THE POLITICAL STYLE AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

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INTRODUCTION

It has been pointed out by many observers that Indonesian politics has strong "ideological" orientations while Philippine politics can be characterized as essentially "pragmatic."[1] Sidney Verba makes the following distinction between the "ideological" and the "pragmatic" political styles:

> The former, the style of the *Weltanschauungspartein* of the (European) Continent, involves a deeply affective commitment to a comprehensive and explicit set of political values which covers not merely political affairs but all of life which is hierarchical in form and often deduced from a more general set of "first principles". A pragmatic political style on the other hand consists of an evaluation of problems in existing comprehensive view of reality. One deals with the issue at hand, perhaps in terms of some guiding principles, but not as an instance of some overall scheme.[2]

From a "functional" point of view, a stable democratic process is considered more compatible with the pragmatic rather than the ideological orientations. Thus Gabriel Almond states that: "The particularisms and ideological tendencies in the party and interest group systems produce relatively low mobility of interest groups in the party system, and a relatively low potential for stable coalitions among political parties." [3]

In Indonesia, politics has been highly divisive. During the colonial rule, there were divisions between those who accepted cooperation with the Dutch authorities and those who condemned all forms of such cooperation; between those who sought to establish mass-based organizations and those who concentrated on "cadre" formation; between those who emphasized practical tasks of social and economic uplift and those who did not; and between those who emphasized the Javanese of Indonesia and those who did not. *The post*-independence divisions included those between the Communist supporters and anti-communists; Islamic politicians and secular nationalists; "liberal democrats" and supporters of "guided democracy"; "Javanism" and

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[1] For example, O. D. Corpus, *The Philippnies* (Englewood Cliffs, 1965) Jean Grossholtz, *Politics in the Philippines,* (Boston, 1964); Lucian Pye, "Southeast Asia," in Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, eds.) *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton, 1960), G. Mc. Kahin, (ed.) *Government and Politics of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, 1964).

[2] Sidney Verba, "Conclusion: Comparative Political Culture," in Pye and Verba, (eds.) *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton, 1965), p. 545.

[3] Almond, "Introduction· A Functional Approach to Comparative Politics," in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.,* p. 48.

anti-Javanism, etc. It has been characteristic of Indonesian politics that all these fragmented sectors have justified their respective positions on the basis of "comprehensive and explicit set of political values" (to borrow Verba's description) such as Marxism-Leninism, Islamic millenism or Pantja-sila. According to Herbert Feith, the nationalist movement failed to develop the type of organizational cohesion and machinery for the settlement of conflicts which existed in the Indian Congress Party and the Philippine Nacionalista Party, which can be explained by the ideological divisions among the Indonesian elite.[4]

In the Philippines, on the other hand, politics has been more or less consensual and basic ideological differences have been absent within the socio-economic elite that led and dominated the major parties in the country. O. D. Corpus points out that "many leading families used party affiliations only to promote their interests," and it was common for them to take out insurance against vicissitudes and perils of politics by dividing their affiliation between the two leading parties after Philippine independence.[5] James Coleman argues that, in the Philippines, "competing parties are instruments through which 'political brokers' endeavour to aggregate the largest possible number of interests,"[6] rather than through which comprehensive principles or political values are to be promoted. Differences in interests and opinions did not result in the destruction of the system as a whole as in Indonesia, and the "pragmatic" nature of Philippine politics is held responsible for its relative success in maintaining a reasonably stable two party system. The other side of the argument, is of course, that the "ideological" nature of Indonesian politics is responsible for its "immobilism" which resulted in the decline of constitutional democracy.

This is not to argue, however, that the pragmatic or non-ideological attitude among the political elite is invariably "functional" under all circumstances. The point is that, given the initial goal of constructing a democratic mechanism following their respective independence, Indonesia would have had a better chance of achieving that objective if her political elite had been less ideologically inclined, and that Philippine democracy would have had more difficulties if there had been strong ideological orientations among the political elite. These political styles do not exist in a vacuum, however. This essay thus proposes to identify the social and political factors that contributed to the shaping of the political elite in the two countries, and how these political styles in turn affected the political life of the respective countries.

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[4] Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constituitonal Democracy in Indonesia*, (Ithaca, 1962), p. 21.
[5] Corpus, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
[6] Coleman, "Conclusion: The Political Systems of the Developing Areas," in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 567.

THE INDONESIAN ELITE

Political elite in developing countries generally hold high values in political and economic modernization. Whether they hold high values in modernization or not, most of them are inevitably involved in this process. The process of modernization involved in turn the task of mediating the gap that exists between the modern and the traditional sectors—a gap between the society's intellectuals and its common people; between urbanized, Westernized elites and the village-based, peasant masses, etc. Lucian Pye distinguishes between six different roles of the social and political elite in this "gap-bridging" process: the administrator, who emphasizes rational bureaucratic norms; the agitator, who awakens dormant demands; the amal- gamate, who combines both old and new roles in one; the transmitter, who tends to represent only the new roles without seeking political influence for themselves; the ideological propagandist, who strives to establish a common ideology; and the political broker, who aggregates special interests.[7] It is true that few people actually belong exclusively to one or the other of the above categories, but rather in identifying the general traits of the leadership groups and to examine which group of people had more of the characteristics attri- buted to which category.

In most colonial societies of Asia and Africa, a predominant percentage of the first generation of political leadership was supplied by traditional elite families. In Indonesia, most of the native administrators until the beginning of the twentieth century came from the upper *prijaji* class. The exclusiveness of recruitment from the former elite class was a result of the educational policy of the Dutch authorities. According to Robert Van Niel:

> The Dutch government developed an interest in education for Indonesians about the middle of the 19th century. A few Indonesians from the highest elements of society were permitted to attend European primary schools which had existed exclusively in Java since 1816. In 1848, money was set aside for the first Javanese schools. These schools were designed to train scribes and administra- tors and drew their students exclusively from those *prijaji* families whose here- ditary rights made them eligible for such positions.[8]

It was only under the "Ethical Policy" of the first decade of the twentieth century that educational facilities for Indonesians were considerably expanded partly to satisfy the growing aspiration for power of the *prijaji* and partly to meet the needs of the expanding governmental services. Enrollments in these schools were still limited mostly to sons of the *prijaji*.[9]

In Indonesia, the traditional aristocracy was not land-based but depen- dent upon government office. The fact that the Dutch colonial government

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[7] Pye, "Administrators, Agitators, and Brokers," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Fall, 1958).

[8] Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite,* (Chicago, 1960), p. 27.

[9] *Ibid.,* pp. 177-8.

had decapitated the traditional royalty meant therefore that the status of *prijaji*, high or low, lost much of its meaning. Harry Benda points out:

> Deprived of (its) apex, and without entrenched hierarchies of social class, ...
> Javanese society (was) in effect rendered politically eliteless, reduced to un-
> differentiated peasantries.[10]

Consequently, the *prijaji* class lacked the means and inclination to turn to other forms of leadership in the society except through service in the colonial government. Furthermore, the growing number of educated *prijaji* sons coupled with the government's capacity not to employ all of them as well as their own unwillingness to serve, left a majority of them without a "stake" in colonial relationship itself. Benda argues that their aloofness from the colonial order stemmed from the fact that, as a group and as individuals, the educated elite did not *own* anything but their educationally acquired proficiency.[11] Although education was primarily limited to the *prijaji*, social origin became progressively far less significant and membership in the modern intelligentsia was no longer based on ascriptive but primarily on educational and functional criteria.

Having been denied or voluntarily refused service to the colonial government, and without means and willingness to engage in industrial and commercial enterpreneurial activities the only alternative was to restore leadership through political movement as "agitators." This group of intelligentsia saw the first chance of national movement upon the founding of the Sarekat Islam in 1912. Although its alleged objectives were the advancement of commercial interests and religious spirit, its distinctive political character was manifested by the powerful segment of the leadership consisting of Western tion within the colonial government structure. Another significant aspect of the movement was that although most of its leaders stood above intellectually the general level of Indonesians "almost none of them belonged to the best educated segment of Indonesian society."[12] These lesser-intellectual and semi-intellectual elite, including the military, were to control ultimately the Indonesian political scene over the better educated "administrative-oriented" elite. These secular elite subsequently took off their religious guise, which had been instrumental for the mass support, and realigned themselves with the army by creating such mass movements as the Communist Party (PKI) in 1920 and later the Indonesian National Movement (PNI) in 1927. The religious sector of the Sarekat Islam developed into the moderately left-wing Council of Indonesian Muslim Association (Masjumi-1943) and the right-wing orthodox Indonesian Association Party (PSII-1947).[13]

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10 Harry Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia: A Historical Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* (April, 1965), pp. 243-4.
    11 *Ibid.,* p. 244.
    12 van Niel, *op. cit.,* pp. 113-4.
    13 *Ibid.,* also Benda, *The Crescent and Rising Sun* (The Hague, 1958). Thom Kerstiens, *New Elites in Asia and Africa* (New York, 1966).

This secular elite which was western-educated but not absorbed into the Dutch administration constituted the first modern challenge to the well-educated, administrative *prijaji* and the Dutch control. According to Benda:

> This "secular nationalist" leadership (led in the main by western educated intellectuals and drawing its inspiration from the libertarian and socialist ideologies of the West) endeavored to place itself at the helm of the political radicalism bequeathed to it by Islamic and in part Communist leadership on the late 1920's.[14]

However, this leadership suffered a rigorous suppression by the Dutch authorities and was deprived of its most vigorous leaders such as Sukarno because of the 1920's exile and imprisonment. It was not until the occupation of Indonesia by Japan that this group could hope for a revival. As the Japanese attempted to mobilize the Indonesians in the war on their side through this group, their position was enhanced as the recognized spokesman of Indonesian political life. Furthermore, a war of independence against the Dutch after the Japanese defeat needed precisely these men: leaders who could rally various sections of the population to full and active support of the struggle. Long-term ends with a grandiose design and all-encompassing promises which led to ideological appeals held priority over the solution of short-term and what may be called practical problems.

Therefore, it was rather surprising to find that the "administrative" group represented by Mohammad Hatta, the Vice-President of the war-time Republic of Indonesia still occupied an important position in the nationalist movement during the late 1940's to become the first prime minister of the independent Indonesian federal republic. However, these leaders are not to be identified with the conservatives of the old guard consisting of the traditional hereditary elite of nobles and administrators. Instead, they inherited the more practical but nationalistic tradition of Dr. Sumoto and Dr. Gunawan Mangunkusoimo of the Budi Utomo in the 1930's who aimed at doing what was necessary but attainable.[15] The wartime Republic continued to function as a single political entity despite the multifaceted conflict between the two groups—the other group being represented by Sukarno —largely because the latter as the Republic's president could maintain close personal cooperation with Hatta in the face of the Dutch who were their common enemy. The suicidal radicalism of the communists led by Musso and their collapse after the Madium revolt in 1948 also contributed to the Sukarno-Hatta solidarity. As indicated above, Hatta maintained his influence after the independence by heading the first (and his last, too) cabinet of the federal republic. During this period, Hatta's primary advantage was his acceptability to the Dutch negotiators as well as BFO states and his recognized leadership and contribution in the Round Table Conference with the Dutch.[16]

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[14] Benda, *The Crescent* . . . . p. 197.
[15] van Niel, *op. cit.*, p. 242.
[16] Feith, *The Decline* . . . . pp. 47-54.

As long as he was responsible for the governing of the Indonesian State, he tried to curb the excess of the political parties of the "solidarity makers" and in large measure succeeded in this attempt. As Feith points out, however, this "bifurcation of attitudes" toward the future between ideological appeals and administrative realism within the top leadership could not tolerate the preponderance of the latter for long. Hatta's successful claim derived from this usefulness and contribution to the new state under strain. Once independence has been achieved, and when the external challenge played no equally great role in generating solidarity among the Indonesian elite disintegration seemed inevitable and Hatta was no more a suitable man to cope with the situation. According to Feith, each of the "administrator" and the politician, or the "solidarity-maker" as he puts it, had a constituency. The latter was primarily supported by lesser educated former revolutionaries who had been shaken in their commitment to traditional values as a result of disruptive social change, but had not as yet found the security of an alternative set of values or positions. Since they sought to cope with their anguish through political involvement, politics—and perhaps politics alone—was a very important part of their life. The "administrator" was supported by those relatively better educated who were neither politically alienated nor expressive in their support. They were therefore relatively detached from political struggles as such. Both "constituencies" were concentrated in cities where political communication was most feasible. After the revolutionary war, the absence of the external stimulus made Hatta's authority extremely precarious; the lukewarm support he received from his relatively quiet constituency was hardly enough to enable it to withstand the onslaught of the "politicians" supported by the more vociferous and active section of the political public. The fact that the Nastier's cabinet, the first one under the unitary constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, was formed on the basis of political parties marked that Indonesian politics was now to be fought among the ideologically oriented political parties—each claiming and aiming at "party" solidarity.

The reasons for his abrupt shift in political style can be sought in the bifurcation of attitudes among the political elite—between those with ideological appeals and those with what might be called "bureaucratic realism." Here was a problem which has been perceptively pointed out by Pye: "the problem today in nation-building is that of relating the administrative and authoritative structures of government to political forces within the traditional societies."[17] What Indonesia lacked in this respect were what I would call the "middle-range politicians" (political broker) to whom politics would be seen primarily as a means to satisfying various specific and unambiguous interests of the society rather than as the ultimate goal in itself. It seems

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17 Pye, "The Political Context of National Development," in Irving Swerdlow, (ed.) *Development Administration,* (Syracuse, 1963), p. 31.

that there has never been any dearth of such politicians in independent Philippines.

POLITICAL ELITE IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippine "politicians" should be distinguished from their Indonesian counterparts even if we have the same image. Feith calls the Indonesian type the "solidarity-makers." According to Feith, they are the leaders with integrative skills, skills in cultural mediation, symbol manipulation, and mass organization.

> What was important for them was not governing as a set of activities but government as an image. As they put it, the all-important thing was that government would be truly of "the people," and when they spoke of the "people," it was not as differentiated groups with particular sets of interests, but rather as an amorphous mass characterized by a set of value orientations. The 'solidarity makers' were in fact principally concerned that government should serve as fount of values it must have meaning. The meaning might be provided in traditional, nationalist, Islamic, or Communist terms.[18]

In contrast with the Indonesian "solidarity makers," the Philippine politicians are predominantly middle-range ones. Jean Grossholtz offers two characteristics of Philippine politics within the general framework which she describes as the "bargaining process": (1) the lack of clearly defined political roles and (2) the absence of universal interests.[19] Because of these characteristics, the Philippine system can provide rewards according to criteria that the interested Philippine population readily understands. According to her, this is done by the act of "brokerage" on the part of politicians. The explanation for this phenomenon can be sought in the traditional power relationships. In the Philippines, landlords have dominated rural community leadership in most areas. Their political power was originally derived from the feudalistic obligations that have traditionally been owed by tenants to landlords and from the latter's ability to retaliate against tenants who ignored tradition.[20] As a result, there existed specifically a Philippine ruling class composed of native and Chinese *mestizo* members, whose social status did not depend entirely upon a position in the government, in sharp contrast to their Indonesian counterpart. Having had nothing that could remotely be called a Filipino nation when Spain began its rule in the archipelago, the Philippine traditional elite did not lose their sources of power with the imposition of foreign rule. Especially under the American administration, the Chinese and Spanish mestizos as well as the traditional land-owning class were also able to use their capital to engage in industrial and commercial enterpreneurial activities. Carl Lande believes that this is largely a function of the effort of American colonial education to inculcate an achievement orientation

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[18] Feith, *The Decline* . . . . p. 118.
[19] Grossholtz, *op. cit.,* p. 171.
[20] David Wurfel, "The Philippines," in Kahin, *op. cit.,* p. 712.

among the Philippine population.[21] At the same time, Pye observed that even today, most of the enterpreneurs who have been introducing new enterprises come from the established families of Spanish days.[22] The politically active elite members were thus firmly rooted in a class that enjoyed wealth, and the same people continued to enjoy, under American rule, the privileges of acculturation, education as well as wealth. Accordingly, Philippine nationalism was primarily political, not socially radical. The nationalist leaders strove for political equality within the Spanish empire but they did not aim at destroying the social status quo as such. In addition, the American colonial rule, though it commenced with the destruction of the nationalist uprising turned into preparation for autonomy and independence. This, according to Benda, helped to consolidate the Philippine elite and to increase its landholdings; it also offered new commercial, and far-reaching educational and administrative opportunities.[23]

One of the remarkable aspects under the succeeding colonial rule was that the masses chose to be acquiescent to the continued domination of their former political superiors. The explanation can be sought in the existence of "actual" economic power on the part of the ruling class as well as in their general willingness to assume the culturally imposed obligations including financial, of paternalistic leadership. Property qualifications for suffrage in early American rule also ensured the continued dominance of the landed aristocracy.

The American policy, through education of the population and cooperation with and cooperation of the traditional elite, succeeded in generating a high degree of agreement among the diverse sectors of the population as to the type of society and state in which they wished to live and as to the means of achieving these goals. Such an "agreement" among the leaders and followers also contributed to the continued dominance of the traditional elite.

Under the circumstances, even the Nacionalista Party, which openly dominated independence during their first campaign against the Federalistas, was neither radically nationalistic nor national in organizational terms. Corpus thus remarks:

> The founders of the Nacionalista Party were provincial political leaders gathered into an alliance that professed a national scope. When the elected delegates met for the opening of the Philippine Assembly in Manila, most of them were strangers meeting each other for the first time They were individual victors in separate provincial blocs, each bloc organized as an *entente* among family leaders pursuing or protecting momentarily harmonized interests. Their triumphs were their own, and not owed to a national organization.[24]

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[21] Carl Lande, "The Philippines," in Coleman, (ed.) *Education and Political Development* (Princeton, 1965), p. 327.
[22] Pye, in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
[23] Benda, "Political Elite . . .," p. 250.
[24] Corpus, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

As in Indonesia, high education was an important factor to enter the political leadership under the American rule in the Philippines. Unlike in Indonesia, however, most of the influential leaders with economic and social resources chose to be engaged in "political" (party) and thus in brokerage activities rather than administrative activities. As the American encouragement of the establishment in 1900 of the Partido Federalista shows, the American approach in the Philippines was that the government was primarily to rest upon the politicians and not upon the administrators. As a result, the image of leadership that evolved in the Philippines was clearly that of the party-politicians who looked after the particular and specific interests of the society and later of the voters.

Thus, the economic basis of political power of the traditional elite and the tolerance by the American authority of party activities among the Filipinos, as well as the existence of opportunities in non-political areas, left positions in the government open for the educated yet second class leadership as well as people of relatively humble origin. Lande points out that the relative ease with which they were absorbed into the government and leadership position had the effect of depriving the common people of leaders dedicated exclusively to the interests of the common man.[25] The entry of large numbers of poor boys into such positions also has made the public service in the Philippines a middle class rather than an elite profession.[26] It can be further argued that such a situation deprived the lesser as well as highly educated of the incentive to resort to all-encompassing principles or radical ideologies as a guide to their political action.

The two preceeding sections show that, generally speaking, Indonesia and the Philippines developed two elite groups under the colonial rule: the "administrative" and "political" groups. The significant difference between the two countries is that while in Indonesia, the upper *prijaji* predominantly turned to administrative posts, their Philippine counterparts of *mestizos* became mostly "middle-range" politicians. The lesser *prijaji* and educated "poor boys" in Indonesia turned to politics, oppressed and frustrated. The educated lower principalia and poor boys in the Philippines turned to what we might call the middle class professions through the acquisition of new skills—public service, lawyers, teachers and others. In Indonesia, those holding administrative posts maintained high position and greater influence until the independence was achieved, but soon lost out to the "solidarity-makers" with ideological orientations. In the Philippines, however, the politicians invariably held the upperhand with the blessing of the American authorities during the colonial period and through continued personal ties and influence after independence. In Indonesia, the "ideological" parties and politicians soon developed a parliamentary deadlock and political *immobility*. In the Philip-

25 Lande in Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 322.
26 *Ibid.*, p. 333.

pines, in the meantime, the unprincipled, self-interest oriented politicians would generate corruption in government and dissatisfaction among those who are not represented in the "bargaining process." The following section will deal with the implications and developments of those problems in the two respective countries and attempt to identify the socio-political factors that contributed to such developments.

THE MESSIAN AND THE PRINCIPLED POLITICIAN[27]

The inability to agree and compromise among the Indonesian parties produced no less than seven cabinets in office during the so-called "Liberal" period between 1949 and March 1957, with none of them staying in power for as long as two years. The virtual deadlock between the largest two parties, the Masjumi and PNI, neither of which even approached the size of a majority, enabled a large number of smaller parties to yield power in-between. In order for a cabinet to form a working majority during this period, it was necessary to include the representatives of many parties in one coalition. Sharp conflicts of primarily ideological nature frequently arose between the parties of the coalitions as well as between different sections inside these parties. Until about the end of 1955, the potentially most serious cleavage of all, the cultural and regional tension between Java and the Outer Islands had been kept in bounds by Hatta's symbolic participation in the so-called "dual leadership" with Sukarno as the vice-president. Sukarno presumably represented the Javanese aristocratic political culture of a greater intensity of nationalistic sentiment, greater inclination toward nativism and mysticism; Hatta represented the Islamic-enterpreneurial political culture more amendable to influences stemming from the West, of more pragmatic orientation, greater capacity of enterpreneurship and more sympathetic to socialist ideas rather than the Communist holism.[28]

> Electioneering, in fact, gave rise to a circular effect; party leaders had to emphasize their ideological positions to appeal to communal segments of the electorate. But by doing so they aggravated the division between these segments. And these ideologically reinforced divisions in society at large then sustained the newly sharpened cleavage in the political elite.[29]

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that little or nothing remained of consensus on the ends of the state, and almost all public organs had come to assume a partisan position. Split within the capital-city politicians and the ensuing coups and coup attempts throughout the Republic made the political situation highly untenable. The instability coupled with the Indonesian claim to West Irian provided a central leadership role for the "solidarity-maker" who would save the situation in the Bonapartist fashion, but on the basis of an ever higher and nobler principle.

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[27] This term is from Robert Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, 1963), p. 90.
[28] See Feith, *The Decline . . .* p. 32.
[29] *Ibid.,* pp. 570-1.

By 1956-57, it appeared to President Sukarno that, given the popularity he enjoyed in Java and support by the Communists (who also claimed the grassroot support in rural Java) as well as the army's distrust of the party politicians, he was warranted and could afford a fundamental overhauling of the Indonesian politics.

Indonesian political scene until this time had been essentially elite-based. Parties were formed and power struggle was waged among and within the elite. The 1955 election was meant to be the first positive step toward the popularization of Indonesian politics. Even after the election, however, major political parties except the Communist lacked mass-based organizations and sought their support among primarily the more articulate "political public." Thus the Sukarno upheaval in 1957 which put an end to a "liberal party politics" was a major shift in political base from the urban elite to rural as well as urban masses. In this sense, the leaders of the army who provided the essential physical power to the Sukarno scheme, also shared the characteristics of the mass-oriented leadership group.

> In close contact with their troops, often especially in the regions outside Java, having to play the role of a civil leader, they were much nearer to the masses than the Western-educated elite who concentrated in Djakarta and played at politics.[30]

One of the most interesting aspects during this period was the popular support that Sukarno could mobilize by attacking the "liberal democracy." It is true that Sukarno's authority ultimately depended upon the coercive power that the military supplied. However, there are many indications that his appeals indeed had very widespread support.[31] One of the indications was that the army felt compelled to work with and under Sukarno who they thought supplied the major source of the regime's legitimacy.[32]

It appears that Sukarno's successful overthrow of the democratic process was aided by certain aspects of the Indonesian—particularly the rural Javanese—vulnerability to mystical and messianic appeals. Sukarno's proposals expressed in a speech before a gathering of Indonesian chief political and military leaders in February 1957 reflected his long standing personal political philosophy based on (1) the primacy of egalitarian mass democracy, modified by (2) the mystique of the supposedly specific Indonesian value—the Pantja-sila, for example— of which Sukarno was the chief formulator.[33] Such a proposal had profound appeals to the Javanese masses.

It has been argued that popular support of the early Sarekat Islam, whose greatest growth was in the rural areas (particularly East Java) has

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30 Kerstiens, op. cit., p. 174.

31 Feith, The Decline . . . p. 603.

32 Daniel S. Vlev, "The Political Role of the Army in Indonesia," Pacific Affairs. (Winter, 1963), p. 353.

33 Justus M. van der Kroef, "Guided Democracy in Indonesia," Far Eastern Survey, (August, 1957).

been won on a "mystical superstitious, specially pressured, religious basis."[34] Here the leadership took the form of an individual who,

> In the name of the Islamic messiah, in the name of the *ratu adil* (the proverbial prince whose coming will herald a better life for all), would direct the forces of discontent against some concrete objective.[35]

Justus van der Kroef argues that with the development of the first Javanese kingdoms, to which Hindu-Indian cultural influences gave added impetus, the concept that the ruler was the incarnation of supreme deity in his Hindu manifestation of Vishnu became generally accepted. The relationship between ruler and subject, according to van der Kroef, is not understood in terms of a particularized regional or national community or geographically determined society, but rather in terms of cosmic processes that transcend any locality, class, ethic or sub-ethic group.[36] The same author contends that the "realm of national Indonesian politics today offers continuous proof that the mystical and messianic traditions are very much alive."[37]

With his appeals to "unity and solidarity against 'free fight liberalism' renewal of the spirit of the Revolution, return to national personality, national strength and prestige," Sukarno seemed particularly adept in meeting the "messianic" demands of the Indonesian population. Sukarno could be a substitute for what David Apter calls the political religion in the new nations.[38]

Another factor that made these appeals more attractive would be the fact that the urban dwellers were in many ways torn out of the context of their traditional Indonesian life pattern. The problem of acculturation without substitute moral and sociological frames of references seems more or less universal among many of the former colonial societies. In Indonesia the degree of alienation and frustration was specially high as their expectations in material conditions, increased social status, and integrative leadership were not met at all. Here was a ready ground for a mob to be exploited by the mystical symbols of authority.

Thom Kerstiens argues in his *New Elite in Asia and Africa* that if the national hero becomes a dictator, he is likely to lose the support of a significant element of the population which would more than offset the advantages he has over an anti-democratic leader. At the same time, according to him, "the hero's (in the case of Nehru) popularity among the masses has been diminished because he is criticized from time to time in parliament or by the press.[39] I think, however, that this argument should be modified with

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[34] van Niel, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[36] der Kroef, "Javanese Messianic Expectations: Their Origin and Cultural Context," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, (June, 1959), p. 304.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 320.
[38] David Apter, "Political Religion in the New Nations," in Clifford Gretz, (ed.), *Old States and New Societies*, (London, 1963).
[39] Kerstiens, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

the appropriate consideration of the cultural context. If the people actually
wanted a messiah, he cannot be criticized "from time to time" without
ceasing to be a messiah. The initial question remains unanswered. However,
it seems reasonable to argue that having tried to pose as messiah Sukarno
began to believe that he was indeed one. One thing seems to be certain:
that it was Sukarno's own disposition toward personal power and against
a parliamentary democracy that was responsible for the type of messianism
and authoritarianism he introduced during the seven years of his guided
democracy. The Indonesian case offers an example where the personal dis-
position of an individual leader has so much effect on that nation's political
life as a whole.

At this point, I would like to examine the nature of choice offered to
a dynamic leader in an "instrumentalistic" setting. I refer to Ramon Mag-
saysay's presidency in the Philippines between 1953 and 1957 which is
widely considered to have been a dramatic attempt to *bridge the gap* that
existed (and that still exists) between the political elite and the population.
It has already been noted that, historically, the Philippine political leader-
ship has been tied up with wealth, education and social prestige in the local
community or region. Since the achievement of independence in 1946, the
unprincipled nature of the political elite allowed the election of representa-
tives and president to be determined almost entirely by the shifting alliances
of personal factions and distribution of "pork barrel" among them. National
issues or those concerning the low-class interest played little part.

By 1950 the politician's hunger for patronage and for pork barrel
brought about a situation which generally deserved the charges made by
leaders of the Huk movement; economy was fast deteriorating and hunger
was widespread; corruption was all pervasive; the ballot was a mockery
(especially under the Quirino administration); and the low class interest,
especially the peasants, was largely ignored.[40] According to Jose Abueva,

> The spread of the Huk rebellion beyond central Luzon in 1949 and 1950 was
> symptomatic of the social economic and political gulf between the elite and the
> masses of the people.[41]

Despite the various forces at work behind the increased activities and pro-
grams aimed at alleviating sources of grievances in rural areas,[42] it was
largely Magsaysay who was most instrumental in harnessing the peasant
restiveness by "bringing the government closer to the people."

Two aspects are outstanding in the situation outlined above. In almost
any other country in the general Southeast Asian region, the failure of the
politicians to provide effective solutions to the nation's problems would have

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[40] William Pomeroy, "The Huk Movement in the Philippines," *Eastern World*,
(September, 1964), p. 10.
[41] Jose Abueva, "Bridging the Gap Between the Elite and the People in the
Philippines," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, (October, 1964).
[42] Abueva, *Focus on the Barrio*, (Manila, 1959), Chapter 2.

led to strong-man rule or rule by military junta. This did not happen. Secondly, the Huk movement, was generally programmatic in their demands. They consistently tried to come into and work within the existing political framework until all their hopes were trampled down by the successive administrations of Roxas and Quirino. This was a manifestation of the prevailing pragmatism among the Philippine population. In the case of Magsaysay's *democratic* leadership, two observations can be made; (1) The basis of political power has been so dispersed, and consequently there have been so many leaders of approximately equal puissance, that no one leader has had preeminent power status;[43] and (2) Magsaysay's personal commitment to democratic process preclude any exercise of power by authoritarian means. While these explanations remain generally valid, I think there is another important factor that should be considered in relation to Sukarno's position in his country. It is the general absence among the population of the need to derive religious satisfaction from the political life. About 90 percent of the Filipinos have been estimated as "Christians," and there is no evidence of the remnants of nativistic "folk" religion in the Philippines comparable to that in Java. The American administration was generally successful in separating religious expectations from politics. The state has never taken on the kind of "sacred characteristics" which, according to Apter, constitutes the main cause of a "political religion." No political leader in the Philippines has been, and probably could afford to be the "redeemer" in the manner of a Sukarno or Nkrumah. To Magsaysay, "social justice" did not mean "the establishment of an Indonesian ideology" or "return to national personality," but concrete programs of social reform. To him, "democracy" was not so much of "renewal of the spirit of the Revolution," or attack on the "hyper-intellectuals," but guaranteeing freer elections and the establishment of channels through which social demands could be transmitted. At the same time, it is doubtful if Magsaysay could have received the kind of support he did if he had adopted Sukarno's strategy of appealing to religious aspirations. Despite certain degree of the "father-image" he enjoyed among the rural population, his support came essentially from being a "common man" close to them rather than from being a remote "savior."

This leads to a discussion of another kind of elite, the "aspiring" elite. They largely overlap with the "administrators." However, the former category includes, in addition to the responsible administrators, successful professionals and modern businessmen whose strength lies in their support by fellow members, urban residents and awakened rural elements who look to them for progressive ideas and reforms. Abueva argues that these provided the bulk of crucial support that Magsaysay needed against the conservative traditional politicians. Firmly rooted in the society, they would act not only as a check on the aristocracy but also as a buffer and instrument between

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[43] Corpus, *op. cit.,* p. 126.

the popular president and the people. Magsaysay's untimely death has marked
a serious setback in their attempts to build the bridge between the masses
and the leadership. With Magsaysay, however, a positive step was taken
toward that direction. It should be noted that their ascendancy did not ne-
cessitate the destruction of the basic political order in the Philippines.
"Pragmatism" on the part of both the traditional leadership and the masses
seems to be an important factor in this relatively peaceful "transitional"
process.

The Indonesian "functional" elite which would be comparable to the
Philippine "aspiring" elite had to travel a different course. Their decisive
defeat by the ideological politicians early in the fifties has already been
mentioned. It appeared as if their role would be completely eclipsed with
Sukarno's victory in 1958. Given the divisive nature of Indonesian politics,
however, the group would have better chance of functioning under Sukarno
than under "party politics." It could have been possible for them to act as
"instrumental leaders" who would reform and renovate with the legitimacy
supplied by a charismatic and expressive leader. Such seems to be the
position and role of the administrative leaders under De Gaulle's Fifth
Republic in France. It needed the innovating and instrumental mind of the
leader, however, "messianic" he may have appeared on surface. As Apter
suggests, however, no political-religious regime can successfully justify its
policy failures without damaging the religious aspect. Sukarno failed (and
perhaps did not attempt) to detach himself from mundane policy-making.
The next logical step would be a government based primarily on the physical
forces. The crucial question here would be how effectively the "functional"
elite (now no more to be limited to the administrators) would be able to
exert their instrumental and innovative influence under the system of coercive
authority. When they can do this to a considerable extent, we may expect
the system would more easily move along from sheer coercion as well as
messianism and pork barrelism.

I have one final comment about the "functional-aspiring elite." It seems
reasonable to argue that these elite and their middle class cohorts constitute
the most crucial element in the success of democratic progress in moderniz-
ing societies. It is not possible, however, to predict how "functional" they
would be for the democratic process in the *longer* run.