibid. p. 123

\(^{15}\) Ibid. p. 120.
The reason for this was the fact that the USSR was not in the state of war with Japan at the time and was not going to change it.

The absence of attention on the part of the Soviet leadership at the moment towards occupied by Japan colonies, including Indonesia, was explained in a note of another prominent Soviet diplomat Mayskiy I.M. His note was titled “On the desired bases of the future world”, dated 11 January 1944 and addressed to Narkom of Foreign Affairs Molotov. The influential diplomat described his ideas, which could be useful for the working out of the final Soviet position concerning the post-war world order.16

Mayskiy’s note has 24 sections, the section 17 was devoted to Japan. The Soviet diplomat was of opinion, that the USSR had no interest in the war against Japan, but is interested in Japan’s defeat and was ready to shift “the honour” of it to the Americans and the British. He stressed the necessity of acquiring by the USSR the South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, but not a word was said in the note about the occupied by Japan colonies.17 The section 18 of Mayskiy’s note was devoted specially to the colonial question. He writes bluntly that “the USSR is not directly interested in the problem of colonies”. But he thought that the USSR would have to deal with the problem in the process of the post-war settlement. He takes as one of the examples the Netherlands India, “the post-war future of which looks rather vague” and points out in the brackets, that “the Americans have some intentions about it”.18

Mayskiy also mentioned the Netherlands India in connection with his information about an American idea on the creation of an international pool consisting of the USA, Britain, the USSR, the Netherlands and some other powers with the aim to use natural resources of the Netherlands India and Malaya. Further Mayskiy wrote: “The colonial problem will undoubtedly become one of the most

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16 “Istochnik” No. 4 1995 p. 124-144.
17 Ibid. p. 133-134.
18 Ibid. p. 136.
important problems of the post-war settlement. We worked on it up to now very little. It is necessary to prepare ourselves for this perspective very urgently."  

The Soviet position in the colonial question was also outlined by Litvinov in the report of his commission “On the Relationship with the USA”, prepared on 10 January 1945 on the eve of the Yalta conference. Litvinov wrote that one of the first post-war aims of the USA would be “opening the doors of the British Empire” in terms of trade, markets, investments. The colonial problem might present “a possible basis of cooperation” between the USSR and the USA, and the USSR “may even support these (anticolonial) aspirations of the Americans”.  

The significance of these documents is that they were written by the prominent Soviet diplomats with the clear purpose of impressing Molotov and Stalin on the important issues on the Soviet foreign policy agenda. So they can be viewed as providing a glimpse into the Soviet foreign policy elite’s inner thinking, its vision of the USSR interests in Asia.

The consequence of the small interest of the Soviet leadership at the closing stage of the Second World War in the colonial question and the occupied by Japan colonies, including Indonesia (the Netherlands India), was the actual division of the spheres of influence at the Yalta conference. The Pacific area and Japan were recognized as the American sphere of influence, the South and Southeast Asia as the British sphere of influence, the North-East Asia – as the Soviet sphere of influence.

The USSR and the USA did not lay claims on the Southeast Asia at the moment. Both powers sympathized to the national-liberation movements in the region, but did not support them openly.

At the end of the War Stalin paid little attention to the colonial zone of the Southeast Asia. He considered it to have little perspective for the USSR both economically and strategically. The above mentioned documents testify to this

19 Ibid.

approach to the region on the part of Stalin and other members of the Soviet leadership.

So the documents proved that R. McVey was quite right in her statement that “the USSR did not step forward at the end of the war with a clear-cut Asian policy”.21

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Chapter Two

First signs of the Soviet attention toward Indonesia.

“We in the West, nervously observing current Soviet overtures to uncommitted Asia, tend sometimes to forget that the Communist path in the East has not always been a straight and purposeful one and that it has been marked by inconsistencies at least as great as those manifested by American policy in that part of the world.”\(^{22}\) So wrote Ruth McVey and the newly opened archival documents confirm that she was quite correct.

In the post-war period Soviet-Indonesian relations were complicated and contradictory. In the Soviet leadership there was no clear-cut strategic line concerning policy toward this part of the world. The USSR acted under the impact of mostly outside impulses and the documents suggest a good deal of improvisation and indecision on the part of the Soviet leaders.

Two main tendencies influenced the Soviet attitude towards Indonesia. The first one was the beginning of the Cold War and the second one – the proclamation of Indonesian independence on 17 August 1945.

The USSR’s position of principle was non-recognition of the Netherlands’ claims to restore its domination in Indonesia, so the Soviet Union was ready to support the struggle of the newly born Republic against Dutch colonialism. Under the condition of the beginning of the Cold War the Soviet Union was also interested in diminishing Western influence in Asia and Africa. But the Soviet leadership was insufficiently informed about the situation in Indonesia, so it tried to be very careful in its relations with the new Republic.

On 25 October 1945 there was published in Jakarta a statement of the RI government concerning its relations with the outer world. The document stressed

the Republic’s readiness to enter into negotiations with every country on the basis of the recognition of the independent Indonesia.\textsuperscript{23} The Indonesian government called on the USSR and other great powers to pay attention to the struggle, which took place in the country. Until now we could not find in the opened archives any documents testifying to the Soviet reaction to these calls of the Indonesian government.

As was noted by Ruth McVey, in the Soviet Communist party newspaper *Pravda* till the end of October 1945 Indonesia was referred to as the Netherlands India.\textsuperscript{24}

On 10 November 1945 Soekarno sent a greeting telegram to “the President of the USSR” on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary. Judging from the Foreign Ministry of the RF Archives, this message by Soekarno was left without answer.\textsuperscript{25} Only beginning of 8 December 1945 can we speak about indirect recognition of the Indonesian Republic by the Soviet government.\textsuperscript{26}

In December 1945 Indonesian association of political exiles in a telegram addressed to Molotov insisted on the recognition of Sjarir’s government. But neither in the Archive of the Foreign Policy nor in any other archives have we found any evidence about Molotov’s reaction to the telegram. Nevertheless, as documents of the Soviet Foreign Ministry stressed, the Indonesian authorities did not make direct statements on the question of Soviet-Indonesian relations or Soviet recognition of the Republic.\textsuperscript{27}

All these evidences testify to the fact, that the USSR in the first post-war months did not manifest either “Red Fascism” or “Soviet aggression” at least in this part of the world despite the appeals both of the nationalist and leftist leaders of the

\textsuperscript{23} “Himpunan Undang2, Peraturan2, Penetapan2 Pemerintah Republik Indonesia. 1945”, Djakarta, 1951, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{24} McVey R. Op. cit. p. 3.

\textsuperscript{25} AVP RF f. 091 op. 2 d. 3 p. 1 l. 7.

\textsuperscript{26} McVey R. Op. cit. p. 3.

\textsuperscript{27} AVP RF f. 091 op. 2 d. 3 p. 1 l. 7.
Indonesian Republic trying to attract attention of the Soviet rulers to Indonesia in order to strengthen the position of the newly born Republic on the international arena.

**Drawing Indonesia into the Cold War.**

The rise of national-liberation struggle in Asia after the Second World War made the colonial question one of the most important problems in world politics. The Soviet leadership more and more used the colonial problem as an effective instrument in the Cold War not only in Asia but on the international arena as a whole.

From the late 1945 the Soviet scientific and political press began to express more and more sympathy towards the Indonesian national-liberation movement. The Soviet mass media condemned the imperialist policy of Britain and the Netherlands in the Southeast Asia. The USSR was striving to undermine the position of its rivals in the Cold War first of all of Britain not only in the Southeast Asia, but also mostly on the international arena in general. The problems arisen as a result of the British and Dutch war against the Indonesian Republic was very handy in the diplomatic maneuvers in the post-war settlement in other parts of the world.

The UNO became one on the main arenas of the Cold War rivalry. In the Soviet government archives we have found a very interesting recently declassified document, which showed how exactly the USSR planned to introduce the Indonesian issue and to use it in the Cold War confrontation with Western powers.

On 25 June 1945 at the San Francisco conference there was set up a Preparatory Commission which was to organize the work of the main UNO organs at the first stages of its activity. The Commission succeeded in working out a preliminary agenda for the Security Council and the General Assembly.

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On 7 January 1946 the Politbureau of CC AUCP(b) approved Directives for the Soviet delegation to the First session of the UN GA. Section 8 of the document was titled “About first sittings of the Security Council”. It stated: “It is necessary to insist, that the agenda of the first sittings of the Security Council was restricted to the questions, specified on the preliminary agenda, recommended by the Preparatory Commission”. In the closing section of the Directives it was said, that “in case on the part of some delegations were made attempts to attribute to discussions of the questions concerning territorial trusteeship, refugees and other an undesirable for the Soviet interests nature, the Soviet delegation should draw the General Assembly’s attention to the situation in the Netherlands India and partly in the Indochina. This question should be raised firstly in the form of an interpellation of presenting to the GA the information about the situation in the regions. In this it is necessary to use published in the world mass media factual data on the military actions in Indonesia, on using British troops against local population as well as American, British and other foreign ammunition, and on the involvement of even Japanese troops into the struggle against national movement. But in case of the necessity of raising the question at the session, the Soviet delegation must present its proposals for the government’s consideration”.

The first session of the UN General Assembly gathered in London on 10 January 1946. It set up the Security Council, which began its work on 19 January 1946. The Security Council’s activity started by discussing the Iranian question, which was not in the preliminary agenda, agreed by the Preparatory Commission. The Iranian government complained of the Soviet intervention into the Iranian inner affairs. So, using the Directives terminology, the discussion in the Security Council was acquiring “an undesirable for the Soviet interests’ nature”. In this connection the Soviet delegation decided to resort to countermeasures foreseen in the Directives and to raise the Indonesian question. The more so, as the Soviet authors noted, the delegations of the USSR, Ukraine and Byelorussia in the UNO

29 Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (hereafter RGANI) f. 89 op. 38 d. 65 l. 7.
got a lot of letters and telegrams from various Indonesian organizations and individuals appealing for support of the Indonesian struggle against Anglo-Dutch intervention.\(^\text{30}\)

Apparently the Soviet delegation presented its proposals to the Soviet leadership in connection with the situation, and the Soviet government decided that the initiative in raising the Indonesian question before the Security Council should belong not to the delegation of the USSR, but to the delegation of the Soviet Republic Ukraine. Evidently this maneuver was intended to camouflage the link between the Iranian and the Indonesian questions.

On 21 January the head of the Ukrainian delegation D. Z. Manuilsky sent a letter to the Chairman of the Security Council, in which he condemned British actions against the Indonesian Republic. In full conformity with the Directives Manuilsky referred to the information published in international mass media.

On 7 February 1946 the Security Council started discussions of the Indonesian question.\(^\text{31}\) The head of the delegation of the URRS A. Vyshinsky supported the Ukrainian proposal favoring the Indonesian Republic. Nevertheless they were turned down.

Scholars point out, that the USSR’s aim in bringing up the Indonesian question in the UN was tactical and reflected its desire to embarrass the British and counter their move on the Iranian question.\(^\text{32}\) Now we have the document - Directives to the Soviet delegation, which verify this conclusion. But we must admit (and all the scholars agree) that despite these immediately tactical Cold War reasons the Soviet condemnation of the imperialist policy of Western powers not only gained for the USSR excellent publicity in the Asian countries, but


\(^{31}\) For details see McVey op. cit. p. 11-12.

contributed to the struggle of the colonial people for their liberation. This was one of the major factors favoring the development of the Soviet – Indonesian relations in the second half of 1940s.
Chapter Three

Towards the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia, 1947-1948.

One of the first and on the whole correct but very brief descriptions of the beginning of the Soviet-Indonesian diplomatic relations gives G. McT. Kahin in his classical book “Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia”. I would like to quote this short paragraph:

“…the FDR continued to attack Hatta’s government and call for its replacement by a new parliamentary cabinet. It derived new ammunition for this attack because of the government’s refusal to ratify a consular treaty with Soviet Russia which that country itself had ratified. Soeripno, who it later developed was a Stalinist Communist, had been sent by the Republican government as its envoy to Eastern Europe shortly before the Dutch launched their attack of July, 1947. His mission was to line up whatever diplomatic support in the area he could for the Republic. In January, 1948, Soeripno had approached the Soviet Ambassador to Prague, who appeared receptive to the idea of negotiating a consular treaty with the Republic. An agreement was initiated later in January and Soeripno asked the Republican government for instructions. However, Sjarifuddin was then in the midst of negotiating the Renville Agreement and did not wish the treaty with Russia consummated. The succeeding Hatta government likewise refused to take any more action with respect to the treaty. However the Soviet government itself finally took the initiative, and on May 22, its Ambassador to Prague informed Soeripno that the Russia government had ratified the consular treaty.
Whether or not this Russian move constituted formal recognition of the Republic, it was so interpreted by the FDR.\textsuperscript{33}

The whole episode is based exclusively on Soeripno’s statement to the writer.\textsuperscript{34}

Another well-known scholar Ruth T. McVey in her excellent essay “The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution” states: “The story of how the agreement came to be made is still very much of a mystery.” And then she gave her “perhaps inaccurate” account, based on “the reports which have been pieced together”, mostly statements by Hadji Agus Salim the then Republican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Soeripno as broadcast by Radio Jogja and Radio Netherlands and on some other secondary sources.\textsuperscript{35} Ruth McVey’s account adds not many nuances and details to Kahin’s.\textsuperscript{36}

The present chapter is the first in Russian and non-Russian historical literature research work on the first steps in the establishment of Soviet-Indonesian relations based on primary sources, authentic documents from the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, mostly declassified ones. The aim of the chapter is to put into scientific circulation details and nuances concerning first steps in the establishment of the Soviet-Indonesian diplomatic relations.

First Steps in the Soviet-Indonesian Relations.

On August 17, 1945 Soekarno proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Indonesia (RI). The Constitution of the new Republic was promulgated; the


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., footnote 27.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{35} Ruth T. McVey. The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution. Interim Report Series, Modern Indonesia project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, p. 47, 48.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{36} cf. ibid. p. 47-57, the paragraph “The Suripno Affair”.}
government and other state institutions were established. The independent Republic of Indonesia began its existence.

One of the most important tasks of the Indonesian government was to get international recognition. International recognition of the Indonesian Republic would be conducive to advocacy of national independence, ensure the position of the newly created state on the international arena and strengthen the Republican government's influence on the Indonesian Archipelago. As early as August 23 President Soekarno stressed in a speech on the radio the urgent need for the Republic in international recognition.37

The continued landing of British troops and under British protection of Dutch troops demonstrated to the Indonesian leaders and the population that their assertion of independence was being challenged, that the Netherlands intended to overthrow the Republic and return Indonesia to colonial status.

At first British commanders were forced to negotiate with the Republican leaders and that meant recognition of the Republic de-facto.38 But on 1 October, 1945 the Netherlands announced that they did not recognize the Indonesian Republic and did not want to deal with its leaders.39 In the official statement in Parliament on 17 October the British Prime Minister indicated that Britain also did not recognize the Indonesian Republic.40 The US abstained from intervening into Indonesian affairs but did not recognize the Republic.

As a result the Soekarno's government found itself in a state of complete diplomatic isolation; its international activity was paralyzed. Winning international recognition became of vital importance for the very existence of the newly born state. This desperate situation forced the Indonesian leaders to search for the support and recognition denied by the Western powers in Asia, Africa and the

37 Raliby O. Documenta Historica. Djakarta, 1953, h. 17.
Soviet Union. But the attitude of many of the Indonesian leaders towards the USSR was very much apprehensive. From November 1945 till June 1947 the Indonesian government was headed by Sutan Sjarir, who was also the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was of opinion that Indonesia lay in the American-British power sphere. Even upon attainment of full political independence from the Dutch the limits of the political and economic independence attainable by Indonesia would be circumscribed by that condition. In addition they feared that close relations with the USSR would strengthen the position of communists and left-wing leaders inside the Republic. So the Republican government appealed to the Soviet Union only in the last resort. Nevertheless there was made no direct statement about the attitude of the Indonesian government towards the USSR.

Still the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs points a number of indirect indications testifying a certain interest from the Indonesian side towards the USSR and contacts with it. On November 10, 1945 Soekarno sent a telegram to “the President of the USSR” with congratulation on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the October Revolution. Judging from the Foreign Ministry of RF Archives, this message by Soekarno was left unanswered. In December 1945 an Indonesian association of political exiles in a telegram addressed to the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs Molotov V.M. insisted on the Soviet recognition of the Sjarir government. But neither in the Archives of Foreign Policy not in any other archives have we found any evidence about Molotiv’s reaction to the telegram. Nevertheless, as documents of the Soviet Foreign Ministry stressed, the Indonesian authorities did not make direct statements on the question of Soviet –Indonesian relations or Soviet recognition of the Republic. In January, 1946, the head of the Ukrainian delegation in the UN Manuilsky D.Z. received a telegram from the

41 Kahin, op.cit. p.165.
42 AVP RF, f. 091, op. 2, d. 3, p. 1, l. 7.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
Indonesian Nationalist Party, in which it strongly protested against the Netherlands membership in the Security Council which goes contrary Indonesian interests and contradicts the main thesis of the Atlantic Charter. The telegram appeals to Manuilsky for his kind assistance and protection of Indonesian interests.\textsuperscript{45}

Only beginning with 8 December 1945 can we speak about indirect recognition of the Indonesian Republic by the Soviet government.\textsuperscript{46}

The Soviet Union was insufficiently informed about the situation in Indonesia. But it was ready to support the struggle of the newly born Republic against Western imperialism and Dutch colonialism, as the Soviet Union was interested in diminishing Western influence in Asia and Africa. The South-Eastern department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR formulated Soviet tasks in Indonesia in the following words: assistance in every possible way to Indonesia and prevention both the restoration of the Dutch colonial regime and of the expansion of American and British influence in Indonesia and South-East Asian region as a whole.\textsuperscript{47}

The USSR position of principle was non-recognition of the Netherlands' domination in Indonesia after the termination of Japanese occupation. Nevertheless the Soviet government tried to be very careful in its relations with Indonesia, and to act according to the norms of international law and the UN Charter.

Reacting to the Indonesian appeal, the Soviet Union demanded that the Indonesian issue be discussed by the UNO. In January 1946 Ukraine's representative at the First session of the UNO GA Manuilsky D.Z. drew the attention of the Security Council towards the events in Indonesia and indicated that these events undermined peace and security. The Indonesian issue was put on the agenda and discussed during seven sittings of the SC. The Soviet representatives demanded that the colonial war in Indonesia be stopped and foreign troops

\textsuperscript{45} AVP RF f. 091, op. 1, d. 1, p. 1, l. 7.
\textsuperscript{46} Ruth T. McVey. op. cit. p. 3.
\textsuperscript{47} AVP RF f. 091, op. 1, d. 1, p. 1, l. 7.
withdrawn. But the Ukrainian resolution stipulating dispatching a UNO delegation to investigate the state of affairs in Indonesia was not supported by Western powers. \(^{48}\)

In the meantime negotiations began between the Netherlands and the Republic of Indonesia aimed at the settlement of their dispute. On 15 November 1945 a final settlement between the Netherlands and the Republic was initialed and on March 25 1946 this settlement known as the Linggadjati Agreement was ratified and came into effect. The first paragraph of the Agreement proclaimed that the Netherlands Government recognizes the Republic as the de facto authority in Java and Sumatra.\(^{49}\) Following the Netherlands Britain, USA and India also recognized the Indonesian Republic de-facto. From the day of ratification of the Linggadjati Agreement the Dutch began to violate it, to put pressure on the Republican government, to unilaterally create a federal system, which was seen by Republicans as a superficially disguised policy of divide-and-rule calculated to establish eventual Dutch hegemony over all Indonesia.\(^{50}\) Military pressure by such powerful foe as the Netherlands assisted by Britain was a constant conditioning factor of the Republic of Indonesia's internal as well as external political relations from its birth until late in 1949.

First contacts in the establishment of Indonesian-Soviet relations.

This situation forced the Republicans to search for the support of the USSR and its recognition of the newly born state. It should be noted that appeals for the Soviet support and assistance were heard not only from the left-wing Indonesian leaders, but from Nationalists as well.

\(^{48}\) UN. Security Council. Official records, First year, Ser. 1, ad. N 1, s. 4

\(^{49}\) Kahin, op. cit., p. 196.

\(^{50}\) cf. Kahin, op. cit., p. 196-199, 206-212.
At the end of March - beginning of April 1947 in New Delhi (India) an Interasian Conference took place for the strengthening of relations among regional countries within the region. This was the first international conference at which the Republic of Indonesia participated. The Republican delegation was headed by the Indonesian Prime-minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sutan Sjarir.

The Indonesian delegation had unofficial meetings with the Soviet delegates at which Sjarir informed the delegates about grave condition of the Indonesian Republic blocked by the Dutch. Sjarir stressed that if the Republic was not rendered assistance it would be crushed.\textsuperscript{51}

Sjarir asked for support and even for arms, which he suggested, could be delivered to the Republic through a Latin American state. Sjarir was preoccupied not only with the state of the Republic, but with his own political position as well. He stressed that for the time being his position in the government was strong enough but it could change every moment, because the Dutch instigated the antigovernment activity on the part of the right wing Moslems and Trotskyists.\textsuperscript{52}

The Indonesian delegates at the Interasian Conference in New Delhi expressed desire to use Soviet Mission in Bangkok (Thailand) for links with Indonesia.\textsuperscript{53}

At the same time the Republicans continued to indicate in indirect way their desire to be recognized by the Soviet Union. Such indications were seen in the radio address on April 4 1947, when the Indonesian radio speaking about Indonesian relations with other states announced that Indonesia would like to establish relations with "states of the USSR".\textsuperscript{54}

In the summer 1947 a Soviet journalist Olga Chechetkina visited Indonesia and met president Soekarno. She informed CC AUCP(b) about Soekarno’s request

\textsuperscript{51} AVP RF f. 091, op. 1, d. 1, p. 1, l. 6-7.

\textsuperscript{52} RSASPH f. 17 op. 128, d. 1068 l. 85-86.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., l. 8.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., l. 5
whether the USSR would recognize the Indonesian Republic. O. Chechetkina underlined that in Soekarno’s voice sounded an appeal and fear of refusal.\textsuperscript{55}

The recognition of the Republic of Indonesia not only \textit{de facto}, but also \textit{de jure} by a number of countries, the increasing foreign policy activity of the Republican government and especially attempts to establish links with the Soviet Union gave cause for anxiety on the part of the Netherlands.

Taking into consideration the influence of left-wing parties and leaders in the Republic of Indonesia, the Netherlands feared that nationalist feelings in Indonesia might turn into communist ones.

\textbf{The Position of the USSR}

In April 1947 the Netherlands Embassy in Moscow sent a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR with the Dutch interpretation of the Linggadjati Agreement, first of all concerning the right of the Indonesian Republic to establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries. It was stressed in the document that only the United States of Indonesia would be authorized to establish diplomatic relations after their formation not later than 1 January 1949.\textsuperscript{56} (24) But speaking on the Indonesian radio on 25 April 1947 Sjarir expressed the Republic of Indonesia's conviction that establishing its missions in foreign countries was a matter concerning only the Republic of Indonesia and related countries and nobody else.\textsuperscript{57}

Following its line of non-recognition of the Netherlands' rule in Indonesia and trying to support the new Republic the Soviet government was inclined to recognize the Republic of Indonesia. But at the same time the Soviet government didn't want to violate international law. So the Soviet Vice-Minister of Foreign

\textsuperscript{55} RSASPH, f. 17 op. 128, d. 249 l. 49.

\textsuperscript{56} AVP RF f. 091, op. 1, d. 1, p. 1, l. 4.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid. l. 1.
Affairs A.Ya. Vyshinsky instructed the I European department and Treaty and Legal department of the Ministry to prepare a legal evaluation on the issue of interpretation of the Linggadjati Agreement and of the Republic of Indonesia's right to take part in foreign relations. Soviet experts came to the conclusion that Linggadjati Agreement might be interpreted in two ways. The I European department indicated that the Linggadjati Agreement contained no provisions which directly forbade the Indonesian Republic forming missions in foreign countries, and no provisions allowing such missions. So the Linggadjati Agreement might be interpreted in the way the Netherlands did, but at the same time it could be interpreted in the sense, that the Republic of Indonesia could establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries now.

The I European department supported recognition of the Republic of Indonesia by the USSR or at least recommended making an announcement that the Soviet government was considering the possibility of such recognition. The department underlined the importance of Soviet recognition for Indonesia's prestige among colonies and in the world at large and among Indonesian federal states. It will also strengthen the Republican government position on the Republican territory itself. But at the same time the department suggested that the Soviet government should take a very careful and balanced position in this matter, because the USSR had insufficient information about what was going on in Indonesia, and thoroughly discuss this issue first with Vyshinsky and later with Molotov, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On 27 May 1947 the Treaty and Legal department presented its evaluation of the Republic of Indonesia's status according to international law. The department ascertained that the Dutch interpretation of the Linggadjati Agreement formally confirmed to the letter of the Agreement, but ignored its essence, which stipulated

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58 Ibid. l. 3.
59 Ibid. l. 1.
60 Ibid. l. 5.
that a *de facto* recognized state had the right to establish diplomatic relations with the outer world.

Having concluded the Agreement with the Indonesian Republic the Netherlands thus had recognized the Republic *de facto*. But the Republic’s diplomatic relations should develop in the frame of *de facto* recognition only. The department was of the opinion that the USSR could not recognize the Republic *de jure*, because in international relations the Republic was represented by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but the USSR could recognize the Republic *de facto*. As the first step in this direction the department recommended the appointment of a Soviet consul to Yogyakarta, where the Republic’s government was situated. This step would not be recognition *de jure* and Netherlands could not protest against it. Nevertheless it would demonstrate the USSR’s interest in developing friendly relations with the Republic of Indonesia.\(^\text{61}\)

Much more stressed the importance of the recognition of the Indonesian Republic the SEA department. It pointed out that as the USSR could not assist the Indonesian Republic in any other way, the *de facto* recognition would be a great moral support to Indonesians and promoted the Indonesian issue in the UNO and in the international arena as a whole. The Soviet Union had no precedent of *de facto* recognition yet, but this step would facilitate the official inclusion of the Indonesian issue in the agenda of international organizations and the development of ties via the Soviet Mission in Bangkok.\(^\text{62}\) The South-East Asia department recommended the recognition of the Republic in an announcement over the radio or in the press in order to prevent the crushing of the Republic by the Dutch authorities, and sending a Soviet representative and a TASS news agency correspondent to Yogyakarta. The department did not recommend sending a consul because this would oblige the Soviet authorities to ask for an exequatur from the

\(^{61}\) Ibid., l. 11.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., l. 7-8.
Netherlands' government which contradicted the Soviet principle of non-recognition of Dutch rule in Indonesia.\(^\text{63}\)

After Egypt recognition of the Republic of Indonesia *de jure*, the SEA department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs advised to speed up the recognition of Indonesia.\(^\text{64}\)

So the USSR clearly showed that it didn't accept the Dutch interpretation of the Linggadjati Agreement. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware that even the *de facto* recognition of the Indonesian Republic would provoke a negative reaction from the Netherlands. But USSR intended to keep within the framework of the relations already established with the Republic by such powers as USA, Britain and the Netherlands itself. It was pointed out in the documents of the Soviet Ministry that although in some Dutch official circles and in the press some dissatisfaction could be seen with the *de facto* recognition of the Republic by Western powers, there followed no official protests. So the Soviet Union also had the right to take such a step.\(^\text{65}\)

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware that the Soviet recognition of the Republic might provoke the USA which was striving to increase its influence in Indonesia and to prevent communism and Soviet penetration into the area, to establish direct relations with the Republic all the more so because neighboring South-East Asian states had already established direct links with the Republic with Dutch permission (Australia, the Philippines, Burma, Ceylon, India). But in this matter the USSR put the Indonesia's interests above its own. The USSR was ready to reconcile itself to the activating of American policy in Indonesia, if it would help to break the international isolation of the Indonesian Republic.\(^\text{66}\).

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\(^{63}\) Ibid., l. 9-10.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., l. 12-13.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., l. 7-8.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., l. 8.
Practical steps in establishing Indonesian-Soviet relations.

In the meantime on July 20 1947 the Dutch army in Indonesia was ordered to launch an all-out attack designed to crush the Republic. It was noticed in Indonesia that though both the United States and Great Britain had recognized the Republic of Indonesia de facto and had been vociferous in their denunciation of Dutch aggression, neither showed willingness to take effective measures to stop it.\textsuperscript{67}

The formerly overwhelming pro-American sentiment among Republicans had come strongly overlaid with the suspicion that the United States was partial to the Dutch. The blockade which the Dutch threw around area left the Republic cut off not only from outside sources of arms, but from sources of food and clothing as well. The Security Council's cease-fire order was not observed by the Dutch who declared that they had put an end to the authority of the Republic.\textsuperscript{68} The debates that than ensued in the U.N. were influential in developing the favorable attitude of many Indonesians towards Russia, which constantly called for withdrawal of Dutch troops to the points from which they had launched their attack. Indonesians' following of events in U.N. convinced them that Russia was the SC member who most strongly supported the Republic.\textsuperscript{69}.

Meanwhile time was working against the Republic and in favour of the Netherlands. Some urgent measures were needed. The head of the Republican government was at that time Amir Sjarifuddin. He was known as a prominent leader of the left wing of the political movement in Indonesia. It seems that these factors determined further developments in the Indonesian - Soviet relations.

\textsuperscript{67} Kahin, op. cit., p. 212.

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p. 218.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. 215-216.
The first official request for the Soviet recognition of the Indonesian Republic was presented to the Soviet Embassy in Prague only on 23 January 1948. By all appearances this decision was taken in December 1947 with Soerarno’s consent, because the Indonesian President authorized it by special credentials, which he signed on 25 December 1947. But the Sjarifuddin government addressed the Soviet Embassy in Prague via the Indonesian representative there Suripno only in the situation of the cabinet crisis after signing the Renville agreement.

On 26 January 1948 the Charge d’Affairs of the USSR in Prague (Czechoslovakia) informed his Ministry that he received a letter dated 23 January 1948 from Special Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia Soeripno. It was stated in the letter:

"On 13th January 1948 I have received a telegraphical appointment from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia as her Special Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary for Eastern Europe, in view of the desire of my Government to exchange relations with these countries. Today I received further instructions, especially meant to be dealt with the USSR and Czechoslovakia.

I have been invested by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia with full and all manner of power and authority for and in the name of the Republic of Indonesia to negotiate with representatives of Your country”.

He also informed that he had been staying in Prague for some months as the head of the Indonesian Information Service.70

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no information about Soeripno’s personality. So on the Vice-Minister V.A. Zorin’s orders the South-East Asian department gathered some information about Soeripno. They learned that Soeripno was a member of the Central Committee of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and the leader of the Youth League. He participated in a number of international conferences: was a member and a secretary of the Indonesian delegation and a representative of the Republican Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Interasian

70 AVP RF f. 091, op. 2, d. 3, p. 1, l. 1-2.
Conference in Delhi (March-April 1947), where he established close contacts with the Soviet delegation and demonstrated his deep sympathy towards the Soviet Union. Soeripno headed the Indonesian delegation at the Youth Festival in Prague and became the Indonesian representative in the Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Prague. But when in Delhi he told Soviet delegates that he was getting a diplomatic appointment and would leave the Youth movement.  

After this information was gathered the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave permission to the Soviet Charge d'Affairs in Prague to meet Soeripno. The meeting took place in the Soviet Embassy on February 17 1948. Soeripno stated that he was authorized by the Republican government to carry on negotiations with the Soviet Government about the establishment of diplomatic relations and mutual assistance agreement between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia. Soeripno promised to present his credentials later.

On 10 April 1948 the South-East Asia department received from the Soviet Ambassador to Prague Silin a copy of Russian translation of Soeripno's credentials. It stated that Soeripno was invested with power by the Indonesian Government to negotiate on its behalf with East European countries, including the USSR for the establishment of friendly relations, to conclude and sign agreements and other documents which would be further presented to the Republican Government for ratification. These credentials were signed by President of the Republic of Indonesia Soekarno and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Tamzil and dated January 25, 1947.

But it was not clear for South-East Asia department in the name of what government Soeripno acted - in the name of the Sjarifuddin government which resigned on 23 January 1948, or the Hatta government which was formed on 29 January 1948, and whether Soeripno was authorized by the Hatta government to

\[71\] Ibid. l. 4.
\[72\] Ibid. l. 7.
\[73\] Ibid. l. 71.
negotiate with the USSR. Besides, South-East Asia department insisted on investigating whether or not the Renville Agreement signed recently by the Netherlands and the Republic of Indonesia denied the Republic the right to have direct diplomatic relations with the outside world.\textsuperscript{74}.

At the Soviet request on 10 March 1948 Soeripno handed to the Soviet Charge d'Affairs in Prague a letter which stated that after signing the Renville Agreement the Republic of Indonesia maintained its former status until the final agreement with the Netherlands would be concluded, and that the Republican government had stated that it would continue its own and independent foreign relations, conclude agreements and establish links with other countries. The letter stated that the new Republican government had already sent instructions to all its missions abroad to keep on following the previous course.\textsuperscript{75}

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not satisfied with this explanation and requested a legal evaluation concerning the possibility of the Soviet-Indonesian relations. The legal evaluation on the issue was presented by the Treaty and Legal department on 16 March 1948. It stated that the USSR might establish diplomatic relations with any country which it considered to be an independent subject of international law. The independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia were proclaimed in a Declaration on 17 August 1945, signed by Soekarno and Hatta. The Netherlands by signing the Linggadjati and Renville Agreements had recognized the Republic of Indonesia \textit{de facto}. Besides addressing the Working Committee of the provisional Republican parliament KNIP the Prime Minister Hatta stressed the Republican's intention to maintain sovereignty and international relations. So the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia was legally possible.\textsuperscript{76} Guided by this judgment, having received from Soeripno the confirmation of his authority and taking into consideration the high political importance of Soviet support for the

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., l. 7-8.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., l. 9-10.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. ,l. 11-12.
Republic, which was carrying on the bloody war for its national independence against Dutch occupiers supported by British and American imperialists, the South-East Asian department recommended the acceptance of the Republic's proposal and the establishment diplomatic relations between it and the USSR. The department was of the opinion that such a step would contribute to the improvement of the Republic's circumstances and would heighten the USSR's prestige both in South-East Asia and in the Moslem world. At the same time the department advised refraining from negotiations for the conclusion of a friendship and mutual assistance agreement with Indonesia. The Soviet representative in U.N. Gromyko A.A. also recommended acceptance the Indonesian proposal and opening a Soviet Consulate in the Republic after recognizing it *de facto*. The Soviet Ambassador in The Hague joined with this opinion.

On 14 April 1948 at a conference of Vice-Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the USSR the decision was taken to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic of Indonesia.

On 14 May 1948 Soviet Ministers of Foreign Affairs V.M. Molotov addressed I.V. Stalin informing him about the Republic of Indonesia’s desire to establish diplomatic relations with the USSR. The response was positive.

On 22 May 1948 in the Soviet Embassy in Prague there took place the exchange of notes between the Soviet Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Prague Silin M.A. and the Special Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the Republic of Indonesia Soeripno about the establishment of consular relations and mutual exchange of consuls.

The information about this event was accompanied by a record from the Soviet Ambassador's diary where we find very interesting details of this ceremony. The Soviet Ambassador was informing his Ministry that on 22 May he had invited Soeripno to the Soviet Embassy. Soeripno was accompanied by a secretary. Silin

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77 Ibid., l. 15-16.  
78 Ibid., l.18-19.  
79 Ibid., l. 22.
gave his name as Musin Makar Ivanovich and wrote that he was a Soviet citizen, an official of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany temporary staying in Prague. Silin gave Soeropno a draft of the Indonesian note in Russian. Immediately the Russian text of the draft of the Indonesian note was translated by Musin M.I. into the Indonesian and by another person into English languages. Soeripno agreed with the contents of the draft, took it and left the Soviet Embassy. Some hours later on the same day Soeripno returned to the Soviet Embassy with the note in Indonesian language properly signed and sealed. The text of the note remained practically the same. After that the official exchange of notes took place.

Soeripno stressed that this note was the first diplomatic document in the Indonesian language - the language of the former colony. Soeripno asked for a Soviet consul to be sent to the Indonesian Republic as soon as possible. He stressed that it would be the first foreign consul on the Republican territory, because the other consuls from the states which had recognized the Indonesian Republic (USA, France, China, and Indochina) nevertheless had their offices in Batavia that is on territory controlled by the Dutch.

The exchange of notes demonstrated the fact that the initiative for the establishment of Soviet-Indonesian relations came from the Republican side. The Indonesian note informed the Soviet side that the government of the Republic of Indonesia taking into accounts the exchange of opinions that had taken place between the two governments considered it expedient to establish from that date on consular relations and mutual exchange of consuls. The Soviet note confirmed the receipt of the Indonesian note and stated that the Soviet government accepted the proposal of the Indonesian government to establish consular relations and mutual exchange of consuls.

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared a press-release about the exchange of notes in confirmation of the establishment of consular relations.

80 A Soviet diplomat well versed in Indonesian affairs told me that Musin M.I. was the well-known Indonesian communist leader Musso.

81 AVP RF f. 091, op. 2, d. 3, p. 1, l. 28-29

82 Ibid., l. 25-26.
between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia. The press-release was published in the Soviet newspapers “Pravda” and “Izvestiya” on May 26, 1948.\textsuperscript{83} The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs began the preliminary work needed to put into effect the opening of the Soviet Consulate in the Republic.\textsuperscript{84}

**Reaction to the establishment of Indonesian-Soviet relations**

The information about the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia raised a storm of protests in the Netherlands. All Dutch newspapers demanded that strong measures be taken to prevent its realization. Expressing the point of view of Dutch official circles the press started a campaign of intimidation against communist expansion in the Republic. Dutch authorities in the Archipelago took a number of steps with the aim of strangling the Republic (economic blockade, common monetary system and so on). At the same time a Dutch-sponsored Interim Federal Government without the Republic's participation was inaugurated. All these made Indonesians progressively more convinced of the unwillingness of the Dutch to abide by the Renville Agreement. The Netherlands' authorities exerted strong moral and diplomatic pressure upon the Republican government.

But all this activity had not yielded the expected results. The Republican leaders tried in all manners to elude the Dutch demands of disavowal of Soeripno's action. All Republican leaders not only from the left, but also from the right wing of the national liberation movement were fully aware of vital importance of the Soviet recognition of the Indonesian Republic, especially in the situation where it was desperately struggling for its very existence.

In the documents of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs we can find information gathered from the Dutch and British press which depicts the

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., l. 27.

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., l. 84.
Republican leaders' reaction towards the establishment of consular relations with the USSR. The Republican Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agus Salim said that he did not know anything about the establishment of the Soviet-Indonesian relations, that Soeripno's actions were not quite clear to him, because in Salim's opinion, Soeripno had no authority to sign the agreement. Salim added that he did not acknowledge Soeripno's actions. Nevertheless Agus Salim assumed that the information about the establishment of consular relations between the Republic of Indonesia and the USSR might be regarded as a Soviet initiative, which without any request from the Republican side unilaterally recognized the Indonesian Republic. And Agus Salim would welcome such a step by the USSR.85

The Republican Minister of Information also stated that Soeripno was not given special instructions to make the agreement but had acted on a general mandate given in December of the previous year. The Republican delegation had informed the Dutch delegation that Indonesia did not intend to take steps to establish foreign relations other than those existing at the time of the signing of the Renville Agreement.86

The Dutch, however, insisted on a clear disavowal of Soeripno and an announcement that the Republican government was not prepared to ratify the agreement with the Soviet Union. They pointed out that since under the first of the Renville principles sovereignty throughout the Archipelago lay with the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republican government could not legitimately conduct its own foreign relations. In reply the chairman of the Republican delegation Roem said that withdrawal of Indonesian foreign relations would mean nothing less than the liquidation of the Republic before the institution of the federal Republik of the United States of Indonesia.87

85 Ibid., l. 37.
86 Ibid., l. 33.
87 Ibid.
Roem was one of the leaders of the Indonesian Moslem party Masjumi, which also welcomed Soviet recognition of the Republic.\textsuperscript{88} The left wing of Indonesian parties and organizations regarded the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR as a great victory for the Republic and demanded that the agreement be ratified by the Republican government immediately.\textsuperscript{89}

The Dutch press did its best to prove that Soeripno had no power to conclude the agreement with the USSR. But as stated in the documents of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the Dutch newspapers were eventually forced to publish on 7 June 1948 the text of Soeripno's credentials, dated 25 December 1947 and signed by President Soekarno and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Tamzil.\textsuperscript{90}

On 3 June a Netherlands' representative handed in a note of protest to the Republican Prime Minister, Moh. Hatta, which demanded that the agreement with the USSR be abrogated.\textsuperscript{91} The Indonesian Republic's answer to the Netherlands note was presented on 10 June. Its contents were not disclosed but the Dutch considered it to be unsatisfactory.\textsuperscript{92}

The official reaction of the Netherlands' authorities to the establishment of consular relations between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia was as follows. At the end of May - beginning of June 1948 Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a note drew the attention of the Soviet government to the TASS agency report that consular relations had been concluded between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Indonesia. This protest was also announced by the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Soviet Ambassador to The Hague. The Netherlands pointed out that the appointment of consular officers by the Republic was contrary to the

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., l. 69.

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., l. 69-70.

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid. l. 71.

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid. l. 72.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid. l. 74.
principles of the Renville agreement. In his reply the Soviet Ambassador indicated that the Republic of Indonesia was recognized not only *de facto* but also *de jure* by a number of countries and some of them had consular relations with the Republic, including USA and Britain. But the Dutch Minister stressed that consuls of these countries had offices on the territory under Dutch not Republican rule and that the Soviet Union might have its representative there too. The Soviet Ambassador said that it did not concern the Soviet-Indonesian relations, and besides the Dutch authorities did not give permission to Soviet representatives (TASS Agency correspondent and one another Soviet person) for their stay in Dutch controlled territories.

So the documents testify that the Netherlands policy toward the Soviet Union was discriminatory.

In September 1948 the Madiun Rebellion against the Soekarno government began, and the PKI found itself deeply involved. As the rebellious PKI leaders continued their campaign for the ratification of the consular agreement with the Soviet Union, Indonesian right-wing and moderate leaders who supported the Soekarno government dissociated themselves from the support of the agreement. As a result the Republican government did not ratify the agreement with the USSR and Soviet-Indonesian consular relations were not established.

The documents testify that there should be made some factual corrections:

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.

Ruth McVey writes: “In November he (Soeripno-L.E.) approached M.A.Silin, the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, in an effort to secure Soviet recognition of Indonesia.” Ruth McVey, op.cit. p. 48. In the footnote 95 on the same page she says that according to Kahin, Soeripno told him that he had approaches the Soviet Ambassador in January 1948. The documents testify that the latter date is correct, but that Soeripno approached not the Soviet Ambassador Silin, but Charge d’Affairs.
1. The USSR did not ratify the consular treaty with the Republic of Indonesia.

2. On May 22, 1948 there took place only the exchange of notes between the Soviet Ambassador to Prague and Soeripno about the establishment of consular relations between the USSR and RI which still needed ratification by both sides.

3. Soeripno approached the Soviet Ambassador to Prague on January 23, 1948, not in November 1947 as suggested by Ruth McVey.\(^95\) (62), on the very day Sjarifuddin government resigned, so Sjarifuddin was not “in the midst of negotiating the Renville Agreement”, as stated by Kahin.\(^96\) (63)

4. One of the important factors of why the succeeding Hatta government refused to take any more action with respect to the treaty was heavy pressure from the side of Dutch authorities.

5. The exchange of notes about the establishment of consular relations between the Soviet Ambassador to Prague and Soeripno was supposed to constitute formal *de facto* recognition of the Republic of Indonesia by the USSR after ratification.

The main conclusion that should be made from the analysis of the documents is that in the first years after the World War 2 Indonesia was outside the immediate interest of the USSR. It was the Indonesian Republic, who initiated the establishment of the Soviet-Indonesian relations. The Soviet government behaved very cautiously and tried to stay within the limits of international law.

Although negotiations with the Soviet Ambassador in Prague were carried on by the Indonesian communist Soeripno, he acted in the name and in the interest of the Indonesian Republic as a whole and his credentials were signed by the Republican President Soekarno.

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\(^95\) Ruth McVey writes: “In November he (Soeripno-L.E.) approached M.A. Silin, the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, in an effort to secure Soviet recognition of Indonesia.” Ruth McVey, op.cit. p. 48. In the footnote 95 on the same page she says that according to Kahin, Soeripno told him that he had approaches the Soviet Ambassador in January 1948. The documents testify that the latter date is correct, but that Soeripno approached not the Soviet Ambassador Silin, but Charge d’Affairs.

\(^96\) Kahin, op. cit., p. 268.
Indonesian representatives appealed to the USSR for support and recognition not because they felt sympathy towards communism or Soviet socialist system but because Western powers’ policy tended to favor the Netherlands in its efforts to restore colonial or semi-colonial regime in Indonesia.
Chapter Four.

Did the Soviet Union instruct Southeast Asian communists to revolt? New Russian evidence on the Calcutta Youth Conference of February 1948

There has been considerable speculation among historians of the Cold War and of Soviet policy towards Indonesia, right up to the present, concerning the communist-sponsored Southeast Asian Youth Conference held in Calcutta in February 1948. There, it has been claimed by some, ‘orders from Moscow’ were passed to the Southeast Asian communists, giving rise to the rebellions in Indonesia, Malaya and Burma and the increased unrest in the Philippines and Vietnam which occurred later in 1948, actions which were aimed at seizing power from the national bourgeoisie and turning these countries into socialist states.97

Recently declassified archival documents of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) [CC AUCP (B)] concerning the Calcutta conference and Soviet policy towards Indonesia do not corroborate this theory. Instead, they allow us to construct a more complex picture of Soviet policymakers attempting to collect information on a region about which they were relatively poorly informed, encouraging more links with it, and yet remaining uncertain if not cautious in their assessment of the immediate prospects of local parties there.

Speculations by Western scholars

Ruth McVey’s “The Soviet view of the Indonesian revolution”, written under the auspices of Cornell University’s Southeast Asia Program, remains the

97 There has also been debate over the role of a contemporaneous conference of the Indian Communist Party in Calcutta. For the argument that these Calcutta Conferences were important, see J.H. Brimmell, Communism in South East Asia; A political analysis (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 255–63.
most serious analysis of the early period of Soviet policy towards Indonesia. McVey states that the Soviet policy towards the newly independent Republic of Indonesia, proclaimed on 17 August 1945, clearly changed at the beginning of 1948 and links the communist uprising in Indonesia (the Madiun uprising of September 1948) with this change.

The Soviet archival documents corroborate McVey’s opinion that towards the end of the Second World War, the USSR had no clear-cut Asia policy and certainly no Indonesia policy. Indonesia at that time was on the periphery of Soviet interests in Asia. After the colonial war started in Indonesia between Dutch troops on one side, and the Indonesian national liberation movement on the other, the USSR inclined to the Indonesian side. Although the Indonesian liberation movement was led by the national bourgeoisie, it was directed against Western domination in the region and this was the main argument for the Soviet Union to support those fighting for national liberation. At the same time, McVey points out; the Soviet leaders considered that the united front should remain under the leadership of the bourgeois nationalist movement. She explains this decision as due to the Soviet leadership not believing in the possibility of a communist victory in any Asian country at that time, not even in China.

Late in 1947 and through early 1948, as McVey states, Soviet policy drastically changed. She links this change with the establishment of the Cominform and the declaration of the Zhdanov ‘two camp doctrine’, which divided the world into two opposing camps — socialist and capitalist. The independence of former colonies, now ruled by representatives of the national bourgeoisie, was declared fake. Real independence could be reached only under the leadership of left wing, especially communist, groups and such independence had to be followed by radical

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100 Ibid., p. 19.
social reforms and the creation of people’s democracies. The Chinese concept of ‘new democracy’ and the Chinese revolution was gradually but increasingly being proclaimed as a new ideal for Asian peoples.101

Western scholars, even those who doubt that the Soviet Union issued any overt orders for revolt in Southeast Asia in 1948, base their analysis of this period mainly upon the political rhetoric on the colonial question as seen in Soviet official publications, as well as the general Cominform line.102 They do not give any concrete or archival evidence to prove changes in the Soviet attitude towards the situation in Asia or Soviet subversive activity in Southeast Asia.

But if growing militancy can be seen in Soviet and international communist propaganda materials, nothing of the kind can be found in secret working papers from the archives of the Foreign Affairs Department of the CC AUCP (B). There one can see neither growing militancy nor emphasis on armed struggle. The political rhetoric maintains its usual reserved character. The researcher can find no hint of preparation on the part of the Soviet leadership for calling upon Asian communists to pursue uprisings against their national bourgeois governments.

In order to prove this assertion, and to reveal for the first time how Soviet policy towards the region was actually developing at the time, a number of recently declassified documents from the archives of the Foreign Affairs Department of the CC AUCP (B) will be analyzed. These include: documents of the Soviet youth organizations, documents of the international pro-communist youth movement and internal documents of the Foreign Affairs Department of the CC AUCP (B), connected with the youth movement.103

101 Ibid., pp. 32–33.

102 Hence even Ruth McVey’s “The Calcutta Conference and the Southeast Asian uprisings” (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1958), pp. 13, 18 and 24, while arguing there were no instructions for revolt conveyed at Calcutta, concentrates analysis on the dissemination and discussion of the new Soviet line. Lacking access to Soviet documents, she argued that the implications of the new public line were not as clear as previous scholars had suggested.

103 The Russian State Archive of Social-Political History (RSASPH), created in March 1999, contains not only documents of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) [CC AUCP (B)] for 1898 and 1903–91, but also documents of Soviet youth organizations, including the All-Union
The Indonesian question in the communist-oriented World Youth Movement

After the Second World War, the main contacts between the Indonesian Left and international communist-oriented organizations were conducted through the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the International Union of Students (IUS). On 25 October 1946 the Anti-Fascist Committee of Soviet Youth (AFC-SY), which maintained contacts between Soviet youth and young people in other countries, was separated from the SovInformBureau and attached to the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (Komsomol) – the only political youth organization in the USSR – as its foreign department. Both organizations worked under the absolute control of the Communist Party.

The Central Committee (CC) of Komsomol, through AFC-SY, played the key role in establishing WFDY in November 1945 and IUS in August 1946. Communist-oriented leaders and organizations from various countries dominated these two world youth organizations. As was noted in a Foreign Affairs Department of CC AUCP (B) document, the main result of their activity was ‘that under conditions of a constantly aggravating international situation and intensifying reactionary intrigues, these organizations and first of all WFDY, have proved their vitality while maintaining an anti-imperialist position’. ¹⁰⁴

Up to the beginning of 1946, the main political task of the world youth organizations was the support of leftist groups in Western countries. Then, early in 1946, the USSR began an anti-colonial campaign and the world youth organizations were thus drawn into anti-colonial propaganda activities.

¹⁰⁴ RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 428 l. 74.
When the USSR declared its support for the Indonesian national liberation struggle, from January 1946, the world youth organizations also started an anticolonial campaign. Practically every activity they engaged in included in its agenda the question of solidarity with Indonesian youth fighting for independence.

For example, in a secret document ‘Directives for the Soviet representatives at the meeting of the executive committee of WFDY’ dated 21 January 1946 prepared by AFC-SY and approved by CC AUCP (B), the Soviet delegation was directed to express its full support for the demands of Indonesian youth organizations and ensure that WFDY come out in favour of stopping intervention in Indonesia. At the same time the Soviet representatives were to publicize the efforts undertaken by the Indonesian representatives in order to draw the attention of the world’s progressive community towards the anti-colonial struggle of the Indonesian people and to enhance its support.

In a report to the CC AUCP (B) on the Soviet delegates’ activities during the International Students Congress in Prague from 18 August to 3 September 1946, the Soviet representatives pointed out that the Indonesian delegates, including Soeripno, very strongly insisted on the inclusion in all IUS and Congress resolutions of the aims of anti-colonial struggle. Soeripno was elected as a member of IUS Council.

In 1946, the WFDY Executive received an invitation from the All-India Student Federation to send a WFDY commission to India. The commission also planned to visit a number of countries in Southeast Asia to survey the colonial situation there and make contacts with youth organizations in the area. In February 1947, the WFDY commission, comprising several delegates – Olga Chechetkina (a Soviet journalist specializing in Southeast Asia), J. Lautissier (France) and R. Tomovic (Yugoslavia) – arrived in India, where they stayed for two months. In New Delhi these delegates had a meeting with the young participants of the Indian-

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105 Ibid., f.17 o.128 d.71 l.42.
106 Ibid., l.106.
sponsored Inter-Asian Relations Conference from Indonesia and other Southeast Asian polities (eight Indonesian representatives, including two communists — Soeripno and Maruto Darusman, attended the conference). It was there decided that a full-scale Asian youth conference should be held in the near future. The Indonesians, under Soeripno’s leadership, volunteered to play host to the projected meeting, and the conference was scheduled to be held in Indonesia in November 1947.

The WFDY commission was also invited to travel through Burma, Malaya and Indonesia. It spent two and a half months in Southeast Asian countries, including three weeks, during May and June 1947, in Indonesia.

The WFDY Commission’s visit to Southeast Asia
prior to the Calcutta Conference (May–June 1947)

In June 1947 the WFDY commission presented an account of its travels through the Southeast Asian countries to the WFDY executive session in Moscow. Soviet members of this executive session received secret instructions prepared by the Komsomol CC and approved by the Foreign Affairs Department of CC AUCP (B). On the issue of ‘the state and the needs of colonial youth’, the document directed the Soviet representatives to insist upon the Executive adopting a statement in support of the national liberation struggles of colonial youth in India, Vietnam, Indonesia and Egypt aimed at attaining full independence and democratic liberties.

For the commission which travelled through the Southeast Asian countries, the Soviet delegates were instructed to insist upon the adoption of practical proposals aimed at:

• strengthening ties between WFDY and the youth of the colonies and semi-colonies;
• organizing the youth of the world to carry out campaigns of assistance to colonial youth in order to improve their political, economic and cultural situations;
• presenting reports on the problems of colonial youth and defense of their rights to the United Nations;
• organizing a wide-scale campaign in the press concerning the problems and needs of colonial youth.

It was pointed out in the instructions that the Executive should approve the proposal to hold in late 1947 or early 1948 a conference of the youth of colonial and semi-colonial countries, and that one of the main tasks of this conference should be the creation in colonial and semi-colonial countries of active coordinating organizations of working youth, linked to the WFDY.

The Soviet delegates were directed to endorse the idea of holding the youth conference in India or Indonesia, and support the proposal that not only representatives of the progressive youth and student unions should be invited to participate in it, but also guests from Mongolia, Korea and some Soviet republics, including Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and others.

The Soviet delegates at the Executive were instructed to insist on their membership of a preparatory committee, which would comprise representatives of organizations in the Southeast Asian countries and also of the WFDY and IUS. The preparatory committee was to work in the country of the future conference. It was to start its activity in summer 1947 in Prague during the World Youth Festival.\(^{107}\)

This instruction came with a covering letter by the deputy chief of the Foreign Affairs Department of CC AUCP (B), L. Baranov. This said that the main points of the directives had already been approved by the Department and that the recent idea about a conference of the youth in colonial countries was supported by the Department as well. It was sent to Mikhail Suslov’s Secretariat for agreement.

\(^{107}\) RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 247 l. 183.
Later Baranov wrote on the covering letter: ‘Suslov agreed. You may act. 11. 6. 47.’

After the Moscow WFDY Executive session of June 1947 ended, the Soviet members of the Executive presented a secret account of its work to CC AUCP (B) Secretaries A.A. Zhdanov, A.A. Kouznetsov and M.A. Suslov. The account advised that the WFDY Executive had approved the report of the Commission and declared its full support of the national liberation struggle of the colonial peoples and the democratic youth of these countries; called for granting complete independence and democratic liberties to the peoples of India, Vietnam, Indonesia and others; considered it necessary to provide assistance to the youth of the colonial and semi-colonial countries; and commissioned the Secretariat to send letters to the youth of these countries calling for the struggle against imperialism.

The account stressed the decision to hold the conference of Southeast Asian colonial youth in November 1947 in Indonesia, with the aim of strengthening the unity of the democratic youth of these countries. As delegates to the conference it was decided to invite young people from India, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Indonesia, Siam, Vietnam and the Philippines; as observers, they proposed inviting young people from China, Korea, Mongolia, the Soviet Central Asian republics, as well as from New Zealand, Iran, Iraq and Egypt; while young people from Britain, France, the Netherlands, USA, as well as the Scandinavian and Latin American countries would be invited as guests.

The WFDY Executive considered it necessary that the commission which had travelled to the Southeast Asian countries should now visit Britain, France, the Netherlands, the USA and other countries with the task of propagandizing the Executive decisions on the colonial question. The Executive also discussed a letter from Republican Indonesian youth to the Federation, requesting support for their demand addressed to the Dutch government that they stop dispatching troops to

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108 Ibid., l.182.
Indonesia, and that the Dutch should withdraw their forces from Republican territory.

In this connection, WFDY sent letters to the UN and the Dutch authorities supporting the demands of Indonesian youth and called on young people living in ports where Dutch and French war ships docked to boycott their dispatch to Indonesia and Vietnam.

The Soviet members of the WFDY Executive proposed that CC AUCP (B) and the Komsomol CC should permit the sending of representatives from the Soviet Central Asian and Caucasian republics as observers to the forthcoming Southeast Asian youth conference, as well as allowing Olga Chechetkina to travel together with other members of the WFDY commission to a number of capitalist countries (Britain, France and others) to inform young people of these countries about the conditions of colonial youth and about the WFDY decisions concerning the struggle of these young people for their rights and needs.\textsuperscript{109}

The issue of the Asian youth conference was discussed at the WFDY Council meeting in Prague in August 1947. The Soviet delegates received the following directives concerning the needs of colonial youth and the preparations for the Asian youth conference. They were required:

- To ensure that the WFDY Council approve the Executive’s decisions supporting the national liberation struggles.
- To ensure that the WFDY Council adopt a concrete program of assistance to the youth of the colonial and semi-colonial countries and organize a widespread campaign in defense of the rights and needs of the colonial youth.
- To support the proposal that in November 1947 a Southeast Asian youth conference should be convened in Indonesia with the aim of strengthening the unity of the democratic youth of these countries.
- To propose that the members of the WFDY commission who travelled to India and other Southeast Asian countries should go to various countries (first of

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., l.187–191.
all to Britain, France, USA and the Netherlands) in order to inform the broad masses of young people about the living conditions and the needs of the colonial youth.

• To agree with the WFDY Secretariat decision to accept the Indonesian Youth Federation for WFDY membership.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., f. 17 o. 128 d. 247 l. 199.
Chapter Five.

The Soviet approach to the Conference of the Youth of Southeast Asian Countries (Calcutta, February 1948).

The Conference of the Youth of Southeast Asian Countries took place in Calcutta from 19 to 26 February 1948. There were 93 participants who represented various youth organizations of leftist orientation from 25 countries. The delegates included 18 representatives of youth organizations in India, nine from Pakistan, seven from Burma, one from Malaya, five from Indonesia, six from Vietnam, one from Ceylon, two from the Philippines and seven from China. There were a total of 56 delegates with formal votes. The Conference also included 15 observers from North Korea, Mongolia and the Soviet Asian republics; 22 representatives from Canada, Britain, France and some other countries, including three persons from the USSR, were invited as guests.

The Soviet youth delegation to the Conference received the following secret ‘Instructions’\(^{111}\) approved by the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B):

To agree to the following agenda:

1. The struggle of the Southeast Asian countries youth against imperialism, for national independence and freedom, peace and democracy;

2. The situation and needs of the youth of Southeast Asian countries, who are struggling against imperialism;

3. The tasks of strengthening the unity of the youth movement inside the countries and developing ties with the world democratic youth via WFDY and IUS.

On the question of the struggle of the youth of Southeast Asian countries against imperialism, and for national independence and freedom, peace and democracy, they were:

\(^{111}\) RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 432 l. 21–24.
- To adopt a resolution supporting the national liberation struggle of the youth of Southeast Asian countries against imperialism, for complete national independence,
  democracy and freedom of the peoples of Indonesia, Vietnam, India, Malaya, Burma and other colonial and semi-colonial countries, for peace and democracy in the whole world.
- The Conference should call upon world democratic youth to support the colonial peoples’ struggle against imperialist oppression, because this struggle constitutes a part of the common struggle for peace and democracy.
- To condemn the imperialist policy of the governments of the USA, Britain, the Netherlands and France, which carry on criminal colonialist wars in Indonesia and Vietnam.
- To call on the democratic youth in France and the Netherlands to boycott arms shipment to Indonesia and Vietnam, and to organize mass actions against the criminal policy of their governments.

This paragraph ended with a call to condemn British policy towards India and Pakistan.

In the paragraph ‘On the situation and needs of the Southeast Asian youth struggling against imperialism’ it was recommended to hear the reports of the delegates from India, Indonesia, Malaya, Burma, Ceylon and Vietnam on the problem and to suggest as urgent tasks, for the realization of which the youth should struggle, the following:

- **for youth in general** – concession of political and major social rights;
- **for working youth** – guaranteeing jobs and social security;
- **for peasant youth** – acquisition of land, lessening of exploitation by landlords and so on;
- **for students** – free education and assistance in acquiring education;
- **for everybody** – concession of rights for free unions and democratic organizations.
In this connection it was recommended that restrictions of democratic rights in a number of Asian countries (China, Egypt, South Korea and Iran) be condemned.

All demands worked out at the Conference were to be directed to the UNO. ‘The Conference should call on the world democratic youth to more decidedly support the national liberation struggles of Southeast Asian youth, and in particular of the Indonesian and the Vietnamese youth, who are defending the freedom and independence of their peoples with arms.’

The Conference should address to WFDY the request to enhance ties with Southeast Asian countries. In the concluding part of the paragraph it was stated that: ‘It should be stressed in the Conference decision that the youth of the colonial and semi-colonial countries will achieve the realization of their rights only through the irreconcilable struggle for their freedom and national independence, against the forces of imperialism and reaction.’

In the last paragraph of the ‘Instructions’ entitled ‘On the tasks of strengthening unity of the youth movement in these countries and the development of ties with the World Democratic Youth via WFDY and IUS’, the importance of the struggle against efforts on the part of leaders of some bourgeois national organizations to divide the youth was stressed, as was the importance of the creation of mass organizations of working youth in factories, schools and villages in Southeast Asian countries. It was suggested that in India and Indonesia a youth magazine should be published for Southeast Asian countries.

The importance of training personnel and leaders for the youth organizations was further stressed. It was suggested that ‘the Soviet delegation should agree to a proposal to leave one or two WFDY activists for a long period of time in one of the countries which participated at the Conference for the realization of this task’ and should also ‘adopt a resolution on the creation in India of a permanent section of the Colonial Bureau, which would work under the guidance of the WFDY Secretariat’. The Soviet delegates were also instructed to advocate widely the success of the building of socialism in the USSR, especially in the Asian republics.
On 22 March 1948, the Soviet delegation presented to the Secretaries of the CC AUCP (B) – Zhdanov, Kuznetsov, Suslov and Popov – a secret account ‘On the results of the Youth Conference of Southeast Asian Countries’ signed by the Secretary of the CC of Komsomol N. Mikhailov.\textsuperscript{112}

The account began with general information about the participants, the agenda and the proceedings of the Conference. On the first issue ‘The struggle of the Southeast Asian youth against imperialism, for national independence and freedom, peace and democracy’, reports were presented by China and Vietnam, while a number of other delegations, including Indonesia, Burma and Malaya, took part in the discussions.

The account pointed out that ‘all speeches were of a militant anti-imperialist character. The delegates spoke about the treacherous role of the national bourgeoisie, which made deals with Anglo-American, French and Dutch imperialism.’

On the second issue, ‘The situation and needs of the youth of Southeast Asia’, reports were presented by delegates from India, Pakistan, Malaya and Burma. In the reports and the discussions they advised of the grave situation of, and the deprivation of civil rights among youth in these countries.

At this session, a Soviet delegate, Kharlamov, delivered a salutary address in the name of Soviet youth. ‘His words about the Soviet Union and Comrade Stalin were greeted with a great ovation, many cries from the audience in honour of the Soviet people, and Comrade Stalin.’ The account noted that the ‘reports of the representatives from Uzbekistan and Khazahstan, in which they depicted in detail the life of young people in the Soviet Central Asian republics, were listened to with great attention’.

On the whole the Conference proceeded in a convivial atmosphere. Only once was there discord, when the brothers and associates of Subhas Chandra Bose tried to force the participants of the Conference to endorse Bose’s actions during

\textsuperscript{112} RSASPH, f. 17 o. 128 d. 427 l. 46–58.
the World War II, directed against the Western powers. The account noted that ‘The Preparatory Committee members were taken aback and were ready to meet Bose’s demands. But after talks with the leadership of the Soviet youth delegation, the members of the Preparatory Committee understood their mistake’ and the Bose brothers’ proposal was rejected.

According to the account, ‘the Conference on every issue adopted resolutions which are in accordance with the “Instructions” given to the Soviet delegation’. The Conference unanimously supported the national liberation struggle of the youth of Southeast Asian countries against imperialism, condemned the policies of Dutch and French imperialists, who were being assisted by Anglo-American imperialism, and called on youth to prevent their realization, and advocated the rights and needs of colonial youth, in particular the elimination of the feudal land system and the nationalization of key branches of industry.

The Conference underlined the importance of the unity of young people and pointed out that the struggle against the American warmongers, which was being carried on by WFDY, constituted direct and important assistance to the Southeast Asian youth.

Further, the account described mass actions which were carried out during the Conference: a demonstration under the slogan ‘Hands off Asia!’ where the young people also cried ‘Young people unite, attack, win!’, ‘Long live the Soviet Union!’, and ‘Long live the People’s Revolution!’. At the meeting which followed, participants glorified Generalissimo Stalin. All this was repeated at other meetings and mass actions.

The Soviet delegation had meetings and discussions with youth delegations of other countries. The account advised that these discussions dealt with problems of the Southeast Asian youth movement and topics on life in the USSR, its achievements in the sphere of science, culture and education. A Soviet documentary film about the lives of Soviet youth was shown to the Conference participants and great numbers of people. These film shows always turned into manifestations glorifying Stalin and the USSR.
The account noted that the Indian government had a ‘far from favourable’ attitude towards the Conference, that the government-controlled newspapers ignored the Conference, and that the Soviet delegates’ speeches were published in detail without distorting its essence.

Furthermore, the account gave an evaluation of the political, economic and social situation in India as seen by the Soviet delegates. They noted the absence of any desire in the Indian government to carry out reforms, aggravation of the bourgeoisie’s reactionary nature, and the growth of US propaganda. The account proposed that Soviet propaganda in India as well as work among the country’s youth should be activated.

For our research the concluding pages of the account are of the utmost interest:

‘During the Soviet youth delegation’s stay in India it was contacted by Dr Ram Nook Tak.\textsuperscript{113} On 27 February 1948 in Calcutta Dr. Tak expressed the following considerations: On the situation in Indonesia. Dr. Tak said that the latest developments in Indonesia and in particular the conclusion of the Renville agreement testify to the opportunistic and capitulatory policy of the Indonesian party [Communist Party], which was unable to head the mass movement and transferred the leadership to bourgeois parties. Dr. Tak is of opinion that all that was won with blood was surrendered without struggle.

In Indonesia during their war the progressive forces were too much busy with international propaganda, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the like, but did not pay enough attention to the real unification of inner forces and as a result lost them.

\textsuperscript{113} Phảm Ngéc Thâch (1909–68), head of the Vietnamese delegation to the Delhi youth conference. He had led a revolutionary youth group in Vietnam prior to 1945, was later appointed as a member of the provisional Nam Bo (southern) administration and then as the chairman of the Sai Gon-Gia Dinh Administrative Resistance Committee. Subsequently he became the first Health Minister of the DRV. He was also famed for his research on malaria, and a hospital and medical university were posthumously named after him. For some biographical details in English, see Ham Chau, ‘Pham Ngoc Thach: A physician and revolutionary’, Vietnamese Studies, 147 (2003): 48–52.
In Burma, according to Dr. Tak, the situation is not bad. Everything is under the control of the ‘Marxist League’, which coexists with the Communist party. According to Dr. Tak, there is no principal difference between them, the programs and the slogans on the whole coincide, but there exist disagreements and personal enmity in the leadership of the League and the Communist party… In the situation of Southeast Asia nowadays, Burma in Dr. Tak’s opinion, is the most progressive democratic country after Vietnam. It is very important, Dr. Tak stressed, to establish diplomatic relations between Burma and the USSR, because Vietnam has very close ties with Burma. The Vietnamese people’s army is moving, fighting towards the Burmese frontier in order to have an opportunity to receive arms and materials, which were promised by the Burmese, without hindrance.

Dr. Tak is of opinion, that the common feature of the Southeast Asia’s parties is the abundance in the ‘ultra-left’ groups. They cannot see the difference between strategy and tactics, between principles and tactics. After they acquired the ABC of Marxism-Leninism they are now suffering the growing pains of ‘leftism’. There are a lot of Trotskyist elements which are hostile to the Soviet Union. Tak stated, that almost all the Communist parties are lacking trained and experienced personnel, have almost no connections with the Informbureau of the Communist parties in Yugoslavia and have no possibility because of the lack of currency to receive sufficient copies of the newspaper ‘For the Lasting Peace, for the People’s Democracy’. Tak asked to assist in the matter.

…Further Dr. Tak asked to inquire if the Soviet Union were able to help Vietnam in the matter of foreign currency (American dollars, British pounds), referring to the information that in China and in the Philippines it is possible to acquire a sufficient amount of arms.

Tak was stressing the urgency of getting assistance in Party and military personnel, as until the present the fighting was carried mostly with guerrilla methods. Now that the decisive phase is approaching, there is need of experienced military personnel. … Especially there is a need for air power (it is lacking altogether) and heavy artillery…. Tak asked to help in every way in the propaganda
of the Vietnam Constitution all over the world and in dissemination of other materials…

Dr. Tak arrived in India with the official mission to express condolences to the Indian government headed by Nehru in connection with Gandhi assassination. At the same time the Party commissioned him to lead the Vietnam delegation at the Youth Conference and to establish ties with the Communist parties of Burma and other countries. …

In conclusion Tak asked to pay fraternal regards to the AUCP(B) and the great leader Comrade Stalin.

The Soviet delegations’ Calcutta Conference account was apparently first of all read in the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B). Regarding the account there was sent to Suslov’s Secretariat the following covering letter, written by the head of the Southeast Asian sector Plishevskiy:

“The issues connected with Vietnam were reported separately to Comrade Suslov M.A. on 16.III.48. Besides on 2.IV.48. an information letter from Pham Hgok Thak dated 27 February 1948 which was received through Com. Kharlamov (CC of Komsomol) was directed to Com. Suslov. In the letter there were stated all the issues, which the present note contains.”

Concerning the situation in Indonesia a special report was written in February 1948 for the members of Politbureau. The situation has not changed since then. On the issue of bad connections with Informbureau and difficulties in getting the newspaper ‘For the Lasting Peace, for the People’s Democracy’ Com. Yudin will be informed during his next visit to Moscow.

In other respects the material contains information and does not need action”.

So we can come to the conclusion, that while the Soviet leadership instigated the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist ardour on the part of the Soviet and the world

114 RSASPH, f. 17 o. 128 d. 427 l. 59.

115 Apparently this covering letter was attached to the short paraphrase of the Soviet youth delegation’s account.
communist-oriented youth in their propaganda activity, in resolutions, speeches and in the press, the CC AUCP (B) strongly rejected all practical efforts of the Soviet youth leaders to put these slogans into practice. The Soviet leadership harshly criticized the youth activists who took seriously the propaganda rhetoric and tried to realize it.

Though the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B) tried to follow the situation closely as well as developments in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, especially the communist activities; the Soviet Communist party up to the spring of 1948 kept a certain distance from communist activity there, and tried not to get involved in inner developments in these countries.

Although the Southeast Asian communists were eager to get more assistance from the USSR, including material help such as arms shipment, the USSR refrained from this and did not even maintain regular ties with Southeast Asian communist parties. The Soviet leadership was not even sure about the victory of the national liberation struggle in these countries.

The main aim of the USSR in the period still was the confrontation with the Western powers both in the region and in the world, including the weakening of American, British, French and Dutch influence in Indonesia and other countries of Southeast Asia.
Chapter Six.

Olga Chechetkina’s secret report.

Besides the official report of the WFDY commission to the Executive, Olga Chechetkina prepared another secret account of her travels to the countries of Southeast Asia for the Komsomol CC and the Foreign Affairs Department of the CC AUCP (B). The account was dated 12 September 1947. In it Chechetkina expounded her own views on the situation in the Southeast Asian countries she had visited.\footnote{RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d.249 l. 23–52.}

Officially Olga Chechetkina was a journalist, and a representative of Soviet youth in the WFDY journal World Youth. But this post was included in the so-called ‘party nomenclature’, that is, the list of important posts which were to be occupied by persons chosen by the Communist Party leadership from amongst the Party’s most competent and trusted members.

Chechetkina was appointed to the post in the WFDY by the Secretariat of the CC AUCP (B). She was well versed in party politics, and evaluated international relations and the inner situation in the Southeast Asian countries from the Communist Party point of view. Her main aim during her travels to the countries of Southeast Asia was to gather information not for publishing in the press, nor for the WFDY, but rather for the Soviet leadership and specifically for the CC AUCP (B). That is why her analysis is important for understanding Soviet policy in the region.

Her country by country analysis of the situation in each Southeast Asian country she visited was introduced by a general description of the major features of domestic politics common to all Southeast Asian countries. Chechetkina noted the heightening of political activity and political consciousness of the masses as a result of World War Two and the Japanese occupation. A consequence of this was, according to her, the strengthening of positions and widening of influence of the
communist parties, trade unions and peasant and youth organizations in the region. All this had led to the heightening of anti-imperialist struggle. Chechetkina also noted the rise of class struggle. All this had provoked a reaction on the part of imperialists, who in collaboration with the local bourgeoisie, were striving to suppress political activity by the colonial peoples.

In response to the unity of global opinion, there was also an increased unity of colonial peoples. ‘Now there exist great opportunities for expanding this unity of the masses of colonial peoples both inside the countries and outside, with the working masses of Europe and America.’

Chechetkina stressed the interest of the Southeast Asian peoples in whether they could receive real support and assistance in their struggle on the part of democratic forces of Europe and America. ‘The colonial peoples are not satisfied any more with mere resolutions (although the resolutions help in maintaining in the peoples the spirit of resistance). They need something more essential.’

Chechetkina underlined that the major expectations of the colonial peoples were connected with the USSR. ‘In every country we travelled through I saw extraordinary interest in and love towards the Soviet Union. … Despite desperate anti-Soviet propaganda, which is carried on there through British and American newspapers, the belief in the USSR has not died out among the masses. Quite on the contrary, hopes for Soviet assistance are growing there with renewed strength.’

Further, she wrote that in the remotest villages she was asked whether they were doing the right thing in starting uprisings, whether the USSR would be able to send arms to them; and whether we would support them if they started a

117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
volution.\textsuperscript{119} ‘We shall overcome the British, but we must be sure that you will support us.’\textsuperscript{120}

Chechetkina was speaking exclusively about the national liberation struggle of the peoples of India, Indonesia and other countries of Southeast Asia, about their readiness to rise up against imperialism, and to start an anti-colonial revolution. She underlined their hopes for assistance from the progressive forces of Europe and America, and primarily the USSR, in the struggle for national independence. The colonial peoples’ words cited by Chechetkina testify to their disappointment with the solely moral and diplomatic support from the Soviet side and their desire to get from the Soviet Union more practical support, including the provision of arms.

These expectations of the colonial peoples, which were stimulated by active Soviet anti-colonial and anti-imperialist propaganda in the international arena, have also been noted by Western scholars.\textsuperscript{121} Nevertheless it should be stressed that Olga Chechetkina’s secret account addressed to the CC AUCP (B) did not contain anything which could be considered as implying that the colonial peoples’ were striving for radical socialist-oriented reforms or communist revolution.

In the chapter concerning Indonesia in this account, Chechetkina gave a description of the complex political and economic situation under the Dutch blockade and the anti-colonial war, at the moment that the Dutch presented an ultimatum to the Republic of Indonesia in the summer of 1947. Chechetkina provided interesting descriptions of a number of Indonesian leaders, and evaluations of the Republican internal situation, which differed from previous Soviet assessments.

First of all, she gave a description of the Republican Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir, who was a member of the Indonesian Socialist Party and was regarded by

\textsuperscript{119} ‘Revolution’ here meaning ‘anti-colonial revolution’.

\textsuperscript{120} RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 249 l. 23–52.

the Soviet leadership as well as by the Indonesian communists as a leftist leader. This positive attitude towards Sjahrir is clearly seen in a letter by an Indonesian communist leader Maruto Darusman to the CC of the Communist Party of the Netherlands dated 18 June 1946, which has been found among the documents of the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B). Maruto considered Sjahrir to be very close to the communists. ‘When Sjahrir got the opportunity to form his first government, it was the first step on the way to the right Marxist policy.’

Maruto underlined the similarity of the positions of both the communist and the socialist parties in Indonesia. ‘The struggle of the Socialists and the Communists is commonly directed both against foreign domination and those groups which with their radical slogans are actually weakening the revolution.’ This implied the ‘Trotskyists’ Tan Malaka and Soebardjo, who were Soekarno’s opponents at the time. It was stated in this letter that the socialists exerted strong influence on the peasantry and women’s organizations.

An anonymous article on the situation in Indonesia, apparently written under the influence of this letter, was published in the classified Bulletin of the Information Bureau of CC AUCP (B) on foreign policy topics of 1 October 1946, as N. 18(42). In its closing paragraph, the following conclusion was drawn: ‘The rise of the national liberation movement, the masses’ readiness for every kind of sacrifice in the name of obtaining freedom, and the inclination of the broad working masses towards everything linked with socialism and communism create favourable conditions for the Communist and the Socialist parties to deal with the grave situation in the country and to seize the leadership of the national liberation movement.’

122 RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 216 l. 39.

123 Ibid., l. 42.

124 RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 94.

125 Ibid., l. 9.
Apparently, Olga Chechetkina’s attitude towards Sjahrir was also initially positive. But in the account of her visit to Indonesia she drastically changed her opinion of Sjahrir. ‘I must say, that the changes which occurred in Sjahrir’s views subsequent to when we met him on the first day of our visit to Batavia were conspicuous. On that evening he was telling us about the government’s firm determination to confront the Dutch pressure.’\textsuperscript{126} But later Chechetkina wrote: ‘Nevertheless at our last meeting with him on the eve of our departure [and after the Dutch ultimatum] it became clear that his determination was melting away and obviously he wanted to persuade the Cabinet to make a compromise with the Dutch. As far as our delegation was concerned, he ‘feared’, as we were informed, that our stay in Republican territory and meetings with the Indonesian youth, where we expressed our support for their struggle, possibly might be “harmful” for the Republic, as the Americans and the British had begun to write more and more about the “Communist nature of Indonesia”.’\textsuperscript{127}

Chechetkina’s initial appraisal of President Soekarno did not much differ from the rather negative attitude that was typical of the Soviet leadership, although she brought to the fore some details and nuances, concerning his role and place in Republican political development.

During the first years of Indonesian independence, the Soviet leaders did not pay much attention to the newborn Republic and its President, apparently because they did not have enough firm information about the processes which were going on there. From the beginning of 1946, the USSR had started to actively support the anti-imperialist struggle in Indonesia, but at the same time did not demonstrate much sympathy towards its leader. Evidently, this was an effect of the international press, a part of which considered Soekarno to be a Japanese agent, as well as of the negative attitude towards the President on the part of the Indonesian communists.

\textsuperscript{126} RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 249 l. 44.

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., l. 44–5.
In the aforementioned letter of Maruto Darusman, Soekarno was appraised as ‘a petit-bourgeois leader, hesitating, with weak disposition’, ‘a sheer conciliator’ (towards the negotiations with the Dutch). ‘Taking into consideration the internal situation in the country, we are forced to let him stay for the time being’, wrote Maruto Darusman.¹²⁸

However, after personal meetings with Soekarno, Chechetkina appraised him as a person definitely smart and witty, although ‘full of self-conceit to the extreme’. ‘He is doing his utmost in order to win love and popularity among the people.’ ‘You can feel that he is determined to defend all rights of the Republic and full of concern about the future.’ He was worried about the Soviet recognition of the Republic. When he asked about it you could hear in his voice a request and fear of refusal. Soekarno also expressed the desire to establish trade relations with the USSR.¹²⁹

Chechetkina stressed Soekarno’s tremendous popularity among the Republican population. ‘And it is very typical, that for them, these thousands of peasants and poor people, Soekarno is not a human being, but the symbol of the Republic.’¹³⁰

Chechetkina was much more sympathetic in her description of Amir Sjarifuddin, who was at the time the Defense Minister of the Republic of Indonesia. ‘He is a Socialist, but as we were told by the comrades [the communists] that he is very close to the Communist Party.’ But Chechetkina’s sympathy was based not so much on this information as on Sjarifuddin’s determination to fight against the Dutch without compromise. She reported that Sjarifuddin had stated that, ‘the Republicans will fight to the end. They will start a ruthless guerrilla war with scorched earth tactics.’ She added that, ‘the Republicans are preparing their army for the guerrilla war. He showed to us a map of the deployment of the

¹²⁸ RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 216 l. 47.
¹²⁹ RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 249 l. 49.
¹³⁰ Ibid., l.46.
guerrilla and the army divisions and of the people’s militia. Divided if needed into smaller groups they will scatter over the country…’

Olga Chechetkina drew the special attention of CC AUCP (B) to the very poor state of the Indonesian troops’ armaments. ‘Nevertheless in order not to create a big illusion, I should say that the state of the Republican troops’ armaments is very bad. We inspected some of the Republican divisions, saw many soldiers, visited some guerrilla areas and had a very grave impression of the armaments of the Republicans.’ The most they had was the arms left by the Japanese, a few American and British machineguns, seized from the Dutch, and the rest was just self-made arms: mortars and hand grenades.

The people’s militia consisted of peasants armed with sharpened bamboo spears. Chetchetkina noted that: ‘Certainly a guerrilla war presupposes the seizure of arms from the enemy. But if we want to speak of real assistance to Indonesia it should take the form of sending arms to them. They are receiving some arms from China and India through Singapore to Sumatra and further to Java.’ Thus Olga Chechetkina reminded the Central Committee once more that those peoples struggling against colonialism, among them the Indonesians regarded the sending of arms by the USSR as a concrete method of assistance.

Despite the militant spirit of the most part among the Indonesians, Chechetkina also pointed out the lack of discipline and proper vigilance. ‘But at the same time there exists in the Republic absolutely unfounded carelessness, including among the Communists: scores of American, British, and Dutch “observers” are freely traveling throughout the Republican territory, and near the Republican leaders, including the President and the former Prime Minister Sjahrir there are constantly hovering Dutch women.’

\[131\] Ibid., l.45.

\[132\] RSASPH f. 17 o. 128 d. 249 l. 45.

\[133\] Ibid., l. 46.
The journalist devoted a special paragraph to the deep frustration growing among the Indonesian masses. ‘Until now the proclamation of the Republic has brought to the masses moral relief, rather than social and economic changes. In their everyday lives the peasants, who are still landless, have not received any fruits from the Republican regime. They think this to be a result of the blockade of the country and of the need to mobilize all the resources in case of new military actions. But even now they are more decidedly presenting their demands to the government.’

Chechetkina added that, ‘Among the peasantry, as well as among the workers one can see a certain dissatisfaction with the Republican government, which in many matters did not go further than the proclamation of the Republic. And I think that this dissatisfaction will be increasing as time goes by, if the government does not carry out social and economic reforms, which will free the people from the many yokes of the pre-Republican period.’

While speaking about the urgency of the reforms, Chechetkina was implying not radical socialist changes, but anti-feudal reforms, namely those included in the Socialist Front Program adopted in spring 1947: the reduction of taxes, land reform and the creation of peasant cooperatives.

While describing Indonesian political parties and mass organizations, the journalist pointed out that ‘during recent months the Socialist Front [which comprised the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Youth Union] has been significantly strengthened and has great influence over the whole political and economic life of the country…. The Socialist Front maintains close ties with and is supported by the trade unions, the peasant organizations, the people’s army (the guerrillas, student detachments and the like).’

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134 Ibid.
135 Ibid., l. 45–6.
136 Ibid., l 47.
137 Ibid.
underlined the weaknesses of the Indonesian political and mass organizations, and the major weakness was the lack of experienced personnel.

The communists were trying to solve the problem by means of training personnel both for the Party and the trade unions and the peasant organizations in Marx House — a school of Marxism established in Jogjakarta. But the journalist expressed the opinion that ‘while organizing the school CC CPI had made a grave mistake of including in its curriculum “the study of Trotskyism”. The comrades explained that this was included because of the danger of the penetration into the Party of Trotskyist influences.’

Olga Chechetkina did not pay special attention to the Indonesian communists, possibly because the WFDY Commission intended to establish contacts with as wide a circle of the Indonesian parties and organizations as possible, not only communists. Nevertheless the Commission certainly met the communists and the Indonesian communists discussed with the Soviet journalist their difficulties. ‘As in other countries the Secretary of the Indonesian Communist Party, Comrade Alimin, asked me to inform CC AUCP (B) about their urgent needs in terms of everyday help and links with other parties. He asked me to deliver his frank admission, that without advice from and links with Moscow it is sometimes very difficult to resolve issues. He also asked me to pass on his request for a rapid return to Indonesia from the USSR of Comrade Muso — one of the activists of the Indonesian Communist Party (“where he is staying now I do not know”) and a request that a TASS press agency correspondent be sent to Indonesia.’

Naturally Chechetkina paid much more attention to the Indonesian youth movement. She noted that ‘in no other Asian country do youth organizations play such an important role as in Indonesia’. She pointed out that ‘the general recognition of the young people’s important role in the revolution and in the

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138 Ibid., l. 48–9.
139 Ibid., l. 49.
national liberation war have turned some of the youth leaders’ heads and there exist among them some indications of avant-gardism. More serious and politically experienced people have already understood this danger and are trying to eradicate it.\textsuperscript{140}

Another important topic in Olga Chechetkina’s account was the unity of the Indonesian people and its various factions under the national liberation struggle conditions. ‘The main feature of the Indonesian people at present is its cohesion.’\textsuperscript{141} ‘The Socialist Front has taken as its task cooperation with other parties.’\textsuperscript{142} The same was said about the possibility of unification of all Indonesian young people.\textsuperscript{143}

In the concluding part of the account the journalist drew the attention of the CC AUCP (B) to the need to resolve ‘a number of big and serious questions’. The first and most serious question concerned the communist parties in the Southeast Asian countries she travelled through, including Indonesia.

‘The Communist Parties of all the countries, especially in the colonies, unquestionably need regular and serious help and guidance. There exists a need for links among the parties, without which they are in grave danger of isolation and will find it impossible to swiftly adopt correct orientations on the most serious international and domestic problems.

Until an international organization of workers’ parties is created (in some form), it is absolutely necessary to establish bureaus linking the parties of all the countries. Such bureaus may be regional, but linked with each other, or international ones. In particular, I think, the Indonesian Socialist Front could take the initiative to call an International conference or just a meeting of representatives of various countries.’

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., l. 45.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., l. 48.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., l. 51.
The second important proposal by the journalist dealt with the sending of trade representatives to the region. ‘I suppose that it would be to our political and economic advantage if we had permanent trade representatives of the USSR in … Indonesia.’

Further she urgently recommended the sending of a TASS press agency correspondent to Indonesia. ‘It is absolutely necessary (and I suppose possible) that TASS send correspondents to … Indonesia…’.

Olga Chechetkina proposed that inviting students from these countries to study in the USSR be made one of the ways of Soviet influence in the colonies as well as of personnel training. She stressed the urgency of the issue, because the Americans and the British were already very active in this sphere.

She also recommended that more films and magazines including pro-Soviet propaganda be sent to Asian countries, that the hours of Soviet radio broadcasting to Asian countries be adjusted to local time\textsuperscript{144}, and that the exchange of youth delegations be intensified.\textsuperscript{145}

We can thus draw the conclusion that Olga Chechetkina in the autumn of 1947 saw neither the signs nor the necessity of a socialist revolution in Indonesia. On the contrary, she stressed the unity of the Indonesian people in the anti-imperialist struggle, despite the fact that the working masses were disappointed with their grave living conditions. She pointed out the lack of experienced cadres in the Indonesian leftist and communist groups, and their poor knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.

Chechetkina urgently recommended that the USSR assist in establishing close and permanent contacts among Asian communists, help them with advice,

\textsuperscript{144} Radio Moscow broadcasting to Indonesia began soon after this country proclaimed its independence in 1945. At first programs for Indonesia were sporadic but while Indonesia strengthened its independence the programs became more and more regular. The programs of Radio Moscow were aimed at enriching people’s lives with information, education and entertainment. At the beginning the duration of the broadcasting was three hours every day. Later broadcasting was prolonged up to six hours per day. In the international political and ideological context of the cold war the mission of Radio Moscow was first of all propagandistic. The main purpose of the management was to demonstrate the superiority of socialism over capitalism.

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., l. 51–52.
and also intensify agitation and propaganda work in the Asian countries in favour of the Soviet way of life.

Based on Chechetkina’s account, we can tell that the ties between the Indonesian Communist Party and the AUCP (B) were practically non-existent in that period and that the Indonesian communists had expressed a strong interest in establishing more regular and close links among the communists of Southeast Asia as well as with the CC AUCP (B).

Olga Chechetkina’s account appears to have been negatively received by the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B). To the Secretariat of a member of CC AUCP (B) Mikhail Suslov, who was responsible for Soviet foreign policy, was sent not the whole text of the account, comprising 30 typewritten pages, but only a brief report of four pages, prepared a month later — on 17 October 1947.\textsuperscript{146}

At the beginning of the report it was stressed that the account ‘presents personal observations and conclusions from discussions with leaders of the parties and organizations the delegation met’. In this way the political importance of the information and proposals contained in the document, was significantly reduced.

The annotation mentioned Indonesia only once: ‘About the situation in Indonesia the account contains no data which was not already known.’

The summary authors – the head of the Southeast Asian section of the Foreign Policy Department of CC AUCP (B) Plishevskiy and an instructor Kozlov – included in their document only the following of Chechetkina’s proposals, the realization of which, in their opinion, ‘would contribute to the popularization of the USSR and to the rise of sympathy for it on the part of Southeast Asian peoples’:

1. To include representatives of Southeast Asian countries in trade union, women, youth, and cultural workers’ delegations which are invited to the USSR;

2. As in Southeast Asian countries there exist no Soviet film-projecting organizations, it should be recommended to the Soviet women’s, trade unions, and

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., l. 58–61.
youth organizations that they assist in distributing Soviet films in Southeast Asian countries;

3. To recommend that the Soviet Radio broadcasting Committee take effective measures for improving the quality and the timing of broadcasting to Southeast Asia.\(^{147}\)

The summary was first brought to the attention of the deputy head of the Foreign Policy Department, L.S. Baranov. In Plishevskiy’s covering letter dated 22 October, it was stressed, that ‘the summary includes only those issues which are new to us and are of some value’.\(^{148}\)

Chechetkina’s proposals, especially those about Asian communist parties and Soviet trade representatives, were harshly criticized as of too general a nature and of no practical significance. ‘For instance, the conclusion that the communist parties of Southeast Asia need help and feel the necessity of closer ties among them is indeed correct. But to make proposals at present to the leadership of the CC AUCP (B) on the advisability of the establishment of any regional union of the communist parties of these countries is hardly expedient, taking into consideration the political status of these countries and the role the parties are playing there now. Rather, I believe, we can speak about assistance in the future in the form of advice to these parties on the part of the Information Bureau which has been created in Belgrade through its publications and by other possible means.’

Chechetkina’s proposal to send a Soviet trade representative to the Southeast Asian countries were rejected too. Plishevskii remarked that this question was not as simple as Chechetkina believed it to be and proposing it could only mean that she did not know the real situation in the countries.

Concerning Indonesia, Plishevskiy pointed out that ‘the very existence of the Republic is questionable as a result of the Netherlands’ war aimed at restoring

\(^{147}\) Ibid.

\(^{148}\) Ibid., l. 56.
colonial domination in Indonesia’. He stressed that the summary included only those proposals which could be put practically into effect.

On 10 December 1947, a deputy of the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B), V. Moschetov, sent a note to Suslov’s Secretariat, in which Chechetkina’s account was criticized even more harshly. It was pointed out in the note that her account was mostly of an informative nature and stated that Olga Chechetkina had been dismissed from work as a Soviet representative on the WFDY magazine “The World Youth” in connection with the compromising of information. It was stressed in the note that ‘for the most part, the proposals were not thought through’. Furthermore, the note repeated the wording of Plishevskii’s covering letter:

“The conclusion that the Communist parties of the Southeast Asian countries need help and feel the necessity in closer links with each other is indeed correct. But to make proposals to the leadership of the CC AUCP (B) on the question of the advisability of the creation of a regional union of the Communist parties of these countries is hardly expedient, taking into consideration the political status of most Eastern countries and the role the Communist parties play there.’ Furthermore, ‘Putting to the CC AUCP (B) the question of sending Soviet trade representatives to Burma, Malaya and Indonesia without considering the general political situation and our economic relations with them is not considered.’ Furthermore, the document supported the proposals contained in the summary and its covering letter prepared by Plishevskiy.

Chechetkina’s account was thus being considered in the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP(B) for about two months before its contents were presented to Suslov. In the process, the account was emptied of the most important and acute observations concerning the ideological and organizational weaknesses of the Indonesian communists, their isolation from the world communist movement and their absolute unpreparedness for any serious actions in the Indonesian

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149 Ibid.
political arena, as well as her comments concerning the bad armaments of the Indonesian troops, and the avant-gardism and lack of self-control of the Indonesian young people.

Based on the information contained in Chechetkina’s summary presented to Suslov, and the fact that she was dismissed from work in the world youth organization, we can come to the conclusion that the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP (B) held a generally negative opinion of her views on the situation in the Southeast Asian countries, and felt that her evaluation of local communists and other leftist groups and her recommendations concerning them, were too radical and far-reaching, going far beyond the moderate position maintained by the Foreign Policy Department, which manifested CC AUCP (B) views.
Chapter Seven.

Who gave instructions to the Indonesian Communist leader Musso in 1948?

On August 17, 1945 the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed independence from the Netherlands. Immediately after that an interparty struggle began for power and the determination of ways for political and socio-economic development. The left wing of the Indonesian political spectrum was represented by several parties: the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) headed by old-time Communists Sarjono and Alimin, the Socialist Party, Labor Party and a paramilitary youth organization, Pesindo.

Soon after the proclamation of Indonesian independence the Netherlands waged a colonial war on the Republic for re-establishment of Dutch political control over Indonesia. Indonesian leaders tried in every possible way to settle the conflict with the Netherlands peacefully. Two Indonesian-Dutch agreements were signed – the Linggadjati agreement and the Renville agreement. Both were unfavorable for the Indonesian Republic. The first was signed by a leader of the Socialist Party, Sjahrir, who headed the Republican government at the moment. The second agreement was concluded by another leader of the same party, Sjarifuddin, who succeeded Sjahrir as Prime Minister. Sjarifuddin later confessed to be a Communist. As a well-known specialist on the Indonesian revolution G. McTurnan L. Kahin remarked, “the Communists who joined the Socialist Party, the Labor Party, and the Pesindo ultimately emerged in control of these organizations. … This has led some Indonesians to conclude that there was a long-term conscious design on the part of these Communists to infiltrate and wrest control of these parties to the end of subverting them to Stalinist objectives.” Nevertheless, this scholar stressed the close ties which existed at this period between Indonesian and Dutch Communists and absence of proofs of any connections between the PKI and
Soviet Communists. “It does seem clear that when they first arrived in Indonesia late in 1945 and early in 1946, they were adhering closely to Moscow’s line, at least as it was interpreted by the Netherlands Communist Party. Their initial orientation was paralleling that of the Netherlands Communist party, anti-Republic.”

In January 1948 the Sjarifuddin cabinet fell and the new Republican government was headed by a right-wing nationalist Moh. Hatta. His policy was aimed at containment of the left-wing revolutionary activity.

In this situation Musso, an old-time Communist leader, returned to Indonesia from Moscow. Under his influence the four leftist organizations merged into one Indonesian Communist party. The Party conference in August 1948 adopted a resolution “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia”, which determined a new strategy and tactics for the Indonesian Communists. Immediately after these events an uprising against the Republican authorities took place. The uprising was started by Pesindo and later joined by the PKI leaders, including Musso. The uprising was named “the Madiun Affair” as it started in the town of Madiun. It was crushed by the Republican authorities. The PKI was delivered a severe blow and disintegrated.

In Indonesian historiography of the “Cold War” period, especially Western, the return to Indonesia after more than twenty years’ exile in the USSR, of one of the most prominent Communist leaders, Musso, his program “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia”, and very often the Communist rebellion known as “the Madiun Affair” were invariably and directly linked with “the hand of Moscow”. A number of authors asserted the idea bluntly: "We do not know, nor are we ever likely to know, the precise instructions Musso received before leaving Moscow”, - wrote the American scholar A.C. Brackman.151 “Musso … clearly had come to

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Indonesia as Moscow’s agent with the new party strategy”, - echoed the Dutch scholar J.M. van der Kroef.152

Other authors were more cautious: “… Musso undoubtedly returned to the Republic at Russia’s behest and with a program outlined in Moscow. … However … we cannot be sure Musso did not add to or alter his Soviet instructions after arriving in Indonesia”, - observed Ruth McVey.153 Later authors took more balanced and objective approach to the problem concerning tasks and circumstances of Musso’s return to Indonesia.154 Nevertheless, all the authors based their opinions of their own views and preferences, not on documentary evidence.

Recently declassified documents from the archives of the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) – CC AUCP(B) have shed quite a new light on the relations between Indonesian Communists, especially Musso, with comrades from other communist parties: All Union Communist party of Bolsheviks - AUCP(B) and the Communist Party of the Netherlands – CPN.

Among the materials available to the researcher we could find no traces of any definite “Moscow’s instructions” to Musso. Nevertheless, we have found a number of very interesting documents, which shed quite new light on the sources of the ideas and plans Musso had used while working out his draft resolution for the Central Committee of the Indonesian Communist Party “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia”.

Musso, a well-known leader of the Indonesian Communist Party, emigrated from Indonesia after the Dutch colonial administration had crushed the Communist anticolonial uprising in 1926-27. In 1935 he returned to Indonesia for a short time


with the task of rebuilding the CPI which operated illegally. After the Second World War he lived in Moscow and worked in the Scientific Research Institute 205 affiliated to the CC AUCP(B). Musso participated in preparing information materials on Indonesia, reviews of Indonesian and Dutch press and the like.

Western scholars linked Musso’s return from Moscow to Indonesia with the USSR’s dissatisfaction with the fall of the Left-wing Sjarifuddin cabinet and the establishment of the Right-wing bourgeois-nationalist Hatta cabinet. The Soviet archival documents gave a more elaborate explanation of the reasons for Musso’s return to Indonesia early in 1948. These reasons were several.

The first one was the lack of regular links between AUCP(B) and the Indonesian Communists, the isolation of the Indonesian Communist Party from the international Communist movement. Before the Second World War South-East Asia was too much on the periphery of Soviet interest and knowledge. None the less, the USSR and the Comintern made every effort to improve their contacts with the Indonesian Communist movement. Indonesia’s colonial status and the Soviet Russia’s political isolation made direct contact between the two countries impossible. In the absence of any direct link with Indonesia, Moscow depended for knowledge of the PKI on information supplied it by its Indonesian and Dutch associates. One of the channels of communication ran via the exiled PKI leader Tan Malaka. Several times other leaders such as Alimin and Musso visited Moscow to participate at Comintern congresses and other events. But the major link between the Comintern, the Soviet Communists and the PKI was the Communist Party of Holland. As Ruth MacVey points out, “it was a general Comintern policy to hold the West European parties responsible in some degree for the training and guidance of the colonial movements.” The PKI relations with the Comintern and the Soviet Communist party were complicated. On the one side, they were rather intimate in that the PKI was able to maintain active and meaningful relations with the Comintern and through it with AUCP(B), and also more strained, in that, as a movement that had achieved political significance by its

own efforts, the Indonesian Communist Party had its own vested interests and its own concepts on the proper path to power, Physical distance added to the complexity of the relationship for, having no direct access to Indonesia and no means of imposing their opinion on the party, the Comintern and the AUCP(B) were forced to deal with the PKI through the Dutch Communists.\textsuperscript{156} The PKI and its leaders always acted on their own opinion. But even if they followed anybody’s advice, more often it was Dutch communists than the Soviet leaders or the Comintern.

After the Second World War the Soviet leadership continued to receive information about events which were taking place in the postwar Indonesia, only from the foreign press as well as from Dutch and Indonesian communists connected with them. This information was fragmentary and inaccurate as we can see from an editorial article published in the Bulletin of Information Bureau of CC AUCP(B) No.18(42), 1 October 1946, with the title “On the situation in Indonesia”. The article reached an optimistic conclusion that “the rise of the national-liberation movement, the readiness of the masses to every sacrifice in the name of winning freedom, the sympathy of the broad strata of toilers to everything connected with Socialism and Communism, create objective conditions, enabling the Communist and Socialist Parties (in the last party there are communists too) to cope with the internal situation in the country and to win the command of the national-liberation movement.” “Marxist literature is widely spread in the Republic. Such books as “On the problems of Leninism”, “The Communist Manifesto”, “The Biography of Josef Stalin” and others are translated into Indonesian language and widely circulated.” The article noted also that “statements of Mao Zedung are very popular”.\textsuperscript{157}


\textsuperscript{157} RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 94 l. 234.
The only means for direct contacts between AUCP(B) and Indonesian communists were international youth, student and trade union associations and their forums. But this was evidently not enough.

Indonesian communists too on their part were eager to establish closer and more regular ties with Moscow. During her visit to the Southeast Asian countries as a member of the delegation of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in spring-summer 1947, Olga Chechetkina informed that the Secretary of CC CPI Alimin had asked her to deliver to CC AUCP(B) “an urgent request of everyday assistance and contacts with other parties. He asked to pass his honest confession that sometimes it was very difficult without advice and connections with Moscow to solve some questions.” Alimin also expressed his desire that Musso – one of the CPI functionaries return to Indonesia as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{158}

So we could rightly suggest that one of the reasons of Musso’s return to Indonesia was Moscow’s intention to establish direct and closer contacts between AUCP(B) and the Indonesian communists bypassing Dutch mediation.

The second reason could be, as Western scholars suggested, the Soviet Union’s frustration with the passing of power in Indonesia from communists to bourgeois nationalists. The archival documents testify, that in the USSR the loss of communist domination in the government was being connected not only with machinations of the right-wing parties, supported by the U.S. and other imperialists, but also with incorrect tactics of the Indonesian Communist Party in the internal political struggle.

CC AUCP(B) was also irritated by the lack of reaction on the part of Indonesian communists to the Zhdanov’s Doctrine about world division into two opposing camps.

Apparently on the instruction of the Department of Foreign Policy of CC AUCP(B) Musso while preparing a usual survey of foreign press on the situation in Indonesia after the Conference of 9 Communist parties and the Cominform

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid. f. 17 o. 128 d. 249 l. 49.
establishment put a special accent on those questions of CPI strategy and tactics which arose the Soviet leaders concern. Apparently on the instruction of the department of Foreign Policy of CC AUCP(B) Musso, while preparing a routine survey of the foreign press on the situation in Indonesia after the Conference of nine Communist parties and the establishment of Cominform, put a special accent on those questions of CPI strategy and tactics which roused the Soviet leaders’ concern.

In his “Remarks on the Situation in Indonesia” dated 23 January 1948, Musso tried to explain to CC AUCP(B) the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian communists. In doing so he strove to justify them and brought the reader to the conclusion that these strategy and tactics resulted in strengthening of the Left wing’s positions in the Indonesian Republic. The reason why the Indonesian communists did not publish and popularize Zhdanov’s report, the Declaration of nine parties and other documents of the Conference in Warsaw among the masses Musso saw in the fact that CPI strove to paralyze Dutch anticommunist propaganda in Indonesia. “The Communists outwardly minimize their actual strength and do not expose their leading role in the Republican government. Leaders of the Socialist and Labor Parties (Sjarifuddin, Tamzil, Setiadjit and others, who actually are communists, but officially are known as Socialists) are moved to the foreground”. “The Indonesian communists are trying to escape attacks by anti-Soviet and anti-communist leaders of reactionary Indonesian parties and religious groups as well as accusations of connections with foreign countries.” It was because of this that the Republic chose for membership in the Good Offices Commission not the USSR or Poland, but Australia. “The Communist leaders are giving the impression that CPI is only a small party which does not play any important role.”

According to Musso, the membership of Sjarifuddin’s cabinet reorganized on 11 November 1947 “clearly testify that the communists officially keep to the shady side…” “Summing up the reorganization of the cabinet, we can say, that the

159 Ibid. f. 17 o. 128 d. 1175 l. 2-16.
Socialist block position in the government became considerably stronger than before…” “One more important change in favour of the liberation movement is the transition of many armed forces of various parties and organizations under the command of the Indonesian National Army, headed by Sjarifuddin…”

In addition Musso assured the Soviet leaders of sympathy on the part of broad Indonesian masses: “As far as the people’s attitude to the Soviet Union is concerned, it is possible to state, that not only communists sympathize with the country of Socialism, but other strata of society too.“

At the same time Musso noted that in the course of negotiations with the Netherlands in January 1948 the unity of action of the Republican forces was threatened, because of machinations of the American imperialists aimed at bringing Indonesia into their sphere of influence and creating a basis for that in rightist parties. But Musso expressed doubt about the capability of the rightist Indonesian parties to overthrow the Left-wing Sjarifuddin cabinet.

The ink had hardly dried on the analysis of the situation in the Indonesian Republic prepared by Musso when the Sjarifuddin cabinet fell on 23 January 1948.

On the next day after Musso’s analysis the officials on the Scientific Research Institute 205 Kogan and Puhlov presented to the Department of Foreign Policy of CC AUCP(B) a report titled “On Musso’s Remarks”. In the document they harshly criticized the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian communists and severely condemned Musso’s position, which tried to explain and justify CPI’s actions.

“Comrade Musso explains the reasons for not publishing the materials of the Conference of the nine parties and the absence of propaganda on the questions connected with the resolutions of the Conference of the nine parties on the part of the Indonesian Communist Party, by its special political line, which allegedly aimed at “paralyzing Truman’s Doctrine as well as anti-Communist propaganda in Indonesia, carried on by the Dutch”, with the help of conscientiously minimizing

160 Ibid. 1. 17-19.
its actual strength and not exposing its leading role in the Republican government, as well as concealing its links with abroad and so on.

In our opinion, if such a course is actually being taken it is a rotten course, and the consequences of this course have already manifested in that Sjarifuddin was forced to sign an agreement with the Dutch, imposed on him by the American “mediation”, just because the Republic and particularly the Indonesian Communist Party up to this time absolutely insufficiently laid bare the aggressive policy of American imperialism and thus contributed to a certain trust of the unsophisticated part of the population in the policy and “the mediation” of the American government. If the Party had published the resolutions of the Conference of the nine parties and Zhdanov’s report in particular, the people would have understood the contemporary arrangement of forces on an international scale. One of two things must be true: either there is no such “special course” of the policy of the Indonesian Communist Party in reality and Com. Musso is under a delusion, or if such a course actually exists, it is a disastrous course and Com. Musso justifies it.”

Further the document showed that Musso was mistaken in connection with the strengthening of positions of the Socialist block.

Further on Kogan and Puhlov expressed their negative attitude to the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian communists.

“Our opinion is as follows:

The Sjarifuddin government was forced to sign the agreement with the Dutch with the “mediation” of the American government because of the following circumstances: a) American imperialists up to now maintain the position of “non-interference” into Indonesian affairs, but actually give every kind of assistance to the Dutch colonizers. The Republic and in particular CPI having certain illusions concerning “favorable” for them “mediating” role of the American government (Sjahrir’s mission to the USA testifies to that), did not carry on anti-American propaganda and did not unmask in due measure the expansionist policy of American imperialism and thus created a kind of confidence on the part of the population toward the “mediation” of the American government. The rotten
position of CPI in the problem of the attitude to the Conference of nine parties and
the publication as well as propaganda of its materials contributed to and
predestined such an outcome of the matter; b) inside Indonesia lately a balance of
forces unfavorable for the communists formed between the Socialist block, on one
side, and Masjumi Party, which is trying with active American and Dutch
assistance to form an alliance with the National Party of Indonesia and other
conservative elements.” …” Taking in consideration the insolubility of the agrarian
problem (it is difficult to immediately solve this problem In Indonesia) the major
part of the peasantry is neutralized by the deceitful propaganda of Masjumi,
supported by the false promises of the American imperialists… Thanks to this
Sjarifuddin and the communists are forced to take into consideration the
unfavorable balance of forces and take tactical steps in order to help to unmask
both the Masjumi Party and standing behind it American imperialists.

In this situation the signing of the agreement with the Dutch is a correct
forced step, but if CPI had not taken the rotten position toward the Conference of
the nine parties and had for a long time carried on active propaganda against
American imperialism and its lackeys, it would not have found itself in a situation
such as the present one.” At the end of the document the authors pointed out that
all these observations were not discussed with Musso because of his illness.

The situation in Indonesia after Hatta’s government came to power and the
observations of the Scientific Research Institute’s officials were regarded by the
Department of Foreign Policy of CC AUCP(B) so grave that it decided it was
necessary to draw the attention of the higher Soviet leadership to it, including
Stalin.

On 18 February 1948 a note was addressed to Stalin, Molotov and other
members of the Politburo of CC AUCP(B), by the head of the South-East Asian
sector of the Department, Plishevskiy, entitled “The situation in Indonesia after the
signing of the Dutch-Indonesian agreement on 17 January 1948”. In the covering
letter it was stated directly “that incorrect tactics of CPI led to the transfer of power
The note contained an analysis and criticism of the Indonesian communists’ mistakes, mostly repeating not only critical remarks of the 205 Scientific Research Institute’s officials, but also fragments of Musso’s analysis of 23 January 1948 though with condemnation of the strategy and tactics which Musso was trying to explain and justify.

The contents of Plishevskiy’s note of 18 February 1948 are of key importance for understanding further development of affairs. Undoubtedly its contents were made known to Musso one way or another. And if we could speak of “Moscow’s instructions” to Musso, this document might be regarded as fulfilling this function. The main ideas of this very document were later repeated by Musso in his draft resolution “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia”. It is just CC AUCP(B) criticism contained in the document concerning the strategy and tactics of CPI he was trying to correct through the reform of the Indonesian communist movement after he returned to Indonesia.

Plishevskiy’s note began with critical remark concerning concessions on the part of the Indonesian delegation headed by the Prime-Minister Sjarifuddin in signing the agreement with the Netherlands on 17 January 1948. the first concession was specified as his consent to entering the United States of Indonesia, which were being created by the Netherlands, as a result of which the Republic of Indonesia (where left-wing forces in contrast to other Indonesian states were fairly strong) was to become one of the 16 member states and “could not lay claim to the role of the All-Indonesian representative”. The second error was specified as the consent to the withdrawal of the Republican armed forces behind the “Van Mook line”. Sjarifuddin’s consents to these concessions were attributed to USA pressure.

Further there was mention of the resignation of Sjarifuddin’s cabinet, the formation of a new government headed by Hatta without participation of leftist forces, as well as about increasing protests of the people’s masses against this. Besides with reference to foreign correspondents a suggestion was expressed about

161 Ibid. l. 42.

162 Ibid. l. 43-48.
the possibility of a civil war, “as many millions of the masses of the people are extremely indignant about the fact that with American assistance the reactionary elements came to power”.

“Without sufficient information from Indonesia, it is as yet impossible to draw final conclusions about changes taking place there. Nevertheless, it is absolutely unquestionable, that the Indonesian communists, who had headed the Republican government and had been in majority in it, yielded to the pressure of the Americans and the leaders of the bourgeois-nationalist parties that deserted to the Americans’ side. The communists had not appealed to the masses and without any struggle surrendered state power to the pro-American elements. The leaderships of the parties of the Socialist Block and, above all of the Communist Party, do not oppose the leaders of the nationalist parties, which are trying to convince the people that the Indonesian-Dutch conflict can be settled in a peaceful way.” … “The conduct of the leaders of the democratic parties, particularly of Sjarifuddin and Sjahrir, toward the new pro-American government also misleads the broad masses of the people. The joint tours of the country which are undertaken at present by Sjarifuddin and Sjahrir together with the Prime-Minister Hatta can create an illusion among the people that there are no contradictions between the Socialist Block and the parties which have come to power, and disarm the masses of the people in their struggle for the establishment of a really democratic government.”

“Believing that it should give no ground for an open inclusion of the Indonesian Republic into the block of the democratic states, headed by the USSR, the Sjarifuddin government in its state policy was carefully distancing itself from the countries of new democracy and the USSR.”

“The tactics of the Indonesian Communist Party in its relations with other parties of the Socialist Bloc are very doubtful too. While creating Socialist and Labor Parties on the basis of the program similar to the program of the Communist Party and secretly including in these parties not only leaders but also rank and file communists, the Communist Party thus got the opportunity to spread its influence
among much broader masses of the people. Continuing these tactics the communists everywhere moved to the foreground the Socialist and Labor parties, while the Communist Party was left in the background, although in fact it was the leading force both in the Socialist and Labor Parties and in the government. In this tactics the Indonesian Communist Party went so far, that on all cardinal questions the decisions were taken by the Socialist and Labor Parties or commonly by the whole Block. The image of the Communist Party as a discrete political party was not seen by the masses. All this has led to the decrease of the actual role of the Communist Party and to the limitations of possibilities of direct links between it and the masses of the people, which was not conducive to the increase of the Communist Party's influence among the masses.’’

Thus the critical remarks made by Plyshevskiy and addressed to the Indonesian communists concerned the following main issues in their activity:

1. The rejection of the armed struggle with the Netherlands and the signing of the Renville agreement on the base of concessions on the side of the Republican delegation;
2. The surrender of the state power and its transfer to the nationalist parties without the struggle and the appeal to the masses;
3. The continuation of co-operation with the rightist parties instead of laying bare their reactionary activity before the masses;
4. Keeping their distance from the USSR and the countries of new democracy, the rejection of joining openly the Soviet camp in the Cold War on the international arena;
5. Dispersing of the Communist forces among several parties and organizations, keeping the Communist Party proper in the background in the Socialist Block, denigrating the actual image of the CPI in the eyes of the masses of the people.
6. Insufficient unmasking of the aggressive nature of American imperialism before the Indonesian people.
In the document there was no direct indication that the Indonesian communists should return to power in the Republic, but it contained a clear implication of the idea. In this “indirect” way the document can be regarded as “Moscow’s directions” to the Indonesian communists to regain state power in the Indonesian Republic.

There is one more interesting point in the note, namely that Sjahrir and Sjarifuddin are put on the same level, although Sjarifuddin openly confesses to be “a secret member of the Indonesian Communist Party leadership” while he was officially a leader of the Socialist Party. This fact testified that the CC AUCP(B) still kept to the wrong evaluation of Sjahir’s political and ideological position, which the Soviet leadership borrowed from the Indonesian communists linked to the Dutch Communist Party, as the Indonesian communists considered Sjahrir to be “a leader close to the communists” leader.163 Besides, the definition of Sjarifuddin as a communist already in the winter of 1948 refutes the opinion of Western scholars that Sjatifuddin was “not a Communists of old standing” and that he declared himself a member of CPI in August 1948 only under disillusionment with United States policy toward Indonesia.164

The failure of the left wing in Indonesia, the negative attitude of the CC AUCP(B) to the communist strategy and tactics which had led to it, undoubtedly precipitated Musso’s departure from Moscow to Indonesia. We can suppose that the Indonesian leader himself was frustrated and depressed that his conclusions on the strengthening of the Leftist forces in Indonesia and on the correctness of their policy turned out to be wrong and had negative results. In this situation he could easily agree with the Soviet criticism of the Indonesian communists’ actions and make corresponding conclusions.

The archival documents which will be analyzed later clearly show that Musso was for a long time thinking over the CC AUCP(B) criticism concerning strategy and tactics of the CPI and gradually had become firmly convinced in the

163 Ibid. f. 17 o. 128 d. 216 l. 39.
164 15. Brackman op. cit. p. 84.
necessity of a complete change in them. At the same time this fifty-years communist leader who as far back as in 1935 secretly returned to Indonesia in order to recreate “the illegal CPI” after its collapse following the uprising of 1926-1927, apparently had come to the conclusion that it was he who was destined to play the leading role in the CPI revival in all its might and strength. Ultimately he had become firmly established in the idea of his personal sacred mission in Indonesia in the cause of resurrecting the wavering positions of the Left Wing, in working out the correct strategy and tactics for the Indonesian communist movement, in leading it to the right way which would result in taking the state power.

Musso left Moscow for Indonesia most probably early in 1948. The exact date of his departure is not established yet. Archival documents testify that in the middle of April 1948 Musso was already in Prague. There he stayed for a pretty long time. The Soviet Ambassador to Prague Silin in a record of his conversation with the Indonesian representative Suripno dated 22 May 1948 mentioned that «Suripno’s secretary Musin Makar Ivanovich, (a Soviet citizen, an official of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany, for a time being staying in Prague) attended the meeting.»

In a letter from Prague dated 17 May 1948 and addressed to the CC AUCP(B) Musso informed that his departure from Prague together with Suripno was delayed until 24 May. Musso returned to Indonesia on August 11 1948.

Ruth McVey absolutely correctly stated that whatever program was outlined for Musso in Moscow, “We cannot be sure Musso did not add to or alter his Soviet instructions after arriving in Indonesia; and therefore we cannot consider the policies instituted by him as an absolutely reliable indication of the Soviet program for the Republic.”

165 AVP RF f. 091 o. 2 d. 3 p. 1 l. 28.
166 McVey op. cit. p. 58-59.
This thought of R. McVey turned out to be true. The documents found in the Archives of the CC AUCP(B) show that for a rather long period of time after Musso’s departure from Moscow he worked on the program of reforms in Indonesia and changes in strategy and tactics of the communist movement. The archival documents testify that Musso’s program even if it still was based on the Soviet instructions, was strongly influenced of doctrines and practical experience of Chinese, Dutch and Czechoslovakian communists, who, although maintaining close ties with the Soviet communists were not blind and obedient tools of “the hand of Moscow” and added their own nuances to the common communist dogmas and practice.

So, for instance, from November 1947 on, the Chinese communists’ experience had begun to influence Soviet ideas concerning the colonial question and anti-imperialist revolution in the East.¹⁶⁷

Among Soviet scholars and specialists in colonial questions the Chinese experience in creating a united national front with representatives of the broadest layers of the working people and including elements of national bourgeoisie but under the indispensable leadership of the communists heading the national front was evaluated more and more positively and began to serve as a proper way of organizing national-liberation struggle in other Eastern countries and defining the role of communist parties in it (with a non-proletarian program, which included national independence, land reform, economic modernization, when not the communist ideology but nationalism united all, and the communists acted under the banner of nationalism). Living in the USSR and dealing with matters concerning Indonesia Musso could not help to notice this new idea, which was not yet officially approved by the Soviet leadership and recommended by the Cominform.

It should be added that the idea of a broad national front under the communist leadership was not unknown in Indonesia. Similar attempts were

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 32-35.
undertaken in the form of Radical Concentration and Left Wing before and after the establishment of the Hatta government.

Besides, as noted by a British scholar J.H. Brimmel, from the spring 1948 on, a new line in the world communist movement could be noticed namely conversion of Asia into the sphere of influence of the communists of China.\textsuperscript{168} The Chinese communists linked the victory of Asian peoples in the national liberation struggle with their own fight against Kuomintang forces supported by the American imperialists. The Chinese Communist Party was eager to spread its experience among the communists of other countries and widely propagated it in the press. These publications did not escape Musso’s attention.

While in Prague Musso continued to send information about Indonesia to the CC AUCP(B). We have found in the Archives his short exposition of an article from the journal “China Digest” dated 23 March 1948 (taken from the leading article in “The New China Agency”). The article was regarded by Musso as so important that he decided to report its content to the CC AUCP(B). The title of the article was “The New Stage of the Indonesian Struggle for Independence”. The exposition of the article was interchanged with Musso’s own comments.\textsuperscript{169} The article begins with the statement that the Indonesian revolution at present has already reached its third stage. The first stage was the period of the British intervention that ended by the opening of the door for the Dutch; this period lasted up to the Linggadjati agreement. After that “Indonesia reached the brilliant status of an independent country”. (This is absolutely wrong, was Musso’s comment, as the Linggadjati agreement gave only the status of dominion, but in fact much worse than that.) “The second stage began with the rise of the intervention of the USA”. The USA supplied the Netherlands with arms and money, bribed some leaders of the rightist parties, used the Good Office Committee to their own interests, and put pressure on Indonesia. The result was the Renville agreement and coming to power

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\item[\textsuperscript{169}] RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 632 l. 3.
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of the Hatta government. The vacillating upper elements of the Republic fear American imperialism and adopt a hostile attitude toward the people and its leaders – the Communist Party of Indonesia. They do not call on the people to wage a resolute struggle simultaneously against Dutch and American imperialists. Furthermore they talk of opposing the influence both of America and the Soviet Union and put on a neutral countenance.

“Then here comes the most interesting part of the article which gives an outline about the present task of the Indonesian people, writes Musso and continues: American and Dutch imperialism have to be exposed, the real fact is that America though appearing outwardly strong, is feeble. The people must struggle against vacillation and betrayal, firmly believing in the sure victory of the great cause of their liberation. They must not fear temporary difficulties and setbacks, but resolutely carry on the struggle into the camp of American and Dutch imperialism and the Hatta government, and lead themselves to victory. …Now that they see the approaching of the economic crisis in America and the great victories of the struggle of the peoples throughout the whole world against American imperialism and its running dogs. They see particularly in China the war of liberation against American imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek. The level of the consciousness of the Indonesian people will be greatly raised. They will discard their illusions and fears of America and cast away the cowardly, incompetent, vacillating and treacherous upper elements of Indonesia and march together, united in the struggle against imperialism. Although the struggle will be prolonged and arduous, the dawn of final victory will be nearer. America is the last bastion of imperialism invading Indonesia and if the Indonesian people can defeat the combined forces of America and the Dutch, no other imperialist would dare to engage in wild fantasy for the enslavement of the Indonesian people. At the same time the national front of Indonesia will still be broadened to include workers, peasants, the middle and petty bourgeoisie, and other patriotic elements. Only the running dogs of America and the Dutch have to be excluded. The Indonesian people must learn that they should never trust in vacillating elements and
compromising parties, but only in the people’s revolutionary organizations and especially the INDONESIAN COMMUNIST PARTY. The victory of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party over Japanese imperialism … in the past and their present victory over American imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek serve as an example to the Indonesian people.”

So we may draw the conclusion that Musso’s plans concerning Indonesia experienced the influence of this article, containing the evaluation of the Chinese communists of the situation in Indonesia, as well as their recommendations to the Indonesian communists to follow the Chinese example and their model of national-liberation revolution.

Musso’s high appreciation of the article confirms R. McVey’s conclusion that after Musso’s return to the country the Indonesian communists adopted a program, which was very close to the Chinese model of the national-liberation struggle. This program supposed the formation of a broad united national front out of representatives of many different social layers, including middle and petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the communists. At the same time R. McVey is not sure that this Maoist model was recommended to the Indonesian communists by the Soviet leadership as this line was not yet approved and recommended by the world communist movement.170 The analyzed document may, in our opinion, testify to the fact that the use of the Chinese model of the revolution was Musso’s own initiative and was not imposed on him by Moscow.

While working out the new program for the Indonesian Communist Party, Musso also experienced the influence of Dutch communists. At the same time Musso on his part contributed to the change of the position of the Netherlands’ communists on the colonial question. While in Prague Musso connected with the Communist Party of Netherlands. Apparently on Musso’s initiative, a conference took place between Musso, the Secretary General of the CPN Paul de Groot, and Suripno, the representative of the Republic of Indonesia in Prague. Musso

170 McVey op. cit. p. 66.
informed the CC AUCP(B) about the conference in a letter dated 17 May 1948.\footnote{RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 633 l. 6-8.}

At the conference the Indonesian and Dutch communists discussed in detail the current situation in Indonesia.

It the letter Musso informed the Soviet leaders that at the conference serious decisions were made, which were formulated in a special document attached to the letter. The document dated May 4, 1948 was entitled “Outlines of the tasks of the communists in Indonesia”\footnote{Ibid. l. 2-3.}

The first paragraph “The Party” stresses the need of “fusion of the existing Communist, Socialist and Labor parties into one single united Party of the Indonesian working masses, based on the theory and practice as taught by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, continuing the glorious traditions of the struggle for independence of the Indonesian people…” The United Communist Party of Indonesia should be built not only on factory, local and territorial basis, but also on the basis of Indonesian member states, nationalities and other units, so that there may be a Communist Party of Sumatra, Java, Pasundan etc. All under the central leadership of the United Communist Party of Indonesia.

The second paragraph titled “The National Front”, declared that “the United Communist Party shall endeavor to create a National Front, based on the platform of the National Liberation (Merdeka), organized as a broadest possible mass organization, with basic units, individual membership, and elected leadership. The United Communist Party shall endeavor to collaborate with all existing national parties, groups and individuals, in the creation of this National Front. “The Trades Unions, Peasants’, Youth and Women’s organizations will support this National Front.”

In the third paragraph “Political Tasks” they were defined as follows:

1. “Confronting the present Hatta Government:

Defense of all democratic rights and economic demands of the masses of workers and peasants; organizing mass pressure in order to prevent further retreat;
mobilizing all resources for the Army and the Resistance movement in the occupied territories; strengthening by all means the fighting potentials of the Republic; aiming at the transformation of the Hatta Government into a government of National Unity and Defense, in which the United Communist Party of Indonesia will be duly represented.

2. Confronting the Dutch Government:

Denunciation of the enforced so-called “Renville agreement”. Continuation of the negotiations with the Dutch government based on equal rights. These negotiations should proceed in order to come to an agreement, in which the sovereignty of the United States of Indonesia over all Indonesian territory will be completely recognized and realized, through the withdrawal of all Dutch troops and authorities.

The agreement will provide for a close and friendly co-operation between Holland and Indonesia in the economic and cultural field, this co-operation will be fixed by mutual agreement.

3. Occupied territories:

The activation and unification of the Resistance Movement everywhere in the occupied territories.”

At the end of this typewritten document there was added in Musso’s handwriting: “This decision has been agreed by P.de Groot, general Secretary of the C.P.N., Suripno, member of the politburo of the C.P.I. and Republican representative in Prague, and Musinov.”

In the letter from Prague to the CC AUCP(B) dated 17 May 1948, which accompanied this document, Musso pointed out: “This certainly represents only the main lines of the task, which I have to carry out in Indonesia at the present moment. Undoubtedly it is a great turn. I hope the Indonesian comrades would understand it and would be willing to follow me.”

Musso also stressed that the structure of the organization in the occupied territories and how to lead activity there “is based on the experience of comrade De
Groot during the occupation period in Holland and on my illegal experiences in Indonesia during 1935-1936.”

Musso writes further that “the most debatable question during the conference was the policy of the Dutch Communist Party confronting the Indonesian liberation movement in general. From the very beginning of the conference de Groot maintained his post-war colonial policy that Indonesia has to remain in a “UVIEVERBAND” (Dutch Union, or Dutch Commonwealth)” The main argument of the Dutch communists in defending such a policy was based on the assumption that the sympathizing petty-bourgeois elements in the Netherlands and those people who owe their jobs due to the connections between Holland and Indonesia, will desert the Communist Party if it is launching the slogan “complete independence” to the colonies. “Certainly I have rejected such thesis sternly. In the fire of the debate he (de Groot) called me even as an adventure a Trotskyite … that I do not know the changes in the world situation, …even do not know the present conditions in Indonesia.” But Suripno, who not long ago had come from Indonesia and who maintained regular contacts with the comrades there, supported Musso’s point of view, stating that the slogan “Dutch Union” was not at all popular among the masses of the Indonesian people. But “the Communist leaders there now are following the policy of the CPN with the catastrophic results, that the communists were supporting the Linggadjati and the Renville agreements. The revolution, due to reformist policy of the communists, is from the very beginning up today defensive”.

As a result of the debate P. De Groot changed his position on the colonial question and accepted Musso’s and Suripno’s point of view. He agreed to their formulation as was mentioned in the decision but with the concession that Holland would enjoy preferences above other countries in economic and cultural relations.

So assertions of some Western scholars that it was Moscow who pressed the Indonesian communists to restrain nationalism and promote compromise with the
Netherlands\textsuperscript{173} turned out to be absolutely wrong. The documents testify that such a policy of the Indonesian communists was rather the result of the recommendations from the Dutch communists.

The plan of changes in Indonesia worked out by Musso in Prague was also approved by the Czechoslovakian communists. As Musso wrote in his letter, P. De Groot “has visited Comrade Gottwald and afterwards he proudly told me that Comrade Gottwald was in the main also agreeing with the decision.”

Musso stated also that after the conference de Groot remained in Prague for a few days and since he lived in the same hotel where Musso was staying, they were in close contact every day. “Our personal relations were exceedingly good.” … “Comrade de Groot in these few days knew me better and he got more confidence in me. … In conclusion he wrote a special letter to the CPI, urging to support the great turnaround.”

So we may say that those Western authors who ascribed the prompt adoption of Musso’s program by the Indonesian communists only to Moscow’s influence were not quite correct.

In the letter to the Indonesian communist leaders Sarjono and Maruto Darusman, written by P. De Groot in Amsterdam on May 10, 1948\textsuperscript{174} the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of the Netherlands supported Musso and his plans for changes and asked the Indonesian communists to meet him warmly.

De Groot reproached the Indonesian communists for pursuing a wrong policy and recommended them to drastically change it: “All comrades here are following the political development in your country with great attention. The general situation is today very serious and dangerous for your people. The policy pursued has given bad results. Now it is absolutely necessary that you make a sharp turn and to step on a new way Our old and trusted friend, who brings this letter,

\textsuperscript{173} Brackman op.cit. p.53

\textsuperscript{174} RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 633 l. 18.
will help you much in working out a new line and carrying out the struggle of your people on a firm basis. From our side we will exert all power in order to reach together what we want to obtain.”

P. de Groot gave Musso a certain sum of money but nevertheless Musso complained to the CC AUCP(B) of his and Suripno’s strained financial conditions which prevented them from continuing their trip to Indonesia. Musso concluded his letter with the expression of the hope that in the main the Soviet communists would agree to the decision taken in Prague. He supported his hopes with a citation from Zhdanov’s report at the establishment of the Cominform: “I think this is a correct remedy in order to cure the ‘underestimation of the power of the working classes and the too great overestimation of the power of the enemy’.” It was said as if by quoting Zhdanov’s words Musso asked Moscow’s approval of his plans, showing in this manner that his plans were in the framework of the policy of the world communist movement, sanctioned by the Soviet communist leadership.

It should be stressed that all this information got from Musso, worried the Foreign Policy Department of CC AUCP(B). An instructor of the Department, Kozlov, while forwarding the Russian translation of the documents to his superiors considered it necessary to write a covering note dated June 4, 1948, in which he gave main ideas from Musso’s materials and an evaluation of them.

The information about the conference in Prague between the Indonesian and Dutch communists and Gottwald’s approval of Musso’s new program was presented by the instructor Kozlov in a manner which suggested that this information was big news for the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP(B) and that nothing like that was ever planned by Moscow.

Kozlov regarded positively the planned unification of the left-wing parties in Indonesia into a single political organization, but considered it expedient to name the new organization not “the Communist Party of Indonesia” as Musso proposed, but somehow differently, for instance “People’s” or “Democratic”, because the

175 Ibid. l.13-14.
176 Ibid. l. 38-45, 50-52.
Communist Party as such had not yet acted openly under its Communist name as a major leading force in the struggle for Republican independence.

Kozlov did not approved of the rejection of the Renville agreement, as the rejection of the agreement signed by Sjarifuddin himself could undermine the reputation of the left-wing leaders. Kozlov pointed out that “more expedient would be the tactics of the firm defense of the interpretation of the terms of the agreement”, which was given by the Indonesian side.

Further the note stated: “Comrade Musso, describing these decisions as a sharp turn in the policy of the Party, declares that he must fulfil these serious tasks in Indonesia and expresses the hope that Indonesian comrades will understand these tasks and express their readiness to follow him.(Underlined in the document. – L.E.) This declaration of Musso excites apprehension. Judging by the tone of his declaration he intends to assume the leading role in the Communist Party and that may give rise to objections on the side of Indonesian comrades and have much more serious consequences. It would be desirable to point out to comrade Musso before his departure to the country that his task is assistance to the leadership of the Indonesian Communist Party and that Indonesian comrades themselves will define his role in the CPI.”

This note of the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP(B) shows that Musso went far beyond the tasks and aims which were planned for him in Moscow and that Moscow was very much worried by all this and did not approved of such actions. But we could not yet find any documents which would reflect a further line of action on the part of the CC AUCP(B) toward Musso.

From Prague Musso sent two more letters to the CC AUCP(B) dated May 28 and June 16, 1948, and a press review and other informational materials about the situation in Indonesia. In the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP(B) an annotation of these documents was prepared dated July 12, 1948 which contained the most interesting and important for Moscow information.

177 Ibid. l. 40-52.
In the annotation was pointed out, that Musso “hopes to arrive in Indonesia before the formation of the new cabinet and will be able to use his influence in order to transform the present government into a really national government responsible to the people’s parliament.” Musso also asked the Soviet government “to continue the policy of support of the Indonesian Republic. It is most desirable that a campaign be waged in the Soviet press against the policy of the Americans and the Dutch in Indonesia. “It would be for me, - wrote Musso, - as well as for the leftist movement in Indonesia the best tool in our struggle for the overthrow of the present vacillating Hatta government.” … “I hope to fulfil my crucial and interesting task.” – Musso concludes.

The annotation also contained Musso’s information about the dissatisfaction on the part of the Dutch Communists concerning a former member of the CPN and now head of the Indonesian Labor Party Setiadjit. De Groot accused Setiadjit in connections with Trotskyists and the British Intelligence Service. He allegedly “calls on to the creation in Indonesia of as much chaos as possible as well as for the expectation of the explosion of the third World War, being of the opinion that only under such conditions could Indonesia continue its revolution, which at present, according to him, is nearing its fiasco.”

Musso also reported that “five former members of the Dutch Communist Party: Setiadjit, Abdul Madjid, Tamzil, Maruto Darusman and Tang Ling Dji, who had arrived in Indonesia, have monopolized the leadership of the Communist Party of Indonesia” and other left wing parties and organizations, while the old leaders – Alimin and Sardjono – were moved to the background.

This document refutes assertions of some Western scholars that it was Musso who after returning from Moscow “on Stalin’s directions” opposed Alimin – the former leader of the Indonesian communists, and confirms their conclusion

178 Ibid. l. 53-57.
about rivalry among Indonesian communists.\textsuperscript{179} The document testifies to the fact that this rivalry arose long before Musso’s return to Indonesia.

Later in 1948 the leaders of the Communist Party of the Netherlands, de Groot and Vagenaa,r visited Moscow. On August 25 they asked the CC AUCP(B) Secretary M.Suslov to give them an audience. At the same time they presented information, in which they also depicted the political situation in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{180} They informed the CC AUCP(B) about the conference with Musso and Suripno in Prague, which resulted in working out a draft resolution concerning tasks of the Communist Party of Indonesia. This draft resolution was typed in three copies: one was intended for the Cominform, the second for the CPN and the third Musso and Suripno brought to Indonesia. Further the Dutch communists presented the main ideas of the document which became known as the Politburo of PKI resolution “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia” dated 13 August 1948. In the CPN leaders’ letter to the CC AUCP(B) it was pointed out that the program of the planned National Front in Indonesia should be based on the liberation of Indonesia from the Dutch occupiers and all imperialist influence. It was stressed that during the conference in Prague the Indonesian comrades warned that the struggle against any new capitulation of the government to the imperialists and an open actions of the Communist Party in front of the masses may lead to a new wave of terror and new military actions by the Dutch authorities against the Republican government. (It should be stressed that this prediction of the Indonesian communists made in the spring of 1948 fully came true in the second half of the same year. – L.E.)

In the letter presented to the CC AUCP(B) the Dutch communists overestimated the weaknesses of the Hatta government, the strength of the left-wing parties. And the “warm sympathy of the masses toward Communism”.

\textsuperscript{179} Brackman op. cit. p. 148; Kroef op. cit. p 36.

\textsuperscript{180} RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 1167 l. 6-10
It was pointed out in the document that Musso’s task consisted in moving a proposal and making efforts aimed at convocation of a unifying congress of the three leftist parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, which should elect “a strong Central Committee”. “Taking into consideration that the present chaos in the Indonesian communist movement was conditioned not only by lack of sufficient experience among the leading comrades, but probably, by a hostile influence too, we should expect a certain resistance toward the policy envisaged in the resolution from some persons in Indonesia.”

The Dutch communists wrote that in order to assist Indonesian communists two practical tasks should be realized: 1) to establish reliable connections between the CPI and CPN; 2) to organize arms transportation for the Republic.

Further they reported rather regular contacts between the CPN and Indonesian comrades and underlined the importance of sending to Indonesia a high-qualified delegation of the CPN for improving these contacts. They suggested that the Republic of Indonesia buy armaments in Czechoslovakia, where there were illegal sellers of arms working in favor of Israel, or officially in Sweden.

Analyzing this document we may come to the conclusion that Musso and Suripno were receiving the major inspiration and assistance in working out new plans for Indonesian communists, which concerned reorganization of the left wing and changing their tactical line, not from Moscow, but from the Dutch communists, who maintained close and regular contacts with Indonesian communist leaders. This conclusion is supported by a document prepared for Suslov by the Foreign Policy Department of the CC AUCP(B) and dated 15 September 1948.

The document was entitled “About the activity of the CPN”.

In it was said that “jointly with the Indonesian Communist Party the CPN planned a number of measures, the realization of which would make it possible to broaden the struggle of the Indonesian Republic against the colonialists and to strengthen and consolidate the forces of the Indonesian people. One of these measures was the creation of the united Communist Party as a really mass party…” Further there was

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181 RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 1167 l. 13-22.
reference to the creation of a broad National Front and its tasks, that is the main ideas of the program worked out jointly by Dutch and Indonesian communists were given... “In order to assist the CPI to fulfil its tasks the CPN considers it necessary to establish reliable and regular connections between the CPI and the CPN as well as give the latter every other necessary assistance.”

It should be stressed at the same time that Dutch communists were not puppets or blind tools of Moscow. They had their own tactical line which did not always coincide with the Soviet line and get Moscow’s approval. This can be seen very clearly while studying archival documents of the AUCP(B), which very often criticized actions of Dutch Communists.\textsuperscript{182}

The Dutch communists de Groot and Vagenaar were received by Suslov only on October 15, 1948, after the Madiun Affair had occurred in Indonesia. We have found a record of the conversation between them, which concerned both the situation in the CPN and the Indonesian issue.\textsuperscript{183}

In the discussion of the situation in Indonesia the main speaker was P.de Groot, while Suslov limited himself to short remarks, De Groot told Suslov that the situation in Indonesia after the uprising of youth groups in Madiun still remained unclear. The only source of information about it consisted of reports of the Reuter press agency. De Groot stressed that “during our conference with Musso in Prague we outlined a correct position – the struggle against Dutch colonialists and American imperialists and a course toward the Indonesian reactionary forces. The CPN should now start a campaign accusing the Hatta government of unleashing a civil war and of capitulation before the Dutch and the Americans.” Suslov underlined the correctness of these plans.

If we look closely at the document “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia”, we will see how all the impacts Musso had received from different

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid. d. 1104 l. 78-79, d. 1167 l. 14, 21

\textsuperscript{183} RGASPI f. 17 o. 128 d. 1167 l. 27-30.
sources while working on it have found their reflections in this document, which was approved as a resolution of the Politburo of the Indonesian Communist Party on August 13, 1948. This document in English and its Russian translation we have found in the Archives.\textsuperscript{184} The document was received by the Soviet Embassy in Prague in December 1948 from the Indonesian communist Suripno. The text of the document is practically identical to the later text, used by many scholars.\textsuperscript{185}

In Part 1 “Organization”, in which the necessity of merging three left-wing Indonesian parties into one Communist Party was stated and which was discussed and formulated with CPN’s assistance, we can find the Soviet critique of the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian communists. There we can also see the Soviet idea about underestimation by the Indonesian communists of Soviet influence and overestimation of American influence. Remembering Soviet accusations of distancing from the USSR, Musso included into his program a proposal to establish in Indonesia a League of Friendship with the Soviet Union. The thesis on the importance for the working class and the communists to strive for hegemony in leading the national revolution was suggested both by the Soviet and the Chinese communists.

In Part 2 “Politics” Musso put his own thoughts about the struggle for the complete independence of Indonesia from the Netherlands, which he had defended earlier in discussions with the Dutch leader Paul de Groot. This paragraph contains also the ideas from the “Zhdanov doctrine” on the division of the world into two camps. It criticizes, also noted by the AUCP(B), the withdrawal of the CPI from the government without the struggle and appeal to the masses.

In the paragraph on foreign policy there is evident Chinese influence and the experience of the Chinese revolution with the support of the armed forces and the police, led by the communists.

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid. d. 633 l. 83-95, 96-123.

\textsuperscript{185} Cf. Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia, Djakarta, 1953, Van der Krouf op. cit. pp. 33, 37, 38 and further; VeVey op. cit. pp. 58 and further
In the paragraph concerning the national front Musso expressed Chinese recommendations to organize a broad united anti-imperialist front under the leadership of the communists.

In the theoretical part it is interesting to note Musso’s appeal to ideas of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, but no appeal to Mao’s thoughts.

With the occurrence of the Madiun Affair Musso’s program of reforming the Communist movement, its strategy and tactics was fulfilled only in part. The realization of the main ideas was postponed. But the resolution “The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia” worked out by Musso was kept by the Indonesian communists as a major policy of the Party.

So what conclusions can be drawn from the archival documents, which are put into scholarly circulation for the first time?

In our opinion, the documents testify contrary to the established view, that the USSR and its leader Joseph Stalin in the post-war period had no definite political line concerning Indonesia and its communist movement. The Indonesian Republic and CPI still remained on the periphery of the Soviet foreign policy. The Soviet Union continued to be insufficiently informed about the Indonesian situation. The information came firstly from an ideologically underpinned Cold War Western press, which overestimated the communist threat in the region. The other source consisted of Dutch communists, who, in their turn, received information from Indonesian communists. Both groups as well as the Soviet Party bureaucracy in charge of this aspect of Soviet foreign policy were consciously or unconsciously trying to present the role and place of left-wing Indonesian organizations in a better light than they were in reality. They overestimated the weakness of the right-wing, and the strength of left-wing parties and organizations as well as “warm sympathy of the Indonesian masses to Communism”. As a result the Soviet leadership was brought to the conclusion that the independent
Indonesian Republic was in the years of 1945-1947 drifting towards the Communist camp.

The unexpected and sharp turn of the situation in Indonesia in January 1948, the fall of Sjarifuddin cabinet and the creation of the right-wing Hatta government was regarded by Soviet Party bureaucracy not as a result of its incorrect evaluation of the Indonesian internal politics, but as a consequence of “the rotten course” of CPI and machinations of the USA. CPI strategy and tactics, earlier approved by Musso, underwent sharp criticism on the part of AUCP[B].

Musso himself, who earlier supported PKI strategy and tactics, was apparently badly hurt by this criticism. He too did not have reliable information on real causes of the right-wing rise to power and was disappointed of Indonesian communist leaders. Musso came to the conclusion that it was he himself who was destined to fulfil the sacred mission of restoration of the left wing leading position in Indonesian politics. He began to think out a new course for the Republic and correct strategy and tactics for CPI. In this he got full support from Dutch communists.

The archival documents clearly show the process of working out he new program in full correspondence with AUCP[B] criticism, CPN recommendations and CPC advice. Nevertheless the documents testify that Musso laid his own views and thoughts in the foundation of the new course.

The archival documents have shed quite new light also on relations between AUCP[B], CPN and CKI. We can clearly see an independent and free way of thinking demonstrated by representatives of these three sections of the international communist movement. Special attention is deserved by the Indonesian communists Musso’s and Suripno’s ability to defend and insist on their own points of view based first of all on Indonesian national interests as they saw them.

So we can definitely say that Musso cannot be looked upon as “a Moscow’s puppet”, a blind and obedient instrument of “the hand of Moscow”, of Stalin and AUCP(B). Musso had always been and remained a confirmed communist, who despite his long stay in Moscow had retained his own thinking and original vision
of events in Indonesia, had taken into consideration not only AUCP(B)’s recommendations, but studied the experience of the Communist parties in other countries.
Chapter Eight.


A new stage in the development of the Soviet – Indonesian relations.

The next stage in the development of the Soviet-Indonesian relations (after the Madiun affair) appeared to be absolutely unknown to scholars. Ruth McVey wrote: “After long and weary quarrelling in The Hague, Indonesia’s independence was conceded by the Dutch on December 27, 1949. The Soviet Union immediately recognized the Republic.”186 A. Brackman describes the sequence of events in the same manner, but goes further and depicts the next stage in the developments of the Soviet-Indonesian relations: “…the Russians made the best of an unpromising situation. On January 26, 1950, the Soviet Union recognized the R.U.S.I., and on February 21, Hatta dispatched a mission to Moscow headed by L.N. Palar, the Indonesian representative at the U.N., for the purpose of negotiating a diplomatic exchange. … At the Kremlin, the Palar mission was icily received. It was obvious that the Russians were not interested in an exchange.”187

But the archival documents show that the recognition was not at all immediate. The story of the Soviet recognition of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI) was complicated and full of mystery. This is the first time it is disclosed.

The USSR, after it had recognized Indonesia, was very much interested in a diplomatic exchange. But the Indonesian side used this desire to its own benefit. It played on Soviet interest in the matter in order to realize the purpose of getting Soviet consent for the Indonesian membership in the UN. The archival documents


clearly show how Indonesian leaders used the Cold War rivalry between the USSR and Western powers in their play.

The initiative in the matter of Soviet recognition of Indonesia came this time from the Netherlands. Having failed to crush Indonesian independence by force of arms, the Netherlands succeeded in imposing upon Indonesia their own conditions of recognition of Indonesian sovereignty. In place of the proclaimed on 17 August 1945 the Republic of Indonesia they created the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI), consisting of 16 quasi-independent states, and were interested in its recognition by the international community.

On 24 December 1949 the Netherlands Ambassador to Moscow met the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, A.A. Gromyko, and handed him a note stating that on 27 December 1949 the Netherlands would recognize RUSI as an independent and sovereign state. The note suggested that the new state would want to establish friendly relations with all peace-loving nations. The Netherlands hoped that after the transfer of sovereignty to RUSI the Soviet Union would recognize it.\(^{188}\) Apparently similar notes were sent by the Netherlands to other East European governments.

On receiving the Netherlands note the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs started consultations about attitude to the recognition of RUSI and the Soviet response to the Netherlands note. Besides on 6 January 1950 the Czechoslovakia Embassy in Moscow sent a memorandum to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting the Soviet position concerning recognition of RUSI.\(^{189}\)

In the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs there existed a negative attitude toward a RUSI created with active participation on the part of former colonialists. The Ministry was not inclined to recognize the new state, which undoubtedly would ally with the other side in the Cold War confrontation. In connection with the Czechoslovakian memorandum the South-East Asia Department of the

\(^{188}\) AVP RF f. 07 op. 23a d. 185 p. 13 ll. 1-2.

\(^{189}\) AVP RF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 1-2
Ministry addressed the following recommendation to the Deputy Minister Zorin V.A.: “To state orally to the Counselor of the Czechoslovakian Embassy that the USSR (as is well known from statements of the Soviet delegation at the IV session of the UNO) considers the creation of RUSI to be the result of a bargain struck by Indonesian feudals and Dutch ruling reactionaries with the active co-operation of USA ruling circles contrary to the real interests of the Indonesian people who are struggling for independence. In this connection the USSR does not intend to recognize RUSI as a sovereign state at present.\textsuperscript{190}

It was in this negative sense that the Soviet Ministry was preparing draft documents in response to the Netherlands note about RUSI recognition. As usually Stalin should make the final decision. The Ministry worked on the documents very thoroughly. The texts were rewritten more than once and corrected by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs A.A. Gromyko and by the Minister of Foreign Affairs A.Ya. Vyshinsky.

On 16 January 1950 the Head of the SEA Department Sergeev presented to Gromyko a new version of the draft document which was to be sent to Stalin for final approval. The draft document read: “The Dutch Embassy in Moscow sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR a note which contains information about the transfer of sovereignty over Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and states that the Dutch government “believes that after transfer of sovereignty the government of the USSR will recognize the new state.” (The citation was underlined by Vyshinsky with remark “No belles-lettres”\textsuperscript{\textsc{a}}) In connection with the creation of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Czechoslovakian Embassy in Moscow asked whether the Soviet government intended to recognize RUSI. The creation of RUSI was the result of a bargain between ruling circles of the USA and the Netherlands and the right wing of Indonesian nationalists.

Transfer of “independence and sovereignty” by the Netherlands’ government to RUSI, the “governments” of which are fully dependent on American and Dutch

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid. l. 3
ruling circles, is but a new maneuver aimed at the disintegration of Indonesian national liberation movement and in this way at crushing this movement. In connection with all this and taking into consideration that the Netherlands note by its character does not need an answer, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it possible to leave the note without any answer. Concerning the request of the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR considers it possible to inform the Czechoslovakian Embassy in Moscow that the question about recognition of RUSI by the Soviet Union is not on the agenda.”

Upon this draft note prepared by the SEA Department to be sent to Stalin, Gromyko on 16 January 1950 put the resolution: “In my opinion this draft note will do” and forwarded it to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vyshinsky. On the next day Vyshinsky returned the draft note to Gromyko with the remark: “In my opinion, the draft note will not do, please correct.” But Vyshinsky disapproved only over-long and ideologically laden text of the document but agreed to its essence which rejected the Netherlands’ request to the USSR to recognize RUSI.

In the next version of the draft note presented by the SEA Department on 19 January 1950, corrected and approved by Gromyko, there were no “belle lettres” and the ideologically-laden paragraph stating that RUSI was the result of the bargain between Indonesian right-wing nationalists and the Netherlands and the USA directed at splitting the national liberation movement of the Indonesian people was removed. Nevertheless Gromyko could not refrain from adding in the first paragraph of the document to the name of the new Indonesian state the negative attribute “so-called” RUSI.

On the same day the new version of the draft note for Stalin was forwarded to Vyshinsky with the following inscription by Gromyko: “To com. Vyshinsky A.Ya. Present the corrected version for your approval. 19.1.1950.”

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191 AVP RF f. 07 op. 23a d. 185 p. 13 l. 3, 4-5.
192 Ibid.
193 Ibid. l. 6, 7.
note was as usually supplemented with the draft resolution of the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) (CC AUCP(b)) which read as follows:

1. To approve the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR about leaving the note of the Netherlands Embassy in Moscow dated 24 December 1949 concerning the creation of RUSI without response.

2. To commission the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to inform orally the Czechoslovakian Embassy in Moscow in response to its request that the issue of recognition of RUSI by the Soviet Union is not on the agenda. All the aforementioned testify that in the Soviet leadership there existed a well-established negative attitude toward RUSI and its leaders. It was only natural, taking into consideration the fact that it was these leaders who actively participated at crushing Indonesian communists and other left-wing groups in the course of Madiun Affairs. Besides the transfer of sovereignty over Indonesia to RUSI instead of to the Republic of Indonesia declared on 17 August 1945 signified in any case a victory of Dutch colonialism over Indonesian national liberation movement and contributed to the strengthening Western powers’ position in the area, which was contrary the Soviet interests in the Cold War.

And abruptly this negative attitude to the recognition of RUSI changed. Prepared by the SEA Department and approved by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Gromyko the draft note to Stalin and draft resolution for CC of AUCP (b) about non-recognition of RUSI were for some unknown reasons delayed for some days at the Secretariat of Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, possibly because of his being busy (it was the time of the state visit of the Chinese leader Mao Zedung to the USSR, in the organization of which and in the talks Vyshinsky took a very active part). On 18 January 1950 Mao Zedung returned to Moscow from Leningrad. We cannot exclude the possibility that Vyshinsky, who was permanently present at Mao’s meetings with Stalin and other talks between

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194 Ibid. l. 8.
Chinese and Soviet leaders, felt that the negative attitude to the recognition of RUSI in the Soviet leadership began to change under the impact of the Chinese. It might be that Vyshinsky decided to keep the draft documents in his Secretariat for a while.

But the staff of the Foreign Ministry did not suspect that some changes of opinion were taking place in the Soviet leadership on the issue of Soviet recognition of RUSI. On 21 January 1950 the SEA Department informed Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin about the following broadcast on 17 January on Radio Jakarta, which was the RUSI government’s residence: “According to the information of well-versed sources in Washington, the USSR intends to recognize RUSI in the very near future.” The SEA Department recommended that high officials of the Soviet Foreign Ministry refrain from any reaction to this statement.195

Abruptly on 25 January 1950 the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vyshinsky, sharply changed his attitude to the recognition of RUSI. On the draft note to Stalin prepared by the SEA Department and approved by Gromyko on 19 January and which Vyshinsky kept for some days at his Secretariat he underlined the words “is not on the agenda” in the last phrase about the issue of Soviet recognition of RUSI and put on the draft a categorical resolution: “Object.”196

On the same day 25 January 1950 Vyshinsky forwarded to Stalin a new draft note and resolution for CC with absolutely different contents:

“To Stalin I.V.

Present

1. A draft return note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to the Netherlands government about Indonesia.

2. A draft telegram to Indonesian Prime-Minister Hatta.

3. A draft press release

195 AVPRF f. 07 op. 23a d. 185 p. 13 l. 7-8.

196 AVPRF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 5.
Enclose a draft resolution of CC AUCP (b). Ask Your consideration.”

The draft resolution of CC AUCP (b) contained the following points:

1. To accept the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to recognize RUSI.

2. To approve, presented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
   • draft note to the Netherlands government about recognition of RUSI
   • draft telegram to the Prime-Minister of RUSI
   • draft press-release

On the new draft resolution of CC AUCP (b) was put a pencil inscription: “to com. Poscrebyshev (he was Stalin’s personal secretary) Appr[oved] by comrade Stalin on 25.1. Please register.” No signature was added.

In the draft telegram to RUSI Prime-Minister Hatta, prepared by the SEA Department, was added in Vyshinsky’s handwriting “and establish dip.[lomatic] relations” with the remark “Stalin’s correction 25/1-50, at 11.15”. Apparently Vyshinsky corrected the documents directly under Stalin’s dictation or immediately after meeting with him. Words about establishment of diplomatic relations with RUSI were added by Vyshinsky to the draft note to the Netherlands too.

After all corrections and approvals the act of recognition of RUSI by the Soviet Union was officially accomplished by sending the above-mentioned documents. On the same day, 25 January 1950, Vyshinsky sent the telegram on recognition of RUSI to Prime-Minister Hatta. The corresponding note to the Netherlands government was handed by Gromyko to the Dutch Ambassador to Moscow Visser, also on 25 January late in the evening at 23.30 as evidenced by Gromyko’s diary. Official information about Soviet recognition of RUSI was published in the newspaper “Pravda” on the next day, 26 January 1950.

197 Ibid. l. 14.
198 Ibid. l. 15.
199 Ibid. l. 12, 16.
200 AVPRF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 6.
Judging by the time at which Gromyko met the Dutch Ambassador we may conclude that the official act of Soviet recognition of RUSI was carried out in haste and was quite unexpected by Gromyko. Apparently Gromyko was not present when the decision about Soviet recognition of RUSI was taken and did not participate in its adoption.

Analysts naturally may ask why the Soviet leadership, which until 19 January 1950 considered RUSI’s creation as “a bargain struck by Indonesian feudals and Dutch ruling reactionaries with the active cooperation of USA ruling circles contrary to real interests of the Indonesian people struggling for independence” and took a negative attitude toward the Netherlands’ request to recognize RUSI, then so abruptly on 25 January 1950 completely changed its position and on the same day hastily informed both the Netherlands and RUSI’s governments about recognition of RUSI by the USSR.

This sudden change of the Soviet position was noted by the Indonesian newspaper “Merdeka”; a review of the issues on 27 and 28 January 1950 can be found in the SEA Department’s dossier. 201 “Merdeka” wrote that after Madiun Affair the Soviet press abused “the Soekarno-Hatta-Sjarir clique”, calling them “bourgeois-nationalist traitors” and “agents of American and British imperialism”. “Merdeka” connected the abrupt turn in the Soviet attitude to RUSI recognition with Mao Zedung’s visit to Moscow. 202

Indeed, from December 1949 until February 1950 the Chinese leader Mao Zedung was visiting the Soviet Union. During the visit Mao more than once had conversations with Stalin and other members of the Soviet leadership. On 18 January 1950 Mao returned to Moscow from Leningrad and the Soviet-Chinese talks continued. Vyshinsky as the Foreign Minister was always present at the talks.

201 Ibid. l. 8-19. 201 Ibid. l. 12, 16.
201 AVPRF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 6.
201 Ibid. l.
202 Ibid. l. 11.
Possibly during these conversations one way or other there was discussed the problem of RUSI’s creation and its recognition. Possibly during these conversations one way or another, the problem of RUSI’s creation and its recognition was discussed. Possibly the Chinese, during official and unofficial conversations, expressed a positive attitude toward Soviet recognition of RUSI. As it became known, the Chinese made recognition of RUSI by the PRC conditional on recognition of the PRC by the Netherlands.\(^\text{203}\)

Apparently Vyshinsky took all this into consideration and slowed down the approval of the draft documents prepared by the SEA Department on 19 January 1950, which expressed a negative attitude to Soviet recognition of RUSI. On 25 January 1950 a meeting took place between Stalin and Mao Zedung at which Vyshinsky was present but Gromyko absent. We may suggest that it was during this meeting that Mao advised Stalin to recognize RUSI, maybe hoping to ensure the PRC’s recognition by the Netherlands.

Stalin was very attentive to the opinion of Chinese comrades on issues concerning South-East Asia. Stalin believed that the first role in Asia should be played by PRC, not the USSR. He considered it better because the USSR was only partly situated in Asia, while China was completely an Asian state so it should play the leading role. This idea was expressed elaborately by Stalin later, for instance during his conversation with Zhou Enlai in 1952.\(^\text{204}\) But we cannot exclude the possibility that Stalin had begun thinking about China’s and the USSR’s roles in Asia much earlier, maybe already during Mao’s visit to Moscow. We also cannot exclude the possibility that it was under the impact of conversations with Mao about the situation in Asia that Stalin abruptly changed his opinion on recognition of RUSI and ordered the addition to draft documents prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of words about the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and RUSI. Apparently this change of mood in the highest Soviet

\(^{203}\) Cold War International History Project Bulletin. Issues 8-9, p. 235.

leadership was immediately felt by such an experienced politician and diplomat as Vyshinsky.

The fact that the issue about Soviet recognition of RUSI was not depicted in the transcripts of conversations between Stalin and Mao Zedung can be explained by evidence of a well-known specialist on China, a former high Soviet official, diplomat and scholar O.B. Rahmanin, who in his memories remarked that many conversations between Stalin and Mao and other Chinese leaders were not transcribed at all. Very often transcriptions of conversations were not minutes in exact meaning of the term and represented only the main essence of conversations, main results of information.205

On 3 February 1950 RUSI’s Prime-Minister sent a return telegram. Hatta confirmed the receipt of the Soviet telegram about the recognition of RUSI and stated that this act of the USSR was highly appreciated in Indonesia.206 (21) Expressing his gratitude to the Soviet government Hatta informed that his government “is ready to consider the question of opening talks concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations”. But from the very beginning RUSI’s ruling circles demonstrated quite a cool attitude to the development of ties with the Soviet Union. Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ documents stressed that Hatta’s government avoided expressing positive agreement to establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR.207 In contrast, the Soviet government expressed its desire and readiness to establish diplomatic relations with RUSI without delay. In spite of the rather cool attitude in Indonesia to Soviet recognition, the Soviet attitude to Indonesia remained warm and friendly. In a telegram to Hatta on 15 February 1950 Vyshinsky offered the Indonesian side the choice of a place for future talks.208 Apparently the Indonesian authorities were not eager to see Soviet


206 AVPRF f. 091 op. 3 d. 1 p. 11 l. 1-2.

207 AVP RF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 31 l. 38.

208 Ibid. l. 3.
officials in the country, so on 21 February Hatta informed Vyshinsky about the intention to send Indonesian representatives to the USSR for talks. On the date and the composition of the delegation the Indonesian side promised to give details later.\textsuperscript{209} After that the Soviet side had no information from Indonesia for a month and a half.

All this time the Soviet leadership followed very attentively reaction in Indonesia to Soviet recognition of RUSI. In a review of the newspaper “Merdeka” made by the SEA Department it was noted that on the whole Soviet recognition was perceived positively, but Indonesian ministers and some politicians spoke about it very cautiously. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials attributed this attitude to the similar position of Western circles, first of all those of the USA and Great Britain.\textsuperscript{210}

The deepening of the Cold War influenced Indonesian ruling circles. The review sited words of the acting Vice President of RUSI Mr. Assaat that the Soviet recognition was very useful for Indonesia’s peaceful foreign policy and unifying internal policy. But the Soviet recognition would not change the Indonesian attitude toward the USA and Britain.\textsuperscript{211}

Indonesian leaders were aware that decolonization produced a shifting of power within the international system and the emerging of new states whose allegiance both the USA and the USSR were avidly seeking. So the Indonesians began playing on Soviet-American rivalry trying to achieve their own aims. It was stressed in the review of “Merdeka” that Indonesian leaders considered the Soviet recognition of RUSI first of all as a possible step towards RUSI membership in the UN.

In connection with this reaction in Indonesia to the Soviet recognition the SEA Department of the Foreign Ministry considered it necessary to forward to

\textsuperscript{209} Ibid. l. 38.

\textsuperscript{210} Ibid. l. 8, 17.

\textsuperscript{211} Ibid. l. 20.
Vyshinsky a translation of some material from ‘Merdeka’. The Department marked the prevailing tone of Indonesian leaders’ statements, the essence of which was not to hurry with the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR (last words were underlined by Vyshinsky.)

The SEA Department proposed that a short article should be published in connection with statements in “Merdeka”, but Vyshinsky decided to wait for the results of an exchange of correspondence with the RUSI government.²¹²

But the results were not encouraging. Only on 11 April did Hatta state that on 15 April an Indonesian delegation was departing to Moscow “for hold talks about an exchange of diplomatic missions” and name the members of the delegation.

The delegation was quite representative and included well-known leaders of the main Indonesian political forces. They were Moh. Jamin, with no party affiliation but close to the left-wing chairman of parliamentary foreign affairs commission, a “Trotskyist” as defined by the Soviet Ambassador to The Hague; a PM Hadinoto - leader of the influential PNI (nationalist party); Yusuf Wibisono – vice-chairman of the largest Muslim party, Masjumi and two high government officials. The delegation was headed by L.N. Palar – the Indonesian representative in the UN. At the meeting with Vyshinsky Palar stressed that the delegation’s composition was intended to demonstrate to the Soviet government and to the whole world the great importance which RUSI government attached to the mission of the delegation.²¹³ But in reality by sending such a representative delegation to Moscow RUSI government tried to camouflage its actual aim which was not the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR but the realization of Indonesia’s desire to become a member of the UN. For that the USSR’s position was of vital importance.

The Soviet Ambassador in The Hague Zaitzev G.T. informed Moscow about this actual aim of RUSI after a meeting with the Indonesian delegation in the

²¹² Ibid. l. 24.

²¹³ Ibid. l. 26-27.
Netherlands before their departure to Moscow. Zaitzev reported that it became clear from his conversation with Palar on 27 April 1950 that the Indonesian delegation did not want to disclose beforehand its program of talks in Moscow. “According to our information, - Zaitzev wrote, - the Indonesian delegation was not authorized to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. It was charged with clarifying the USSR’s position on the Indonesian question particularly RUSI membership in the UN and informing Hatta’s government about it.” Only after that did RUSI government intend to consider the issue of the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR.\textsuperscript{214} Zaitzev’s information turned out to be absolutely true. At the meeting of the Indonesian delegation with the Soviet Foreign Minister Vyshinsky on 5 May 1950, Palar began his speech with a statement about the official aim of their visit and - which was of the utmost interest for the Soviet side – on the RUSI government’s desire to exchange diplomatic representatives with the USSR. But he immediately added that the Indonesian delegation should inform the Soviet side about the basis of such exchange, that was acceptable for the Indonesian people and this basis was the USSR’s consent to RUSI membership in the UN. Vyshinsky assured Palar after his repeated requests that the Soviet position toward RUSI membership of the UN was sympathetic.

As Vyshinsky noted in his diary, the speeches of all the members of the Indonesian delegation invariably contained the statement that for Indonesia the question of its membership of the UN and the exchange of diplomatic representatives with the USSR were inseparably linked with each other.

At the same time Palar having received Vyshinsky’s assurances about the USSR’s sympathetic attitude to RUSI membership in UN took an evasive position on the concrete dates and documents concerning official formalities connected with the establishment of diplomatic relations and exchange of representatives between the USSR and RUSI. He referred to difficulties connected with finding proper

\textsuperscript{214} Ibid. 1. 33-34.
housing for the Soviet mission in Indonesia because of the destruction caused by war. Palar suggested that the USSR first send a small group of technicians who on the spot would study all necessary details and prepare for the arrival of official representatives. Vyshinsky once more returned to the importance for the Soviet side of the issue of diplomatic representatives and pointed out that the form of diplomatic representation was not agreed yet – would it be a mission or an embassy? Palar replied that no doubt the exchange of diplomatic representation between RUSI and the USSR should be at the highest level; it should be embassies as it was between RUSI and other great powers – the USA and Great Britain. Vyshinsky touched upon the issue of official registration of the agreements reached on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the exchange of embassies and signing corresponding documents. Palar replied that according to RUSI opinion, the sides should follow common diplomatic practice that is to exchange notes with agreemans for Ambassadors. Vyshinsky agreed to that. In conclusion Palar stressed once more the mutual understanding reached between the Indonesian delegation and the representatives of the Soviet government and stressed that the main aim of his mission was to demonstrate to the whole world the great importance attributed by RUSI to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and to remove any doubt on the issue. He believed his mission to be a success. But the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed in its documents that the Indonesian delegation avoided signing any official documents on this matter.

On 15 May 1950 the Indonesian delegation returned to Jakarta and on 16 May presented an account of its visit to Moscow at a cabinet meeting. Even after that no telegram followed from Hatta to the USSR about his government’s decision concerning the delegation account, no information for the press.

So the Indonesian side reached its main aim – it got Soviet consent to RUSI membership of the UN. Playing on the Soviet desire to establish diplomatic relations and exchange embassies with Indonesia RUSI leaders avoided the official registration of this important matter for the Soviet side. No documents were signed

215 Ibid. l. 28-32.
which confirmed de-jure the fact of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and RUSI. There took place no exchange of notes or telegrams on that matter.

Interpretations by Indonesian officials of the results of the Indonesian delegation’s visit to the USSR and its talks in Moscow were very much reserved, ambivalent and contradictory. On 17 May 1950 Prime-Minister’s Adviser Agus Salim said that between the USSR and Indonesia “one can see the desire for the establishment of diplomatic relations” and that “as Indonesia had sent its diplomatic mission to Moscow for discussing the issue about the establishment of diplomatic relations”, so now obviously the Soviet government should send its diplomatic mission to Jakarta. Having returned to the USA, Palar who was the Indonesian representative at the UN, stated on 22 May 1950 that the Soviet Union and Indonesia had agreed to establish diplomatic relations only “in principle”. 216 At the same time Hatta’s statement in Parliament on 4 August implied that the Indonesian side considered diplomatic relations between the USSR and RUSI established. 217

Such ambiguity put the Soviet leadership in an awkward position and caused irritation among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ officials. Among them a difference of opinions emerged on the issue of the establishment of Soviet-Indonesian diplomatic relations.

Experts of the Law and Treaty Department came to the conclusion that, from the legal point of view, diplomatic relations between the USSR and RUSI could not be considered established. 218 Nevertheless the SEA Department insisted that taking into consideration Palar’s suggestion that the USSR and RUSI should in the near future exchange notes about agreements for Ambassadors and that the USSR should send to Jakarta a preliminary small group in order to prepare housing for the Soviet Embassy, as well as his statement about agreement “in principle” on the matter of

216 AVP RF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 39-40.
217 Ibid. l. 41.
218 Ibid. l. 40.
the establishment of Soviet-Indonesian diplomatic relations, it should be considered that in fact diplomatic relations between the USSR and RUSI were established. In June 1950 the SEA Department prepared a draft document on the staff of the future Soviet Embassy in Jakarta.

Despite legal ambiguity, a tradition was established in Soviet historiography of considering the date 3 February 1950, i.e. the date of the positive answer of the RUSI government to the Soviet government’s announcement about its recognition of the independence and sovereignty of RUSI, as the official date of the beginning of Soviet-Indonesian diplomatic relations.

The Soviet side, especially Vyshinsky, who had carried on talks on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Indonesia, were irritated by such an uncertain state of affairs and absence of any initiative from the Indonesian side in developing relations with the USSR while the USSR had demonstrated its desire and readiness in the matter. In early August 1950 the SEA Department suggested to Vyshinsky that a hint be given to the Indonesian side (through Palar or Indonesian representatives in The Hague) that it would be expedient in accordance with existing international practice to exchange notes or publish a joint communiqué about the decision of the Soviet and Indonesian governments to establish diplomatic relations and exchange Ambassadors. Vyshinsky agreed to the proposal. In November 1950 a conversation took place between Vyshinsky and RUSI Minister of foreign Affairs Moh. Roem in New York during the GA of the UNO session. Vyshinsky reminded him about the agreement reached in Moscow to establish diplomatic relations and exchange diplomatic representatives. In his turn Roem explained that the main obstacle was that the Indonesian government could not find a proper person to be sent to the USSR as Ambassador. Vyshinsky

219 Ibid.
221 AVP RF f. 091 op. 6 d. 3 p. 3 l. 41.
remarked in his diary that further conversation with Roem made it clear that the Indonesian side still had no concrete plans on the matter.\textsuperscript{222}

The conversation between Vyshinsky and Roem took place after the dissolution of RUSI and the establishment of the unitary Republic of Indonesia on 15 August 1950. But even after the emergence of the new Indonesian state no exchange of notes or telegrams took place concerning the character of Soviet – Indonesian relations.

Vyshinsky’s irritation with ambiguity in the matter of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Indonesia was clearly shown in connection with the fifth anniversary of Indonesian independence. On 8 August 1950 two high Foreign Ministry officials – heads of Protocol and SEA Departments Molochkov and Bahitov - proposed to the Deputy Foreign Minister Bogomolov that the Soviet side should congratulate Indonesia on the occasion of its anniversary. It would be the first congratulation in the history of Soviet-Indonesian relations. It was suggested that Soviet Ambassador to The Hague, Zaitzev, should forward to Indonesian High Commissioner of RUSI in the Netherlands, Moh. Roem, his personal letter which would contain congratulations from the Soviet government.\textsuperscript{223} All necessary draft documents were enclosed. Vyshinsky’s attitude to the proposal was highly negative. On the note of Deputy Foreign Minister Lavrentyev who backed the proposal Vyshinsky wrote: “Not to be sent. Hold. 11/8.” \textsuperscript{224}

The exchange of embassies was still being delayed because of the absence of real interest in settlement of the issue from Indonesian ruling circles, which consisted at the time of representatives of pro-Western political groups. Nevertheless there existed at the time in Indonesia other groups interested in developing ties with the USSR.

In November 1951 Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs forwarded to CC CPSU information that Charge’ d’Affair of the USSR in Bangkok, Dolya was

\textsuperscript{222} AVP RF f. 091 op. 7 d. 1 p. 4 l. 3.

\textsuperscript{223} AVP RF f. 07 op. 23a d. 186 p. 13 l. 1.

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., l. 2.
frequently requested by Indonesian representatives (Charge d’Affairs of RI in
Bangkok, members of the Indonesian delegation at the conference on trade which
took place in Singapore in October 1951, Indonesian trade representatives in
Singapore and Thailand) why the Soviet Union did not send its Ambassador to
Indonesia. The Soviet Foreign Ministry recommended that Dolya should answer
that the delay was caused by the Indonesian government which took no steps to
exchange diplomatic representatives with the Soviet Union. 225 Possibly by
forwarding this document to the Party headquarters the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
attempted to arouse some interest among the Soviet leadership toward further
development of relations with Indonesia. It seems Indonesia at the time still
remained on the periphery of Soviet foreign policy during Stalin’s rule.

Although Indonesia showed no interest in realization of the agreement to
establish diplomatic relations and exchange embassies with the USSR, the Soviet
Union continued to display a favorable attitude toward RI in the world arena. In
September 1950 Indonesia with Soviet consent became a UN member. The USSR
rejected a request by the so-called “government of the Republic of South
Mollucas” in November 1952 to support its protest against inclusion of South
Mollucas Islands into the Republic of Indonesia. 226

Judging by documents from Archives of the Soviet Foreign Ministry
accessible for research, in the last years of Stalin period the Soviet side did not
demonstrate great activity in its relations with Indonesia either. Possibly the main
reason was of Stalin’s permanent lack of interest in the country. Besides, as was
mentioned earlier, Stalin considered Asia to be the sphere of China’s activity.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry documents explained the long delay in
establishing real diplomatic relations between the USSR and Indonesia by pressure
on Indonesia exerted by the Anglo-American block as well as by complicated
situation in Indonesia itself in the years 1950-1953. 227

225 AVP RF f. 091 op. 7 d. 1 p. 4 l. 6-7.
226 AVP RF f. 91 op. 6 d. 2 p. 2 l. 1, 2-15.
So the second attempt to establish Soviet – Indonesian diplomatic relations made during Stalin’s rule early in 1950, like the first one in 1948, was not successful and was not legally registered owing to the Cold War. Nevertheless, as has been pointed out, the Russian tradition traces the history of Soviet – Indonesian diplomatic relations from 3 February 1950.

Now we not only deduce, but know on the basis of the archival documents that the USSR in the closing period of the war and in the immediate post-war period had no plans concerning Indonesia, neither in the aspect of its Sovietisation nor imperial aggression. The USSR’s attitude toward Indonesia was the result of the interplay of the practical interest in the Cold War competition and the Indonesian struggle to defend independence.

Maybe the USSR was the first among the great powers to draw Indonesia into the Cold War. Anyway the Indonesians used the Cold War rivalry fully to the benefit of the country as a whole and of its competing political groups in particular.

Now we know how exactly how Soviet-Indonesian relations were developing in the years 1949-1953 and so can fill in the gaps in the scholarly literature of the period.

227 AVP RF f. 091 op. 9 d. 1 p. 6 l. 7.
Chapter Nine.

Stalin and the Revival of the Communist Party of Indonesia.

For more than two generations, historians have been asking themselves whether Moscow participated in the organizational and ideological revival of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in 1951-53. Some authors believe that the Indonesian communists defined the new party strategy and tactics independently from either Moscow or Beijing. Scholars have been eager to know whether Moscow participated directly in the promulgation of the new PKI line. Newly released documents show that Stalin played an active and personal role in the process of discussing and refining a new program for the PKI. The main ideas Stalin expressed during his discussions with the Indonesian Communists were incorporated into the new PKI program adopted in 1954, as well as in articles and speeches of PKI General Secretary Dipa Nusantara Aidit.

As a result of the participation by a number of the Communist Party of Indonesia (CPI, or PKI in its Indonesian initials) members in the anti-government rebellion of 1948, known as the Madiun Affair, the party was crushed, but officially not banned. The surviving leaders and members attempted to maintain what was left of the party organization.

Western scholars noted that at the end of 1940s and the beginning of 1950s Indonesian communist leaders were trying not only to maintain and restore the PKI structure after the Madiun disaster but also to work out a new program of action in drastically changed conditions. In this connection one of the most intriguing and important questions for them was whether Moscow participated in the organizational and ideological revival of the Communist Party in Indonesia. But
not a single scholar could say anything definite on the problem because they lacked documentary or even oral information.

Western specialists on Indonesian communism obtained information about this period of the movement mostly from non-documentary sources, and therefore their accounts are contradictory and fragmentary. Donald Hindley wrote that the acting secretary-general was at first Ngadiman Hardjosubroto, who was replaced in January 1950 by Djatun. Later the foremost leader in the Indonesian communist movement was Tan Ling Djie, who at the same time continued to head the Socialist Party of Indonesia. Veteran communist leaders Alimin and Wikana retained considerable prestige.228

Another scholar, Justus van der Kroef, identified Alimin and Tan Ling Djie as the leading PKI figures.229 A third researcher, Arnold C. Brachman, stated that it was Alimin who assumed the direction of the Politburo in 1949, filling the vacuum left by the death of Musso. Brachman emphasized that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and local Chinese in Indonesia were playing an important role in PKI affaires.230 Not one of the scholars mentioned the existence of one additional group of Indonesian communist leaders living in Peking under the protection of the CCP. Western scholars noted that at the end of 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, Indonesian communist leaders were trying not only to maintain and restore the PKI structure after the Madiun disaster, but also to work out a new program of action in drastically changed conditions. In this respect, one of the most intriguing and important questions was whether Moscow participated in the organizational and ideological revival of the Communist Party of Indonesia. But not a single scholar could say anything definite on the question because they lacked documentary or even oral information.

Some authors believed that Moscow showed an apparent lack of interest in PKI for some years after the Madiun rebellion. Donald Hindley wrote:

228 Donald Hindley “The Communist Party of Indonesia, p. 22-23

229 Justus M. Van Der Kroef “The Communist Party of Indonesia: Its History, Program and Tactics”. P.45

"It is probable that after the fiasco of Madiun, Moscow wrote off the Indonesian Communists as a lost cause. That is, Moscow considered the distant PKI no longer worthy of attention. Only after 1954, when the success of the Aidit leadership's form of the national united front had become amply apparent, did the interest of Moscow focus anew on PKI."  

D. Hindley emphasized that Moscow’s previous interference into PKI affairs was disastrous for the party, and that the Indonesian communists defined the new party strategy and tactics independently from either Moscow or Peking. Later researchers also supported the theory of Moscow's loss of interest in the Indonesian communist party. Van der Kroef wrote about the likelihood that the CCP provided material support to the PKI. Other authors were eager to know the answer to this intriguing question: "It is interesting to speculate whether Moscow participated directly in the promulgation of the new line."

Documents discovered in the recently opened Archive of Joseph V. Stalin clearly and definitely positive answer this question in the affirmative. The documents completely refute the contentions of Western scholars, cited above, that Moscow lost interest in the Indonesian communists. The documents testify that Moscow, and Stalin personally never ceased to pay attention to the events in Indonesia and the destiny of Indonesian communism. Stalin personally took most active and immediate part in the process of discussing and polishing of new program for the PKI, which was being formulated by Indonesian communists in cooperation with their Chinese comrades. Stalin read the documents thoroughly and reacted with a keen interest. He suggested his own formulations and


amendments, explaining his views and approaches in detail without formally forcing them upon the opponents.

The archival documents also point to the existence of a group of Indonesian communists in Beijing under the patronage of the Chinese Communist party. The existence of this group was never mentioned in Indonesian historiography. It was the Beijing group that first began work on a new strategy and tactics for the PKI. As is clear from the archival documents, Chinese communists considered Indonesian leader Tan Ling Djie to be the central figure among Indonesian communists. It was through him that they maintained contacts with the PKI. Tan Ling Djie became the main channel of Chinese ideological and political influence on the Communist party of Indonesia. The strong impact of the Chinese model of revolutionary struggle is clearly seen in the first program worked out for the PKI in the early days of its revival.

After the Madiun Affair some Indonesian leaders went to China and those who stayed in Indonesia apparently did not lose contact with the CCP. In cooperation with the CCP CC and some other Indonesian communists, a representative of a provisional Central Committee of PKI - Kando (alias Muriono), who was sent to China - had worked out program proposals for the PKI CC dated 6 October 1950. This document was sent to Stalin by CCP CC Secretary Liu Shaoqi, who requested Stalin's opinion. It signified than both Chinese and Indonesian communists needed approval and support from the All Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (AUCP(B) CC - and most importantly from Stalin. The Chinese communists played a role of intermediary.

On October 1950, the Soviet ambassador to China, Nikolai Roshchin sent a cipher telegram to Filippov (Stalin’s pseudonym). He informed Stalin that he had received the following message from CCP CC Secretary Liu Shaoqi:

“Comrade Roshchin, I am passing you proposals from the PKI CC, worked out by Comrade Kando [alias Muriono] and other representatives of the provisional PKI CC sent to China, in cooperation with CCP CC. We ask you to pass this
document to Comrade Filippov and AUCP(B) CC and request their opinion about it.”

Attached was the document prepared by Muriono together with CCPCC and dated 6 October 1950. For the first time in historiography, this document is now available to scholars.

The document begins with these words: “After studying the experience of the victory of Chinese revolution we propose the following for PKI CC:” The document continues with a short history of the PKI's successes and failures, from the uprising in 1926-27 to the Madiun Affair, which resulted in another crushing defeat for the party. The document stressed the complicated situation faced by the Communist Party in Indonesia, where power lay in the hands of a reactionary puppet government led by American and Dutch imperialists, and American imperialism supposedly intended to turn Indonesia into its own colony.

The document points out that inside the country feudal forces remained unchanged. During the war a group of feudal-comprador capitalists was assembled, headed by the Sukarno-Hatta clique, which achieved domination by leaning on feudal landlords and establishing contact with imperialists. The document considered of the Republic of Indonesia's independence to be only a facade, screening imperialist domination.

“The basic contradictions which caused the rise of the national revolution in Indonesia not only remained unsolved but even became sharper and deeper. This creates the inevitability of a new revolutionary ascendance of the national revolution in Indonesia, and taking into consideration the international situation, especially ... victories of national-liberation movement in the East, this ascendance is not too far away.

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235 RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 313 l. 2.

236 Ibid. l. 2-11.

237 Some of the ideas in the document are interpreted by the Russian scholar Ilya Gaiduk in his paper “Stalin and Asia: Teaching Revolution, 1950” presented at the conference “Stalin and Cold War in September 1999 in the USA.
The main tasks of the Communist party and all patriotic political parties and revolutionary organizations in Indonesia at the present time consist in incessantly unmasking, before all the peoples of Indonesia, the false and deceptive character of the Indonesian Republic's “independence”; unmasking the factual domination by the Dutch over the Indonesian peoples and of their oppression by Dutch, American and British imperialists; revealing the Sukarno-Hatta clique and their government as servants and agents of imperialist domination and suppression of the Indonesian people; raising the self-consciousness of all layers of the population; consolidating all patriots against imperialists and their agents; creating a broad, united national front; consistent struggle for the achievement of true independence for the Indonesian people and a genuine people’s democracy; and building a sovereign, free and united Indonesian Republic.”

In order to fulfill these tasks, the document proposed strategy and tactics for the PKI as follows:

1. Based on the revolutionary experience of all colonial and semi-colonial countries, which is at the same time the experience of the Indonesian Revolution, an "armed revolution” against “an armed counterrevolution” is necessary for the definitive liquidation of the domination of Dutch, American and British imperialists and their agents. This is the only way for the Indonesian people to achieve the goal of the revolution. It is necessary to take appropriate measures for the creation of an army that is strong and steadfast in the struggle for national liberation.

2. The Communist Party of Indonesia should create a united national front, based on the union of workers and peasants, led by the working class and including all nationalities, the petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, all patriotic parties and groupings and patriotic elements of the country on the platform of the following political demands:

- The expulsion from Indonesia of all of Dutch, American and British imperialist’s forces and implementation of full independence for Indonesia.
• The overthrow of the domination of the domestic reactionaries, who serve the imperialists, and their replacement with a democratic coalition government, which ensures national independence and freedom of the people.

• The liquidation of feudal privileges and the carrying out of land reform.

• The protection of national industry and trade and development of the people’s economy.

• Improvement in the lives of workers, peasants and all toilers.

• The granting to the people of freedom of speech, press, meetings, unions and beliefs.

• Equal rights.

• Equality of rights between men and women.

• An alliance with the USSR, China and the states of people’s democracy; struggle against imperialists’ intervention in Asia’s affairs; opposition to turning Indonesia into the bridgehead for a war of imperialist aggression.

3. The organization of the Communist Party of Indonesia needs, at the present time, the ability to use the tactic of temporary withdrawal flexibility and to organize such a withdrawal.

This was followed by a proposal to unite again all party organizations and cadres and to complete the party build-up, as decided in August 1948, before the Madiun Affair. The document stressed the necessity of organizing a broad discussion of the strategic and tactical tasks proposed for the party “in the further revolutionary movement in Indonesia, to study simultaneously the lessons of defeat, to use the moment for carrying out a systematic educational activity in the party, raising the level of theoretical mastery of basic dogmas of Marxism-Leninism as well as the experience of the Chinese revolution”, in order to turn PKI.
“into a united proletarian party, which masters the weapon of Marxism-Leninism, well-knit by iron discipline”.

4. The revolution in Indonesia will be won only after a hard, prolonged and serious struggle. This is why PKI should master the highest principles of strategy, to lead the revolution to the end... To effectively revolutionize the people’s masses and gather revolutionary forces, it is especially important at the present moment to study seriously and to master methods of illegal or semi-illegal organization of the masses and contacts with them. ... Under the present conditions, main party organizations must work in the gravest secrecy. Therefore, in order to conduct legal work in accordance with future possibilities, it is necessary to select and train a group of leading and high-ranking party members who are capable to open legal work. It is also necessary to use every legal possibility for carrying on open mass work and to participate in parliamentary activity in all instances.

The document laid down the task of drawing workers of culture and broad circles of intelligentsia into the party, as well as intensifying work in trade unions, among women and young people.

The sixth point addressed the necessity of “carrying on serious, well-planned and broad work among the peasantry with aim of preparing bases and positions for the armed revolution”, and sending the best and most responsible workers “into reactionary army units, through possible loop-holes, for seizing weapons”.

“At the present time, the party should move the center of gravity of the work, step by step, into the village. For the beginning of the armed struggle in the countryside it is important to choose a region where the enemy’s domination is the weakest, where, most importantly, the broad masses have already ripened politically and prepared organizationally; to create one or several guerilla units, which with the help of the masses and in defense of the masses’ interests would begin a guerilla war against taxes and requisitions, a struggle against the reactionary government.

The development of the armed struggle should be tightly connected with the interests of the people’s masses. As far as the military aspect is concerned, it is
necessary to master strategy and tactics of guerilla war. As far as the political aspect is concerned, it is necessary to master the policy of the united front, isolating the enemy as much as possible, gradually strengthening guerilla units and turning them into a regular people’s liberation army”.

At that time, there were still clandestine and semi-clandestine militarized regions, so-called “small red regions”, where the dual revolutionary tactic was to be continued. This tactic consisted of trying to legally preserve weapons in the peasants’ hands, while at the same time strengthening party and political work among them to establish the idea of the armed revolution, so as “to foment guerilla struggle when the situation ripens”.

Further the document envisaged drawing into the party Indonesian national minorities and Chinese immigrants while trying to influence them via the CCP.

In conclusion, the authors of the program asked PKI CC to evaluate the proposals and “if CC considered them executable or feasible on the whole with certain corrections, we ask CC to take measures for their proper realization.”

The contents and formulation of the document reflect the strong influence on its authors of both the Chinese revolutionary experience and the strategic and political thinking of CCP leaders. Many of the CCP's typical dogmas are conspicuous: the orientation of the Communist Party of Indonesia towards new armed struggle against “the domination of Dutch and American imperialists” and “their puppets in the person of Sukarno-Hatta clique”; the primary attention in party work on the creation of guerilla units among peasants and “red” liberated areas in the countryside; forming a national-liberation army in order to lead the revolution to the end, as well as the organization of "a broad united national front with the participation of petty and national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia" for the struggle against both local reactionaries and American imperialism.

Stalin read the program worked out for the Indonesian communists very thoroughly, underlined some sections and made many marginal notes. In Stalin's reaction, we can clearly see his attitude of the Indonesian party and to the proposals of the Indonesian and Chinese leaders.
Stalin’s first remark concerned the passage in which the document first mentions the main tasks of PKI, focusing on the necessity to unmask the falsity of Indonesian independence. “And what about the agrarian question?” – wrote Stalin, as there was not a word about this question in the document. Further, Stalin marked the words about the necessity of “the armed revolution against the armed counterrevolution”, “creation of a strong and steadfast national-liberation army” and commented: “From the wrong end.” Next to the passage about the necessity of “banishing from Indonesia all forces of Dutch, American and British imperialists” Stalin added: “Nationalization of their property!” Concerning the proposal for “the overthrow of the domination of the inner reactionaries who are serving the imperialists” and “their replacement with a democratic coalition government”, Stalin exclaimed: “Wrong!” Stalin had the same reaction to the call for “the union with the USSR, China and the states of people’s democracy”.

Stalin was also against the proposal to begin a broad discussion on the program, remarking: “Limitless discussion? No!” Concerning the necessity “to study the lessons of defeat”, the Soviet leader exclaimed: “Exactly!” He also underlined the words about “the systematic educational work in the party”. But the whole fragment concerning the mastery of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice of the Chinese revolution was simply crossed out as useless and irrelevant in such a serious document.

Stalin agreed that “the revolution in Indonesia will be won only after hard, prolonged and serious struggle”, remarking: “This is so”. The PKI’s intentions remained unclear to him. Next to the words “to lead the revolution to the end”, he wrote a question: “What does it mean?” He stressed the importance of mastering methods of illegal work, and especially approved of the call to legal “parliamentary activity at all instances”, exclaiming: “This is right!”

Stalin supported plans for the intensification of work in trade unions, pointing to the importance of this work not in official, but in independent trade unions. He gave advice to the Indonesian communists, who intended to send their agents into “the reactionary army”: “To penetrate the army”. On the problem of the
creation of liberated areas and guerilla units Stalin remarked: “It should be done skillfully”. He also stressed the words about the creation of a broad national front, about the attraction of CCP to the work among the Chinese population in Indonesia and other passages.

Stalin did not support the transfer of the Chinese revolutionary experience into Indonesia; he rejected the suggestions for a new wave of armed struggle by the Indonesian communists. He approved only workable, practical proposals for PKI activity among the masses, as well as in legal organizations, especially pointing out the importance of the agrarian question for Indonesian communists.

All of these remarks, one way or other, were reflected later in Stalin’s comments to the draft program for the Indonesian communists that was presented to him. Nevertheless, Stalin decided that he could not express his opinion on the document outright, because he considered himself to be not aquatinted profoundly enough with the current economic situation in Indonesia, without which knowledge it would be difficult to evaluate the draft program properly.  

Stalin requested from Liu Shaoqi informational materials on the following problems:

1. Which industry branches, including transport, are developed in Indonesia? Yow far are they developed? How many workers are occupied in them? What is the percentage of workers in comparison with the population as a whole?

2. How much cultivated and uncultivated land is owned by landlords, the state, foreigners and peasants? What is the percentage of the peasantry in the total population of the country?

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238 I do not agree with Gaiduk’s statement that Indonesia served for Stalin only as an example of one country with economic and political conditions similar to many other countries in East Asia, therefore revealing his views on general issues of the national liberation movement in Asia and on communist tactics in the guerilla war (Gaiduk, “Stalin and Asia”, p. 5) This is inconsistent with Stalin’s thorough analysis of the data he requested about Indonesia; all his further recommendations were based not only on the concrete economic and political data, but on the geographic situation of the country as well.
3. How many small landholders and landless peasants are there in Indonesia? Who employ them? How many agricultural workers are there in the country?

Stalin indicated that he would be satisfied even with rough data. A cipher telegram containing this request was sent to China on 26 October 1950. Liu Shaoqi’s response and materials concerning the economy and social structure of Indonesia were received in Moscow on 23 November of the same year.

Only after studying all the materials (they contain a lot of Stalin’s marks and notes, especially on the agrarian questions), did Stalin reply. In January 1951, writing in his own hand, Stalin replied with his comments on the draft program for PKI CC dated 6 October 1950.

Stalin’s message was as follows:

“We inform you about our comments to the draft program dated October 6, 1950.

Our general impression is such, that despite the purely agrarian nature of Indonesia, nevertheless the industry there is developed better than in some other colonial countries.

1. The main task for PKI in the near future is not “the creation of the broadest national front” against the imperialists for “winning real independence” for Indonesia, but the liquidation of feudal property of the land and the transformation of the land into the property of the peasants. The main thing in Indonesia is to stir up the peasants and to rouse them upright. But this can be done only through the liquidation of feudal property and the transfer of the land to the peasants. The front against feudal landlords should be built in such a way that all feudal landlords are isolated, while all peasants, excluding kulaks, participate in it. If the communist party, as a party of the working class, understands the great

239 RSASPH f. 558 op. 11 d. 313 l. 13-14.

240 RSASPH f. 558 op. 11 d. 313 l. 57-61.
importance of this agrarian revolution and helps the peasants in this matter, then the union of the working class and the peasantry, as a basis of the people’s democratic revolution would be insured.

2. The communist party's second task consists of the organization of a united national front for the struggle for Indonesia's full independence from Dutch imperialism. This front should be organized so that its spear is primarily directed not against all foreign imperialists, but only against Dutch imperialists. The aim of this front is the banishment of Dutch imperialists with their military forces, nationalization of their property, rupture with the Netherlands and the declaration of Indonesia's full independence. If British and American imperialists intervene in the struggle and begin to support the Dutch imperialists and their Indonesian puppets with their military forces, in this case the national front will need to be broadened, aiming it against all imperialists ion Indonesia and nationalizing their property. It is clear that the basis of this national front will be the union of the workers and peasants, and its firmness will fully depend on the success of the agrarian revolution. As far as “the union with the USSR, with China and the states of people’s democracy” is concerned, this thing should be thrown out of the document as irrelevant in this case.

3. The rest of the PKI's tasks, as outlined in the document, did not arouse remarks.

4. Proceeding to tactical questions, the document suggests that the way of “the armed revolution”- that is, a guerilla war in the countryside, - is the only way that can lead to victory. Certainly, the Chinese experience shows that the method of guerilla war, with the creation of liberated guerilla-controlled areas and the organization there of a national-liberation army, should be recognized as an expedient method for such a backward country as Indonesia. But the problem is that, in Indonesian conditions the methods used in China can be applied only with substantial modification.
First, the successful use of guerilla war methods supposes the existence of a large country with has a large number of forests and mountainous areas far away from railways and cities. Indonesia possesses these conditions in limited measure.

Second, even if the communists captured a liberated guerilla area and established a national-liberation army there, nevertheless the area would represent only an island in the state. This island could easily be encircled by the enemy, because it has no solid rear. Of course, it is possible to leave a liberated guerilla area, to cut through the encirclement and to establish a new liberated area in some other place. But this does not protect it from a new encirclement, in which case the guerillas would have to move again to another area. This is what happened to the Chinese communists. Nevertheless, they at last found a solution when they moved to Manchuria and established a solid rear in Manchuria, leaning against the USSR as against their own rear, the enemy lost the ability to encircle them, and the Chinese communists seized the opportunity to wage a planned offensive against Chiang Kaishek’s army from north to south. Can we suppose that the Indonesian comrades, after winning a guerilla-liberated area, would have the opportunity, as the Chinese comrades did, to lean against frontiers as against their own rear and thus deprive the enemy of the opportunity to encircle them? No, we cannot, because Indonesia comprises a group of islands encircled by the sea, and therefore the Indonesian comrades could not establish a secure rear area.

Third, the Chinese communists had an advantage due to the fact that, after their breach with the Kuomintang in 1927, they already had at their disposal an army of several tens of thousands of men, which they employed in the struggle against Chiang Kaishek’s units. The Indonesian comrades have at present no army and they still have to build it.

Thus the specific conditions of Indonesia limit their use of guerilla war method, the method of “the armed revolution”.

Where is a way out? The way out is in completing the method of guerilla war with the method of revolutionary activity by the working class in cities and industrial centers, and with the method of all-out economic and political strikes,
which would paralyze the reactionary government's activity and be aimed at supporting the guerilla war in the countryside. The way out consists in the combination of these two methods.

Most important for Indonesia could be strikes by workers in maritime, railway and automobile transport industries, which could throw the country’s economic life into disorder, paralyze the activities of government organs and in this way greatly assist the guerilla war.

Because of that, it is absolutely impossible to underestimate the importance of political and organizational work among the working class. More than this, it is absolutely necessary in every possible way to win the majority of the working class, remembering, that the party activity among the workers is no less important than activity among the peasantry and guerillas.

5. The main sin of PKI leaders until now was that they were prisoners of “leftist phrase”. Without deep and thorough analysis of the situation, they tried in one stroke to solve all problems: to liquidate feudalism, to break with the Netherlands and to crush all imperialists, and to eliminate the kulaks. In fact, they ended up uniting all actual and potential enemies against themselves, isolating themselves and weakening their own party to the last degree. Such is usual though sad harvest of leftist declamations. It seems to me that spirit of leftism continues to live among communists in Indonesia. In order to push this evil spirit out of the party, it is necessary to turn party activists sharply in the direction of practical molecular “dirty” work on the question of everyday needs of workers, peasants, working intelligentsia. Only there, in this work, can they rally the broad masses of toilers around the party. Certainly, this will be the work without luster and chic, without alluring declamations. But now, under present conditions in Indonesia it is the most productive work.

There is in the document an instruction to start a wide discussion in the party” from top to bottom”. I advise the Indonesian comrades not to be carried away by a discussion. Unlimited discussion is ruining the Indian Communist Party. It will ruin the Communist party of Indonesia completely. There is a simple and
verified method for illegal parties: letting comrades work out, say, a party platform, carrying on a corresponding discussion in a narrow circle, without publishing in the press; after the adoption of the document by the majority of the leading comrades, the document is approved and put into realization, as the main laws of the party, obligatory for all party members; all party members took on themselves the obligation to propagate and to defend the platform among workers, peasants, intelligentsia; later, after the platform was verified in practice, a party conference corrects, supplements and changes the platform. I think that the Indonesian Communist Party could at present limit itself to using this method”.

Thus, from Stalin’s response we can see that he did not support the blind copying of the Chinese model by the Indonesian communists. He recommended coordinating actions with the concrete social and economic, as well as political and even geographic, situation of the country. In fact, Stalin was against a new wave of the armed struggle by the Indonesian communists, calling on them, first of all, to use such legal methods as strikes and peasants demands for land. For an agrarian country like Indonesia, he especially stressed the importance of intensifying the peasants’ movement for land, and advised making the agrarian program most important in the party plans.

Stalin warned the PKI about the dangers of “the childhood ailment of leftism”. He recommended that the Indonesian communists should not try by one stroke to solve all problems. Instead, they should carry on the struggle step by step, gradually achieving the task of attracting the broad masses of the people to the party and its program. Despite the intensification of the Cold War in the world arena and the aggravation of confrontation between the USSR and the USA, Stalin oriented the Indonesian communists first of all to the struggle against remnants of Dutch imperialism in Indonesia, with the goal of breaking all formal and informal chains tying Indonesia to its former governors. (This contradicted the intentions of Dutch communists, who had insisted that a paragraph of “a special relations” between the Indonesian Republic and the Netherlands be included in the program
worked out by Musso in cooperation with Dutch communist leader Paul De Groot in April 1948.\textsuperscript{241}

Also striking is Stalin’s dislike of pompous, propagandistic phrases about “the alliance with the USSR, China and the countries of people’s democracy” included in the program with the obvious aim of emphasizing the PKI’s loyalty toward both AUCP(B) and CCP.

To summarize, Stalin called on the PKI to focus on practical work concerning the everyday needs and interests of workers, peasants and the working intelligentsia, including the education of the masses and the organization of the party. He recommended that the PKI should not include on the agenda for the near future such distant and difficult tasks as a seizure of power by military means.

The cipher telegram containing Stalin's remarks was sent to the Soviet ambassador to Beijing on 3 February 1951. At 22.00 the same day, the ambassador personally handed the telegram to Liu Shaoqi.\textsuperscript{242} But after that, the Chinese side lapsed into a prolonged silence. Stalin was forced to inquire further to learn about the response to his message. On 3 April 1951, via the soviet ambassador, Stalin addressed himself directly to Mao Zedong: “Comrade Mao Zedong, some month ago Comrade Liu Shaoqi, acting on behalf of CCP CC, requested Filippov’s opinion on the PKI platform. Filippov gave his comments. However, how all this ended is still unknown to us, Is it possible to inform us on the matter?” \textsuperscript{243}

On 5 April 1951, an answer from Liu Shaoqi arrived to Stalin.\textsuperscript{244} In this message, Liu Shaoqi pledged his full support for Stalin’s directions to the Indonesian communists and promised to do his best in ensuring they were passed on to the PKI leadership. He explained the delay in responding by noting that, according to information received by CCP CC, the PKI CC Politburo concluded a

\textsuperscript{241} RSASPH f. 17 op. 128 d. 643 l. 2-3

\textsuperscript{242} Ibid., l. 62.

\textsuperscript{243} RSASPH f. 558 op. 11 d. 313 l. 63.

\textsuperscript{244} Ibid., l. 64-65
secret meeting on 6 January 1951. At this meeting, the Indonesian communist leadership was reorganized:

“Of the five members of the standing bureau, four were removed, including former Secretary General Comrade Chen Lindjue (Nab Ling Djie). The reason for their removal is that the standing bureau headed by Chen Lindjue, by failing to carry out a Politburo decision to dissolve the Socialist Party of Indonesia, had made, they believed, a mistake. The Politburo elected a new standing bureau and adopted a new political resolution, “The situation in Indonesia” and the tasks of the Communist Party of Indonesia”. The position of the new PKI CC is still not quite clear to us, and they, on their part, still did not express a desire to receive political proposals from us. So, it seems to me, the time has not yet come to make any official proposals to PKI. When in the future the situation becomes clearer and they ask us for the proposals, then we shall render them active assistance and make proposals to them.”

Liu Shaoqi promised to send Stalin all PKI CC decisions received by CCP.

The same position was repeated in the telegram from Mao Zedong to Stalin on 7 April 1951.245

“Taking into consideration the reorganization of the PKI Politburo in January of this year, as well as the fact that the new leadership has not yet expressed a desire to receive political assistance from us, an appropriate opportunity for passing your directions to PKI still has not presented itself. It is necessary to wait for some time in order to clear the situation, and when the leadership of the Indonesian communist party asks for political assistance, and then we shall present your directions in an appropriate form.”

At the same time Mao Zedong confessed that he himself was “not well-educated on the Indonesian question”. Further, he promised that all materials concerning the reorganization of the PKI leadership, as well as the political resolution of the new Politburo, would be sent to AUCP(B) CC. He also suggested

245 Ibid., l. 66-67.
that if Stalin had any new directions, he should again pass them along via the Chinese communists.

By mid-1951 the situation in the PKI leadership seems to slip out of the control of CCP, which previously had been closely watching its activity through Indonesians communists of Chinese origin as well as through PKI representatives in Beijing. Obviously, for a period of time the CCP CC could not obtain true and full information on what was going on in the PKI leadership and therefore decided to wait for the situation to clear. The new Indonesian communist leadership, headed by young leader Dipa Nusantara Aidit, gradually established contacts with Chinese communists.

In the first week of January 1951 the central leadership of the PKI, which had been formed after the Madiun affair, was reshuffled. Former leaders were replaced by representatives of the new generation of communists headed by Dipa Nusantara Aidit, who became first secretary. He immediately began to restore the united party that had been planned and implemented by its first leader Musso, who had been killed during the Madiun affair. Simultaneously Aidit started working out new strategies and tactics for Indonesian communists. Aidit gradually established contacts with Chinese comrades. Only after this could Chinese leaders pass Stalin’s recommendations to the new PKI CC Politburo. As a result Stalin’s comments reached the Indonesian communists long after he made them.
Chapter Ten.

Sialin’s Final Communication with the Indonesian Communists, 1951-1953.

In July 1950, Aidit and M.H. Lukman returned to Indonesia after eighteen months abroad. They had left Indonesia at the time of the Madiun affair (the anti-government communist rebellion of 1948) and had gone to Vietnam and then to China. In the first week of January 1951 the central leadership of the PKI, which had been formed after the Madiun affair, was reshuffled. Former leaders were replaced by representatives of the new generation of communists headed by Dipa Nusantara Aidit, who became first secretary. He immediately began to restore the united party that had been planned and implemented by its first leader Musso, who had been killed during the Madiun affair. Simultaneously Aidit started working out new strategies and tactics for Indonesian communists.

Western scholars have argued that the new Indonesian leaders, Aidit and his associates, based their ideas exclusively on Marxism–Leninism (not on Stalinism or Maoism), and that Aidit worked out his strategy and tactics independently, without Moscow’s participation. Therefore, according to these historians, the new program of Indonesian communists was free of the influence of “Stalin’s dogmas.”

Donald Hindley writes: “That the definition of the national united front strategy was effected independently by the Aidit leadership is strongly suggested by ... the apparent lack of interest in the PKI shown by Moscow for some years after the Madiun rebellion ...”

Justus Van der Kroef states: “... the years from 1948 to 1952 ... gave way to a new “Leninist” direction in the party under D. N. Aidit ... It is only in this last

Hindley, The Communist Party of Indonesia, 1951–1963, p. 31
period that the PKI emerges as a truly Leninist party with a developed organization and revolutionary theory.”  

These statements are echoed by later authors: “This drastic change of course was worked out and began to be put in practice late in 1951, and was adopted at the party congress in 1954. Stalin’s postwar policies had, indeed, begun to wear thin by the time of the party congress in Moscow in 1952, but the base of the PKI’s new policy was primarily to be found in its own analysis of the situation in Indonesia. Even internationally, the party was a pioneer. It was not until 1956 that Moscow openly adopted the policies which the PKI had already worked out in detail and had been practicing for several years”.

Documents discovered in the recently opened Archive of Joseph Stalin refute the contentions of these scholars. The archival documents testify that Stalin personally played a very active and direct role in the process by which Aidit composed new program documents for the PKI. Stalin met Aidit and other representatives of the PKI in Moscow, had long conversations with them, and exchanged protracted letters with them up to the final weeks before his death. So we have ample ground to argue that not only Marxism–Leninism and the Chinese model of revolutionary struggle, but also Stalin’s own ideas and views, had profound impact on the PKI program documents adopted during the first years when the new generation of young Indonesian communists, headed by Aidit, took over leadership of the PKI, as well as on the views and positions assumed by Aidit himself.

After the election of the new PKI leadership, contacts between the PKI and Josef Stalin, established by the former PKI leaders via the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and lost for a short period due to reorganizations in PKI leadership,


248 Tornquist, Dilemmas of Third World Communism, p. 51.
were gradually restored. Chinese communists played an intermediary role, as they had before.

On April 9, 1951, the new leadership adopted the PKI General Program. It was the first variant of a new program worked out by Aidit and his associates—young members of the reshuffled PKI Central Committee. In the archives, we have found translations of this General Program from English into Russian.249

The program stated that “the PKI represents the vanguard and the highest form of class organization of the Indonesian working class” and that “at present, the PKI is carrying out the struggle for the establishment of a people’s democratic system in Indonesia, the further aim being to build a socialist society as the first phase of communism.” The document pointed out that “all PKI activity is based on a combination of Marxist–Leninist theory with the practice of the Indonesian revolution—on comrade Musso’s ideas set forth in the PKI CC resolution [“The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia” of August 27, 1948—L. E.], as well as on Mao Zedong’s ideas.”

The document characterized Indonesia as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, and the driving forces of the revolution were said to include the working class, the peasantry, intellectuals, small-businessmen, the national bourgeoisie, and other elements suffering under imperialist pressure. The current stage of the revolution was defined as “a bourgeois–democratic revolution of a new type, a bourgeois–democratic revolution of the period of imperialism and proletarian revolutions all over the world.”

The program said that “the revolution in Indonesia is a people’s revolution, a revolution of the broad masses of the people led by the proletariat, a revolution aimed against imperialism, feudalism, and the comprador bourgeoisie.”

The document underlined the need for unification of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist elements “for the liberation of the Indonesian people from imperialist

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249 RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 315 l. 22–26. The original documents that came into Stalin’s hands would have been written, or translated, in English because the Indonesian language was practically unknown in Moscow at that time.
and feudal pressure.” However, on a more cautionary note, it pointed out that the fulfillment of this task would take a long time and that the immediate tasks should consist of training party members and creating a united national front.

The program spoke casually of the peasantry’s role in the revolution: “Taking into consideration that Indonesia is an agrarian country, the party work in rural areas should be broadened and deepened.”

This PKI program worked out under Aidit’s leadership was comparatively more moderate, freer of revolutionary demagoguery and leftist deviations, and less oriented towards the experience of the Chinese revolution than were the program proposals put forward by Muriono, the PKI representative in Beijing, which were written in cooperation with the CCP and dated October 6, 1950. Common to both programs was a lack of attention to the peasantry and its role in the revolutionary struggle.

Shortcomings pointed out by Stalin in his analysis of Muriono’s program were not completely overcome by Aidit’s version of the proposals. This can be explained by the fact that Indonesian communists received Stalin’s remarks and suggestions for revision concerning Muriono’s program proposals only in March 1952, more than fourteen months after Stalin composed them, and after a new PKI program had already been worked out under Aidit’s leadership, and so Aidit and his colleagues were not acquainted with Stalin’s criticism of the previous program as they framed their new version. In addition, young PKI leaders, led by Aidit, did not initially accept Stalin’s criticisms and did not agree with a number of his views concerning the situation in Indonesia and PKI strategy. Their opinion was expressed in a 20 March 1952 PKI CC letter to the CCP CC. The letter contained the objections of PKI leadership to Stalin’s remarks and recommendations.

Stalin wrote: "The main task of the PKI in the immediate future is not "the creation of the broadest united national front" against imperialists in order “to gain

250 Ibid. 1. 19–21.
the genuine independence” of Indonesia, but the liquidation of feudal ownership of land and transfer of land ownership to peasants”. To this Indonesian communists replied: "Indonesia, it is true, remains a backward agrarian country at present, but there are no feudal landlords in Indonesia. ... The struggle against feudalism in Indonesia more or less takes the form of the struggle against feudal customs and habits. Peasants' struggle for land should precede the struggle against imperialist ownership, that is against the government”, which leases the land to foreigners. “We believe that the main and immediate task for our party at present is the organization of a broad national united front against imperialism and feudal remnants." They also stressed the importance of the struggle against American imperialist penetration of Indonesia.

On questions of strategy and methods of revolutionary struggle, the Indonesian communists agreed with Stalin. "As far as strategy questions are concerned, we fully agree with the proposals of our Soviet comrades, that we must coordinate two methods: the method of armed revolution and the method of revolutionary actions of workers."

The new PKI leadership referred Stalin's remark, that Indonesian communists "still are captives of leftist phraseology", to the past period of the party activity. They pointed to the difficult internal conditions of PKI existence, thus justifying their semi-legal methods of work. They agreed to Stalin's advice to switch over from revolutionary slogans to "practical molecular "dirty" work” on problems of everyday needs of workers, peasants, and working intellectuals.

In a clear effort to smooth out differences with Soviet comrades and Stalin personally, in May 1952 the Indonesian communists appealed to the AUCP(B) CC to convene in Moscow a tripartite conference of representatives from the AUCP(B), the CCP and the PKI. “The Chinese comrades” supported this appeal. However, the AUCP (B) CC decided not to answer this proposal of the PKI CC. We can assume that Stalin thought that he had already given a sufficiently complete explanation of his views on PKI strategy and tactics in his message of 2 February 1951 passed via the CCP.
It is possible that the Soviet leader was displeased with the PKI CC’s objections to his remarks as well as with the fact that Indonesian communists were strongly influenced by the CCP. (Stalin had been previously quite content with the leading role of the CCP in Asia.)

Alarmed with the AUCP(B) CC rejection and seeking Stalin’s support, the Indonesian communists repeatedly tried to establish direct contact with their "Soviet comrades". Asmu and Subekti, PKI delegates to the nineteenth CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) congress in Moscow, presented to the AUCP(B) Central Committee on October 25, 1952, a report describing the situation in the PKI. In the report, they outlined the PKI CC’s perspective on the questions addressed in the AUCP(B) CC message of February 2, 1951, and asked the AUCP(B) CC to discuss these questions. A Russian translation of this report, with Stalin’s remarks penciled in the margins, is located in RGASPI.\(^{251}\)

Indonesian communists believed that “the present situation gives us the right to hope that a revolutionary situation is again ripening in Indonesia ... We received the letter from AUCP(B) CC comrades and have already begun to undertake successful work in the light of directions given to us. However, up to now we still have a number of unresolved questions. ... For instance, it is not clear to us whether the struggle against Dutch imperialism in Indonesia should be considered of immediate importance and why only an anti-feudal front should be created”

Stalin read Asmu and Subekti’s letter closely and especially noted the questions concerning the struggle against Dutch imperialism and the creation of an anti-feudal front.

Notes on the documents show that Stalin paid special attention to the report prepared by the Indonesian leadership. This report contained an analysis of the political situation in Indonesia at the beginning of the 1950s, a description of political forces and the state’s power, a summary of the foundations of PKI policy,

\(^{251}\) RGASPI f. 558, o. 11 d. 314 l. 7–35.
and a list of the tasks outlined by the leadership, headed by Aidit. Stalin marked a number of points that he considered most important with his famous blue pencil.

First of all, he marked the paragraph stressing the necessity of struggle to secure the abrogation of unequal agreements with the Netherlands and the rejection of a Mutual Defense Agreement with the USA. Secondly, noting the authors’ demand for nationalization of vital economic assets, Stalin wrote: “Without foreign enterprises?” as these enterprises were omitted from the Indonesians’ demands concerning nationalization. To the phrase regarding the liquidation of large landholdings, Stalin added: “And transfer the land to the peasants.” He was perplexed by the proposal to transfer “land for redemption” to Indonesian peasants.

Stalin carefully read the short annotation of the report, prepared by the AUCP(B) CC department of foreign relations. He made a number of notes concerning PKI strategy and tactics, as well as notes responding to the party’s demands. Many of the clauses in the PKI document provoked Stalin into writing skeptical or ironic remarks. Thus, for instance, concerning the PKI’s demand for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Indonesia and the whole of Asia, and for a halt to the remilitarization of Germany and Japan, Stalin reacted: “Ha-ha!” The same remark concludes the whole annotation.252

However, Stalin especially singled out the section on agrarian questions, noting positively the demand to grant land to those cultivating it, adding "as private property".

The annotation to the PKI CC document "Concerning Party Policy on the Implementation of an Agrarian Reform" contained an extensive characterization of land relations and class differentiation of the rural Indonesian population and detailed instructions for leading cadres’ work among the peasantry. Stalin, who attached great importance to the peasantry in agrarian countries such as Indonesia, noted the clauses stating that there was no radical land redistribution in Indonesia after liberation and that all land rights and privileges were returned to large foreign

252 RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 315 l. 8–12.
capital. Stalin supported demands for the expropriation (confiscation) of ‘feudal’ property, nationalization of the basic means of production, transmission of supreme rights on land to the government, and distribution of land among peasants as private property. In general, the PKI’s agrarian program did not raise Stalin’s objection.

The first AUCP(B) CC response to the PKI documents can be found in “Information on Documents on PKI Questions,” published in an Information Bulletin of 1952 edited by the AUCP(B) CC Commission for contacts with communist parties abroad. The Information evaluated the PKI CC letter to the CCP CC of March 20, 1952, which reached Soviet communists only on 23 October 1952, as well as the Report on the situation in PKI dated 25 October 1952, and contained some critical remarks, which took into account Stalin's reaction.

"Both documents presented by the Indonesian comrades contain erroneous clauses. In the letter addressed to the CCP CC, the PKI leadership states that the PKI does not fully agree with some AUCP(B) CC criticisms. Thus, for instance, the Indonesian comrades are of the opinion, that there are no feudal landlords in Indonesia that the land belongs to the government, which is under imperialist control, and so, according to Indonesian communists, the immediate task for the Indonesian people is the struggle against imperialism, not against feudalism. ... Nevertheless in Asmu and Subekti’s report specific details on the condition of the peasantry in Indonesia are listed, which contradict the PKI CC statement that there are no feudal landlords in Indonesia. The report states that "the majority of arable land plots, which were seized by peasants from landlords during the revolution, have been returned by forcible means. Besides, peasants remain subjected to feudal exploitation…" Furthermore the Information, using statistical data, showed the existence in Indonesia of landlessness among the peasantry.

"The Indonesian comrades also do not agree that the spearhead of struggle for genuine independence should be aimed at Dutch imperialists. It is stated in the

253 RSASPH ф. 558 оп.11 д. 315 л.16-18.
PKI CC letter to the CCP CC, that "the struggle against Dutch imperialists could hardly be separated from the struggle against American imperialists. Thus, the Indonesian comrades prematurely provoke American imperialists, in this way multiplying the number of their enemies and depriving themselves of advantages in the struggle."

"Concerning the criticism of the "leftist" mistakes of the Indonesian Communist Party leadership, expressed by the AUCP(B) CC, the Indonesian comrades in their letter state that this criticism is correct only with regard to the previous period of PKI activity." However, the authors of the Information do not agree with such an interpretation. They point out that in Asmu and Subekti's report, alongside correct statements and characteristics, "there are wrong formulations, which could lead to mistakes in party work. Thus, for instance, stating that at present power in Indonesia is in the hands of the national bourgeoisie in alliance with imperialists, the authors of the report do not mention the class of landlords as sharing in state power alongside a segment of the bourgeoisie. The Indonesian comrades sometimes characterize the entire national bourgeoisie as an agent of imperialism."

"The report does not state directly that the Indonesian Communist Party should consider both Dutch and American imperialists equally as enemies and carry on a struggle against them simultaneously, but factual material points to this aim. The report contains PKI demands among which there are wrong ones which do not correspond with the stage of the revolutionary movement facing Indonesia, as, for instance, the demand for the nationalization of the most important enterprises - large mills, mines, transportation, large plantations as well as big houses owned by private proprietors."

In December 1952, Aidit and Njoto arrived in the USSR and took part in the work of the XIX Congress of the AUCP(B), in addition to attending the celebration of Stalin’s seventieth birthday. On January 6, 1953, these Indonesian communists were received by Stalin. I have discovered no records of the ensuing conversation
in the archives. However, the nature of the discussion of the problems concerning the theory and practice of the PKI leadership was reflected in the letters that Stalin and Aidit exchanged during the following days.

In his letter to Stalin of January 13, 1953, Aidit expressed his agreement with practically all of Stalin’s major comments, and clarified the Indonesian communists’ position on the most important issues concerned with the strategy and tactics for the revolutionary struggle, asking for Stalin’s opinions and his recommendations on strategy.254

“Concerning the agrarian program. We agree with You, that from the creation of PKI 33 years ago to the present day the agrarian issue has always remained in the background for our party. As You have explained to us and as it is proved by victories of people’s-democratic revolutions in Europe as well as in Asia, the agrarian question is extremely important and decisive. We consider correct the statement that if the PKI at present does not attribute greater importance to the peasant issue, it will once more suffer the same catastrophe which took place in 1926 and 1948.

Until the end of 1951 the PKI did not have a thoroughly worked-out agrarian program". ... "In November 1951 ... the PKI made public its agrarian program so that when we received the letter in February 1952 from the CPSU CC via the CCP CC our agrarian program was completed.”

As far as our slogan of “nationalization of land” is concerned, we have recently come to understand its incorrectness. Although the peasants do not speak actively against this slogan, this is perhaps because they do not fully understand the meaning of the slogan and remain passive or regard it suspiciously. Our own experience has shown that the aforementioned slogan impedes the development of the peasant movement. We fully agree with Your opinion that this slogan should be dropped. As You [sic] have explained, nationalization of the land is necessary in general, but it should not be a program demand [this phrase is underlined by Stalin]

254 RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 316 l. 2–6.
in Indonesia at the present stage”. The last sentence as a whole was marked by Stalin along the margin of the text.

“We are now convinced that the most important issue is that peasants receive the land as a result of the revolution. Thus, it will be absolutely correct to put forward the slogan “land to the peasants,” meaning by this slogan that there will be confiscation of the land owned by foreigners, as well as by Indonesian landlords, without any compensation offered to these landowners. We shall explain to the peasants that our main task is liquidation of feudalism.” Stalin corrected the word “feudalism” with the words “feudal remnants.”

"You have pointed out to us that in working out the agrarian program we became entangled in laws created by the bourgeoisie. We are of the opinion that You are absolutely right in this regard." Furthermore, Aidit wrote that the PKI agrarian program spoke about peasants' right to use the land but that the party should speak about giving the land to the peasants as private property. The last words were underlined by Stalin.

Concluding the first paragraph of the letter, Aidit assured Stalin: “We would like to state that now there is no discrepancy between Your opinion set forth in the CPSU CC letter and our opinion concerning issues mentioned above.”

He added, “About the national front. You have pointed out that we should choose between joining with the peasantry and creating a national front without the peasants’ participation.” (Stalin’s comments on the sentence: “I did not say that.” The words “did not say” are underlined twice.) Aidit wrote, “We believe that the union with the peasantry should become our base because it would mean the union with the great majority of the people.”

Aidit then asked for Stalin’s advice regarding the prospect of establishing a united front with other political parties. “Nevertheless, sometimes for tactical reasons in the domestic political struggle it is necessary to create a common front with Indonesian political parties on the basis of a minimum program” [underlined by Stalin]. Aidit asked for Stalin's advice on this issue: “Considering this united front with other political parties we would like to ask You: "What is Your opinion
about it [underlined by Stalin] and what would be Your advice to us concerning such a front?" [Stalin marked this question with + and NB, underlining them twice.]

Aidit added, “... on the issue of the nationalization program that would focus primarily on all vital industries owned by imperialists, as well as by traitors, that is the point of view approved by You, and now we agree with it.”

The third paragraph of the letter addresses tactical issues: "Concerning tactics. We fully agree with Your opinion on the issue of the tactics we should adhere to in the present internal political situation in Indonesia.

At the moment our task is to gain as many leading positions in the Army command as possible. Besides, in the interests of the broad mass of the people, mainly peasants and workers, we should demand concrete concessions, in particular armament of the people with the aim of self-defense against attacks of groups of terrorists, especially stooges of feudal landlords.

This is in short our opinion on the main issued put forward by You during our first conversation”.

In conclusion, Aidit informed Stalin about documents the PKI was working on at the time.

Despite Aidit’s assurances that the PKI agreed with most of Stalin’s suggestions, the letter shows that the PKI was not going to reorient itself decisively away from the CCP towards the CPSU, and that the influence of the CCP on Indonesian communists remained substantial. Aidit wrote, “With the help of our comrades from the CCP CC, we are preparing the aforementioned draft documents, and then, after we finish our work on them, we shall present them for Your evaluation. We hope to know Your opinion and to receive Your critical observations on the above drafts. [The last sentence Stalin marked with +.] Grateful to You in advance, with comradely regards, Aidit.”

Stalin replied to Aidit with a letter dated 16 February 1953, a mere two weeks before his death. The Archive of Joseph Stalin retained the original copy in Stalin's handwriting written with pencil, and some typed draft versions corrected by
Stalin. In the present chapter I am citing the latest official version of Stalin's reply to Aidit.255

"1. The Peasant Question. It is a welcome fact that there are no longer any disagreements between us on the peasant question. But I think that there should not only be no disagreements between us, but no misunderstanding at all on this question. I have in mind one passage in your letter, which says: "We shall make the work among the peasants, that is, the abolishment of feudalism as our main work." This sentence may give rise to misunderstanding, since people may think that in Indonesia there exists full, 100 percent, feudalism, which, of course, is incorrect. During our discussion, I already noted that there is not, and cannot be, 100 percent feudalism in Indonesia, just as there was not in Russia before the October Revolution in 1917, just as there was not in China or other People’s Democracies before the beginning of the anti-feudal revolution.”

“It may be asked, to what extent did feudalism actually exist then in those countries and what exists now in Indonesia? There was, of course, not 100 percent feudalism there, but there were important and onerous surviving remnants of feudalism. The Russian Communists spoke of the remnants of feudalism, when they roused the peasants against the landlords in 1917. The remnants of feudalism were also mentioned during the course of the "agrarian revolution." I think that the same thing is taking place in Indonesia. Therefore, in drafting the program, the formula of the abolition of feudalism should be replaced by the formula of the abolition of the remnants of feudalism, to be more precise.”

"The question arises: what are these remnants of feudalism, what is their essence?

They are, in the first instance, the actually existing right of the big landlords to hold monopoly possession of the land cultivated by the peasants, the majority of the peasants being unable - in view of their poverty - to own land and therefore

255 Ibid. I. 26–31
being compelled to rent land from the landlords on any terms ("monopoly right" of the landlords to the land under feudalism).

They are, secondly, payment to the landlords of rent in kind, which constitutes [and claims] a considerable proportion of the peasant harvest, and which leads to the impoverishment of the majority of the peasants ("obligation of payment in kind" under feudalism).

They are, thirdly, the system of rents in the form of labor on the landlords' estates, carried out with the aid of primitive peasant equipment, which puts the majority of the peasants in the position of serfs ("corvée" under feudalism).

They are, finally, a dense network of debts, enmeshing the majority of the peasants, making them insolvent debtors and putting them in the position of slaves in relation to the landowners ("debt slavery" under feudalism).

The consequences of all these remnants of feudalism are well-known: technical backwardness of agriculture, impoverishment of the majority of the peasants, contraction of the internal market, impossibility of industrializing the country.

Hence, the immediate task of the Communists is to eliminate the remnants of feudalism, to develop the anti-feudal agrarian revolution, to transfer without compensation the landowners' land to the peasants as their private property.

The question arises: does not temporarily renouncing the nationalization of the land and the division of the landowners' land among the peasants as their private property mean renouncing socialist prospects in the development of agriculture? No, it does not.

In Russia, it was possible and necessary to proceed to the nationalization of the land by a direct route and not through the division of the landowners' lands, since favorable conditions for this existed there, viz.: a) the principle of private property in land did not enjoy popularity and was even undermined among the majority of the peasants owing to the presence in Russia of the peasant commune with its periodical redivision of land; b) the peasants themselves, the majority of them, considered that "the land belongs to no one - the land should belong to those
who labor on the land”; c) the strongest workers’ party in the country, the Bolshevik Leninist Party, which enjoyed confidence among the peasants, stood for nationalization and conducted propaganda for the nationalization of land; d) the strongest peasants' party in the country, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, in spite of its petty-bourgeois and kulak nature also stood for nationalization, and conducted propaganda for nationalization of the land. All this created a favorable situation for carrying out nationalization of the land in Russia”.

Stalin noted that the situation was different in the Peoples’ Democracies. Not only was it true that the favorable conditions found in Russia did not exist in these other countries, but even more dire, the principle that land should be owned as private property had become deeply rooted in the lives of the peasants in these countries.

“Consequently, it was necessary in those countries to proceed to the nationalization of land, and to socialist prospects in the development of agriculture, not directly, but in a roundabout way—through the division of the landowners’ lands.” Stalin added that, later, the peasants took the path of creating collective farms, that is, the path of socialist development.

The letter continued:

“As regards nationalization of the land, it is being prepared and is beginning to be carried out in those countries [People’s Democracies] in a rather peculiar way, namely, by promulgating a series of laws restricting the right to private ownership of land and making difficult, or even altogether prohibiting, the sale and purchase of land. This is the path towards nationalization of the land ... It is this path that China is taking, too. I think that the same thing will happen in Indonesia after the victory of the agrarian revolution there.”

“2. The National Front. Of course, if the Communist Party is so weak that it is incapable of simultaneously organizing both an alliance of the workers and peasants and the creation of a national front, then it will have to choose between these two social undertakings and concentrate its forces on the organization of an alliance of the workers and peasants as the more important task. But such a
contingency cannot be considered in any way desirable. It would be desirable, on the
contrary, for the Party to gain the capacity to build simultaneously both the
alliance of the workers and peasants and the National Front. In this connection, it
should be borne in mind that the National Front is certainly essential and important
for a successful struggle not only against internal reaction, but also against the
foreign menace.

Hence my advice is: in organizing the alliance of the workers and peasants
on the basis of a revolutionary agrarian program, you should take up at the same
time the improvement and strengthening of the united National Front so that the
Communist Party will acquire, in time, a leading position within this front.

3. Otherwise, your letter does not call for any comment.

With Communist greetings

J. Stalin"

As is well known, Stalin died on March 5, 1953. Apparently, in the period of
time that intervened between Stalin’s final letter to Aidit and his death, no further
meetings between the Russian leader and the PKI leaders were held and no more
letters were exchanged.

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First of all, the party program characterized Indonesia as a semi-feudal
country. In earlier documents issued by Aidit and his associates, the notion “semi-
feudal” was often interchanged with the notion “feudal.” For example, in the PKI
program of April 1951, the country was defined as "semi-feudal" but further in the
same document it was said that the revolution was aimed against "feudalism" for
the liberation from "feudal oppression". In the PKI CC’s letter to the CCP CC of 20 March 1952, it was pointed out that there were no feudal landlords in Indonesia and that the struggle should be aimed against "feudal customs and habits", against "remnants of feudalism". At the same time, in Aidit's letter to Stalin of 13 January 1953, it was said that the struggle should be aimed at the liquidation of "feudalism".

The lack of clarity and consistency in Aidit’s understanding of this issue was noted by Donald Hindley. He writes:

“The Aidit leadership’s theory of the Indonesian revolution is based on the assumption that Indonesia is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country. At first the Party leaders merely asserted this to be self-evident.”

“PKI at first did not elaborate on what was termed the semi-feudal nature of Indonesia. An early account of Indonesia’s semi-colonial position was given by Aidit in May 1953.”

“Although the first agrarian program, drawn up under the Aidit leadership and issued on 10 November 1951, had referred to the “land ownership of a feudal and imperialist nature,” a clear definition of what was meant by semi-feudalism was not given until July 1953. In that month, Aidit wrote a major article, “The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement,” which marked the beginning of intensive Party work in the rural areas.

He stated that after capitalism had developed in Indonesia, complete feudalism no longer existed, but that “important and heavy remnants” remained.

The most significant remnants he listed were:

1) the continued monopoly rights of the large landowners, with the result that the majority of peasants could not own land and were forced to rent land on the landowners’ terms;
2) the payment of most of the crops as land rent in kind, so that the majority of peasants were kept in poverty;
3) the payment of land rent in the form of work on the landlords’ land, “which places the majority of peasants” in the position of serfs;
4) the heavy debts of the majority of peasants, which placed them “in the position of slaves vis-à-vis the landowners.”

In short, Aidit argued, “there is still feudal exploitation of the peasants.”

If we compare these analyses offered by Hindley and the further contents of Aidit’s article, mentioned by D. Hindley, as noted earlier, with the text of Stalin’s final letter to Aidit dated February 16, 1953, the influence of Stalin’s arguments and formulations on subsequent PKI programs becomes quite clear.

Hindley stresses that “the PKI Program endorsed by the Fifth National Congress in March 1954 devoted its first section to a description of Indonesia as being semi-colonial and semi-feudal ... On the matter of feudal remnants in Indonesia, the program added nothing to Aidit’s article of July 1953.”

Thus, we can conclude that the party program’s definition of Indonesia as a semi-feudal country was composed by the Indonesian leadership as a result of the direct influence of Stalin, or, to borrow a phrase from certain Western scholars, under the direct impact of “Stalin’s dogmas.”

Stalin’s recommendations, the result of his analysis of the first PKI program documents of October 6, 1950, were clearly adopted in the PKI Program of 1954, which identified the main targets of the Indonesian revolution as imperialism and feudalism.

Stalin’s recommendations had influenced the formulation and refinement of the Indonesian communists’ approach to the issue of the motivating forces behind the revolution and the proletariat’s allies. Stalin repeatedly stressed the importance of the agrarian question for Indonesia. In his analysis of the PKI Program of October 6, 1950, he pointed out directly that the basis of a people’s democracy in Indonesia could only be a strong alliance of workers and peasants. The Indonesian

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communists eventually agreed to this, as is evident in Aidit’s letter to Stalin of January 13, 1953. As Hindley notes, “the Aidit leadership’s increased awareness of the role of the peasantry in the revolution was shown in Aidit’s declaration in July 1953 that the agrarian revolution is the essence of the people’s democratic revolution in Indonesia.”

Thus, Aidit actually repeated Stalin’s words verbatim.

Soviet recommendations were spelled out in the evaluation of the national bourgeoisie and landlords. The Aidit leadership divided the bourgeoisie into "national" and "comprador" and in the future tried to use the contradictions between the "national" bourgeoisie and imperialism for their own interests.

Stalin believed that the main PKI task, at the time, was the struggle against feudal patterns of property ownership in the countryside. Eventually, Aidit and his associates agreed to this. They declared landlords to be “the main enemies of the revolution.”

One of the most important issues that arose in the discussions among Aidit and his associates with Stalin was the question regarding the development of a national front. As Hindley writes, from the very beginning Aidit, like Musso, believed that the creation of “one complete national united formation” or “a national united front” should be the principle task of the party’s strategy. But Aidit gave no further details to clarify what the front would involve. Aidit was working on the issue during the years 1951 and 1952. Hindley points out that “the political experience of the Party in 1950 and 1951, plus the knowledge of Indonesian society, were used to determine the major tactics, form of struggle, and form of organization that have guided PKI down to the present [the year 1965—L. E.].”

The archival documents show Stalin’s personal, important contribution to the formation of the Indonesian communists’ point of view on the issue of the national front.

258 Ibid. p. 41.

259 Ibid. p. 48.
Stalin believed that the creation of a broad united national front to further the struggle for the complete independence of Indonesia should be carried out simultaneously with the creation of an anti-feudal front. Such a front ought to be based on a strong alliance of workers and peasants. It could include working intellectuals and the national bourgeoisie. The PKI should gradually take command of the front into its own hands.

Discussions on these issues with Stalin helped Indonesian communists refine and clarify their views on this question. On July 31, 1956, Aidit offered a detailed exposition of what the national united front policy meant in terms of the PKI’s relations with noncommunist political forces. This exposition was in full compliance with the Soviet leader’s earlier recommendations.

Aidit repeated Stalin’s words almost verbatim in section 4 of his work, “A Short History of the Communist Party of Indonesia” (1955), as well as in his “Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution” (1957), in section 5 of chapter 1 and section 2 of chapter 2.260

In conclusion, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the opinions, remarks, and recommendations (which cannot be characterized as “dogmatic”) expressed by Stalin had a considerable—and, on a number of issues, even a decisive—impact on the formulation of the PKI’s program documents during the period of Aidit’s leadership. Stalin’s recommendations also influenced the broader strategy and tactics of Indonesian communists in 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Aidit and his associates became genuine “Stalinists,” but not according to the meaning of this label understood by Western scholars, who interpret Stalinism as synonymous with hard-line dogmatism, revolutionary extremism, and the blind following of the “Moscow line.” Quite to the contrary, Stalin’s directions aimed to encourage the Indonesians to adopt a more flexible, pragmatic course, take moderate positions, and use extreme caution, as the Russian leader advised gradual progress towards solving questions having to do with the revolution and the building of socialism.

260 Ibid.
Nevertheless, it should be noted that neither Aidit nor any other Indonesian communist leader ever openly acknowledged the influence of Stalin’s ideas on their worldview. This disavowal was the result of the new situation in the Soviet Union, as well as in the international communist movement, after Stalin’s death. The new state and party leadership in the Soviet Union reconsolidated under slogans that condemned the former leader and called for a struggle against Stalinism. Indonesian communist leaders, who were interested in receiving assistance from the USSR and the CPSU, did not want to contradict the new line in Soviet policy and ideology, and so kept to the spirit of the times.

In the documents available to researchers, this period is concluded with three telegrams of condolence sent from Indonesia on the occasion of Stalin’s death. The first telegram from the Wilopo government was written in a discreet official style. The condolence message from President Sukarno was more personal and emotional. In the telegram from the PKI, the Indonesian communists expressed deep sorrow and promised to fulfill all the wishes of the beloved Soviet leader. And this they truly did.

Stalin’s thorough and attentive efforts to help work out strategy and tactics for the PKI, which began to revive early in 1950, raise questions about the reasons of Stalin’s interest in the weak and disorderly Indonesian party. The available archival documents from the Stalin Fond do not give a definite answer to this question, which, if were answered, could explain the role and place of Indonesia and the PKI in Stalin’s plans concerning Asia and the world revolution. A number of Western scholars have argued that, following the victory of the Chinese revolution, the CCP gradually became a rival of AUCP(B) in Asia. Given the evidence available in the archives, it is possible to suggest that Stalin might have wanted to help the PKI grow strong and influential so that it might develop as a kind of a counterbalance to the CCP in the Asian communist movement.

261 AVP RF f. 91 op. 6 d. 1 papka 1 l. 1–3.
But this theory is contradicted by the fact that Stalin regarded the PKI’s request to him, which was sent via CCP representatives, as quite normal and consistent with his own declaration that it was China and the CCP that must play the leading role in the Asian communist movement. Stalin was of the opinion that this pattern was best, as the USSR was only partly an Asian country, and China was situated completely in Asia. This idea was elaborated by Stalin later in his conversation with Zhou Enlay.262

So we can suggest that, since he had declared himself dedicated to the task of fomenting a world communist revolution, Stalin was eager to revive and strengthen as many communist parties as possible, and not only in Europe but in Asia, as well. He did his best and took all possible measures for achieving this goal. His interest and attention towards the PKI as a potential leader of the national liberation movement in Indonesia was consistent with the practical state policy formulated by the Southeast Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, as follows: that the USSR must assist, in all possible ways, the Indonesian people in its national liberation struggle and struggle to prevent the restoration of Dutch colonial regime, as well as the seizure of Indonesia by Americans in their pursuit of US expansionist policy in Southeast Asia.263

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263 AVP RF f. 091 op. 1 d. 1 papka 1 l. 6–8.
Conclusion.

The main purpose of this volume is to reveal the findings from the archival research, which shed new light on what we can describes as “unknown pages” of Indonesian history. A carefully considered examination of previously inaccessible documentary materials in the Russian archives in Moscow, presented by this volume, offers important new insights on the role of a very different set of transnational forces in Indonesian history. Indeed, the bulk of the book is organized to present in its chapters these previously obscure or unknown pages for the historical record.

Taking place in Indonesia in the years 1945 - 1953 events are depicted without losing sight of the broad contexts of both Soviet and Indonesian politics during the period in question. Indeed, Archival documents concerning Soviet–Indonesian relations attest to the significant influence of the Party and state bureaucracy on the process of decision-making by the Soviet leadership. The process of decision-making itself was complicated and arbitrary. Information was first received, and then placed in prepared and standardized form on the desks of the top leaders. Bureaucrats of all ranks withheld information which would generate dissatisfaction and annoyance among the leadership or which would show them in an unfavorable light. “Inconvenient” information was omitted; those communicating it were removed from their jobs. As a result, the Soviet leaders did not have a real sense of what was going on in Indonesia, and this fact was sometimes reflected in the decisions they made.

Overall, the documents show how Soviet policies towards Indonesia were clouded and complicated by the weakness of links and communications with the PKI, and by adverse political circumstances in Indonesia and elsewhere in the world.

Preliminary Soviet diplomatic moves vis-à-vis successive governments of the newly formed Republic of Indonesia were likewise characterized by diffidence, and disappointment. The Soviet foreign policy apparatus moved quite slowly and
cautiously towards *de jure* recognition of the republic during the revolution, with protracted discussions in Moscow on the legal and political implications of such a move. Archival documents of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs also shows conclusively that the initiative for the establishment of official Soviet–Indonesian relations came from the Indonesian side, with the Prague based republican intermediary (and PKI member) Suripno taking the lead. Although Suripno had enjoyed a brief for his diplomatic efforts from the left-leaning government of Amir Sjarifuddin, he was promptly recalled and effectively disavowed by the more conservative successor government of Mohammad Hatta in May 1948 amidst a storm of Dutch protests following the Soviet announcement in the same month that consular relations were to be established between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia.

The documents shed quite a new and unexpected light on the set of circumstance concerning the Soviet role in the return of the leading PKI cadre Musso from long-time exile in the USSR to Indonesia in mid-1948 and his subsequent participation in events leading up to the so-called “Madiun Affair” of September of the same year. In contrast with earlier, largely speculative accounts, a sheaf of relevant archival sources that clearly qualify, complicate, and in some measure contradict the previous conventional wisdom concerning Moscow’s “instructions“ to Musso. In January 1948, it turns out, Musso had engaged in an ill-timed defense of his PKI comrades against criticism by Soviet officials in Moscow. The PKI leadership, Musso explained in a report submitted to the Central Committee, was trying to maintain a low profile in the Sjarifuddin government, disguising the extent of Communist strength in the cabinet, the armed forces, and the other organs of the republic by dispersing their cadres and forces among a variety of affiliated parties and organizations. Alongside such deliberate downplaying of Communist strength, Musso argued, the low-key approach of the party with regard to the international arena was a matter of tactical necessity in the face of rising anti-communist and anti-Soviet propaganda and in light of American policy towards Indonesian independence.
Musso departed from Moscow in early 1948 and relocated to Prague, where he was to remain until his return to Indonesia in August of the same year. During his stay in Prague Musso was in active dialogue with Dutch and Indonesian Communists on questions concerning a change of strategy for the PKI. In May 1948, moreover, Musso reported to Moscow on a meeting held in Prague with PKI member and Republican representative Suripno and Dutch Communist Party leader Paul de Groot.

Along with this report he enclosed a document drawn up during the meeting, titled “Fundamental Tasks of the Communists in Indonesia.” The document discusses the imperatives of fusing the Communist, Socialist, and Labor parties into a single “unified party of the Indonesian working masses. Besides this imperatives, the document identifies a set of tasks: an assertive stance vis-à-vis the newly established Hatta government so as to compel the formation of a “national unity government“ in which the PKI would be represented. Musso acknowledged that it represents only basic identification of those tasks which he should resolve in Indonesia. Thus Musso offered the document as his own suggestion for a shift in PKI strategy. He did so, however, with repeated efforts to stress the support of the Dutch Communist Party leader de Groot. In the meeting in Prague, Musso claimed, de Groot had at first persisted in maintaining the CPN’s line favoring a continuing union between the Netherlands and Indonesia, but eventually relented, agreeing to offer CPN support for Indonesian independence, so long as the Netherlands would enjoy privileged economic and cultural ties to its former colony. Thus the plans worked out by Musso in Prague were to a significant extent his own independent initiative and were not ‘Moscow’s instructions’” In support of this conclusion witnesses archival evidence of consternation in the foreign relations section of the Central Committee in Moscow upon receipt of Musso’s report from Prague, as well as records of a later meeting held between CPN leader de Groot and Soviet Central Committee Secretary Mikhail Suslov in October 1948, confirming the Dutch Communist Party’s change of policy towards Indonesia following the meeting in Prague in the spring of the same year. The documents also note the critical tone and
substance of memoranda on the CPN submitted to Suslov in advance of his meeting with de Groot.

Overall, archival research thus effectively demolishes official Indonesian nationalist and anti-communist interpretations of the Madiun uprising in September 1948 as the product of a Soviet-orchestrated plot to mobilize the PKI against the republic.

Drawing on archival records from Moscow this volume offers quite a different picture of relations between Stalin and the new PKI leadership in contrast to the established opinion. The archival materials reveal that Stalin showed considerable interest in Indonesia during the final years of his life and enjoyed warm relations with the new PKI leader, Aidit. In the formulation and communication of his views on Communist strategy in Indonesia, moreover, Stalin willingly relied on leaders of the Chinese Communist Party as intermediaries vis-à-vis the PKI. In support of these conclusions witness secret telegram sent to Stalin in October 1950 from Liu Shaoqi, Central Committee Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, passing on a document from PKI leaders for Stalin’s consideration and comments. The document appears in part to draw inspiration from the Chinese Revolution and to suggest a shift of PKI efforts into Chinese-style armed struggle in the countryside.

Stalin’s response was prompt but less than fully positive, offering a thorough reading and a partial critique of the proposed shift of PKI strategy in a telegram to Beijing later the same month. In his response, Stalin offered a wide range of minor comments. Overall, he discouraged the adoption of the Chinese Revolution as a model for the PKI to emulate and deemphasized armed struggle, but, in line with the Chinese experience, he stressed the importance of agrarian issues.

Later Stalin directly emphasizes the dangers of attempting a Chinese-style “armed revolution, in other words the path of guerrilla war in the countryside”. At great length, Stalin pointed to the difficulties of replicating the Chinese experience in Indonesia, given the archipelagic nature of the country, the paucity of armed PKI units, and the absence of an adjacent external refuge and support base, such as the
“solid backing” the Chinese Communists enjoyed in Manchuria thanks to the neighboring USSR. In the light of these obstacles to successful armed guerrilla struggle, Stalin instead urged the PKI to complement its work in the countryside with a strong focus on organizing efforts among the working class in urban and industrial areas, combining mobilization of the peasantry with the promotion of large-scale strikes to “paralyze the government”.

According to subsequent telegrams from Beijing, many months passed before Stalin’s extended critique of the proposed new PKI strategy generated a response from the Indonesian Communist leadership.

With the ascendancy of D. N. Aidit to the PKI leadership in 1951 and his consolidation of control of the party in subsequent years communications between Stalin and the PKI improved dramatically. In stark contrast with the impressions imparted by Hindley and other scholars, archival materials testify to the fact that Stalin personally assumed a most active and direct role in working out with Aidit new policy documents for the PKI. Stalin held meetings with Aidit and other representatives of the PKI, had long conversations with them, and exchanged long letters with them right up to the last weeks of his life.

As a result, we can establish on firm grounds that not only Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese example, but, in the first instance, Stalin’s ideas, had a serious influence on the programmatic documents of the PKI promulgated in the first years of the new young leadership of the Communist Party with Aidit as the party chief, and on the views and ideas of Aidit himself. In support of this somewhat startling conclusion, Stalin advised the PKI to focus on “practical, molecular, ‘dirty’ work concerning the everyday needs of workers, peasants, and the labor intelligentsia”.

In early January 1953, moreover, Aidit and his fellow PKI Politburo member Njoto met with Stalin in Moscow. A long letter dated January 13, 1953, from Aidit to Stalin, conveys the PKI leaders’ consideration of Stalin’s views on a variety of issues, ranging from the PKI’s agrarian program to the formation of a “national front” and imperative of recruitment and infiltration in the armed forces leadership.
In a final, lengthy letter from Stalin to Aidit dated February 16, 1953, less than three weeks before Stalin’s death, several paragraphs were devoted to the question of terminology with regard to agrarian problems in Indonesia, with Stalin urging reconsideration of the PKI’s use of the term “feudalism” in Indonesia and suggesting the merits of “feudal residues” in its stead. Additional comments concerned the goals of the “national front” to be promoted by the PKI.

The style and substance of his advice to Aidit in this letter reemerged many months after Stalin’s sudden death in early March 1953, with the publication of an important article by Aidit in July of the same year on the future of the Indonesian peasant movement and, more importantly, with the promulgation of a new party program at the PKI’s Fifth Party Congress in March 1954.

Thus it should be stressed that the opinions, comments, and recommendations expressed by Stalin exerted a vital and decisive influence on the formulation of the programmatic documents of the PKI during the period of the D. N. Aidit leadership, and on the strategy and tactics of the Indonesian Communists in the 1950s and 1960s. We can say that Aidit and his compatriots were genuine Stalinists, although not in the sense of the term defined by Western authors, as a synonym for rigidity, dogmatism, revolutionary extremism, and blind obedience to the “Moscow line.” To the contrary, Stalin’s instructions pointed towards a more flexible, pragmatic course, measured positions, and exceptional caution and gradualism in the resolution of questions regarding revolution and the construction of socialism.

All these findings may be too multifarious and complex to summarize for the non-Russian reader. These documents confront the reader “with unexpected information and odd lacunae. How, at this stage, can we deal with the questions they raise? Perhaps the best hope is that more archival material will become available and perused. In addition to wishing that other collections in the ex-Soviet Union might be made accessible, we might hope that someday Chinese scholars will be able to explore their country’s early post-revolutionary foreign relations.
through their Party’s archives. Or that historian may gain access to Czechoslovak Communist and government archives…”\textsuperscript{264}