

U.S. Action and Inaction in the Massacre of Communists and Alleged Communists in Indonesia¹

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“In terms of the numbers killed, the anti-PKI massacres in Indonesia rank as one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century, along with the Soviet purges of the 1930's, the Nazi mass murders during the Second World War, and the Maoist bloodbath of the early 1950's. In this regard, the Indonesian coup is certainly one of the most significant events of the 20th century, far more significant than many other events that have received much greater publicity.”

Written in 1968 in a report by the Central Intelligence Agency (71fn), the statement above still holds true today. The massacres of members of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and associated mass organizations, as well as other alleged communists, henceforth referred to as “the Killings,”² claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, yet they remain little known in the United States.³ Among the key differences, however, between the Indonesian Killings of 1965-66 and the other mass killings mentioned is that while the other episodes were perpetrated by US enemies, the killings in Indonesia were committed by military and civilian organizations receiving aid, training, and encouragement from the United States government.

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² Following Cribb (“Unresolved Problems in the Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966”; *The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966: Studies from Java and Bali*).

³ Though there has been increased interest sparked by Joshua Oppenheimer and Christine Cynn's 2012 film *The Act of Killing* and Oppenheimer's 2014 follow up *The Look of Silence*.

This chapter explores the United States' role in laying the groundwork for the Killings and aiding and abetting the perpetrators. While the Killings were fundamentally a product of internal Indonesian political tensions, the US, motivated by Cold War fears and economic interests, worked to bolster anti-Communist military and civilian leaders in Indonesia and to prepare the military for a takeover of the government and a long-term hold on power. US officials celebrated the military takeover and anti-communist repression as an important Cold War victory and the elimination of a potential threat to US strategic and economic interests, glossing over the fact that it was achieved through the mass killing of hundreds of thousands of civilians. The CIA report quoted at the beginning of this chapter proceeded over the course of 300 pages to place the blame for the Killings on the PKI and its associates—the victims, rather than the killers. Like the Indonesian perpetrators, the US officials who were accessories to this mass murder were never held to account for their actions or inaction, and they either acclaimed the Killings or ignored them, downplaying US responsibility.

This chapter begins by examining the historical processes of the Killings. It then considers the Killings in light of legal and scholarly definitions of genocide, followed by a discussion of the particular role played by the United States government in creating the conditions for the Killings and supporting, rather than restraining or condemning, the perpetrators. The primary source evidence from the US government about its role in Indonesia prior to and during the Killings is described, with six key documents included in full. Primary source documents are cited in footnotes throughout the chapter for easy reference. I conclude by briefly exploring the broader historical and political implications of the Killings and the US-Indonesia relationship that they forged, which paved the way in Indonesia for a military dictatorship and future genocidal policies.

The Killings of 1965-1966

Indonesia gained independence from the Netherlands in 1948 and was subsequently led by President Sukarno, a charismatic leader who knit together a nation from diverse ethnic and religious groups across a far-flung archipelago. From the late 1950s through the early 1960s, Sukarno developed closer ties with the previously marginalized PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party. The PKI steadily gained political influence in the government and military, especially in the air force, with whom it shared a distrust of the army (Cribb, “Genocide in Indonesia, 1965-1966” 229; Crouch 84), and the PKI grew to become the third-largest communist party in the world, behind only those in the Soviet Union and China, claiming 2.5-3.5 million members and candidate members, as well as up to 20 million members of associated “fronts” for labor, women, youths, and other groups (e.g. van der Kroef; Boden 510). Total affiliates therefore represented about one-fifth of the Indonesian population. The PKI pushed forward plans for land redistribution, frequently resulting in conflict between dispossessed landowners and party activists and land occupiers. The party also advocated for the arming of workers and peasants to form a “fifth force” to counterbalance the power of the security apparatus (Mortimer; Young; Robinson, “The Economic Foundations of Political Conflict in Bali, 1950-1965”). An economic crisis, military conflict with Malaysia and the United Kingdom over Borneo (1963-66), and the uncertain health of Sukarno (who suffered from kidney problems), led to a tense atmosphere in the early 1960s, with many Indonesian and foreign observers unsure what the near future would bring in terms of economic development, political leadership, and international affairs (Sutter 523–533; Cribb, “Unresolved Problems”; Mackie; May).

Tensions came to a head on the night of September 30, 1965, when a group of mid-level army officers, claiming they were acting to counter a plot against Sukarno, kidnapped and executed six generals from the military high command, also fatally wounding the young daughter of General Abdul Haris Nasution, the Minister of Defense. Major General Suharto of the Army Strategic Reserve (KOSTRAD) quickly organized troops to crush the officers, who were dubbed the 30th of September Movement (G-30-S) or *Gestapu*. By the night of October 1, Suharto and the remaining army command was in control of Jakarta.

In the subsequent weeks and months, the army, under Suharto's leadership and working with Nasution, whom the G-30-S plotters had not killed, moved to consolidate their power and to sideline President Sukarno. Key to Suharto's strategy was stirring up public anger against the PKI, accusing them of murdering the generals as part of a coup plot. To this day uncertainty lingers about the exact nature of the events of September 30-October 1,⁴ but while PKI leader D.N. Aidit was involved in the plot (Roosa ch1), he was not its leader or chief architect; there is no evidence that it was aimed at a larger communist takeover; the list of members of the G-30-S's proposed 'Indonesian Revolutionary Council' included known anti-communists; and allegations of Sukarno's involvement in the plot have been unsubstantiated (Roosa; May; Crouch). Meanwhile, Suharto and Nasution had been staunchly anti-PKI and had been advocating to the murdered generals that a stronger stance against the party was needed (Crouch 136; Roosa 188).

In the wake of G-30-S, Suharto "took steps to consolidate the already widespread public presumption that the PKI had masterminded the coup (and was probably planning further actions) and encouraged rumors that the communists had been planning to torture and murder their enemies" (Cribb, "Unresolved Problems" 551-552). The army seized control of the public

⁴ See Roosa (ch.2) for a review of different interpretations of the events and the evidence for them.

sphere, using newspapers to disseminate false propaganda about the viciousness of the PKI and claim that the generals had been tortured and mutilated, with their genitals cut off by members of Gerwani, the women's organization associated with the PKI. The latter, allegedly, was followed by Gerwani members engaging in a sexual orgy (Drakeley; Wieringa; Anderson).⁵ As discussed below, the US endorsed these propaganda efforts and the CIA helped spread stories of the PKI's guilt. Press reports and editorial cartoons systematically dehumanized the PKI and Gerwani, portraying them as bloodthirsty monsters threatening common Indonesians (Drakeley 21; van Langenberg 50). Communism was equated with atheism and as anathema to the Indonesian nation; one military newspaper argued that a campaign of vengeance against the PKI would be a holy war (Robinson, *Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali* 281n18; Drakeley 21). Rumors were spread that the PKI was compiling lists of non-communists to execute, creating a perception that the country had descended into life-or-death polarization (Farid; Cribb, "Unresolved Problems" 552; Young 80).

Having whipped the population into an anti-PKI rage, the military coordinated with student and Muslim organizations to initiate attacks on PKI targets and alleged communists, forming the "Action Front to Crush Gestapu" (*Kap-Gestapu*). On October 8, Muslim student groups attacked and destroyed PKI headquarters in Jakarta with military complicity (Crouch 141; May 121), and shortly thereafter, massacres began. In devoutly Muslim Aceh, youth groups joined with the regional military command to capture and kill thousands of PKI members, alleged supporters, and in some cases their families and household employees (Crouch). The military commander for the region, Brigadier General Ishak Djurasa, boasted to the press in December 1965 that "the PKI is no longer a problem for Aceh because the region has been entirely purged in a physical sense of PKI elements" (Crouch 143). Late October brought

⁵ Autopsies on the generals found no evidence of mutilations to support these sensational claims (Anderson).

massacres to East and Central Java, where the Army Paracommando Regiment (RPKAD) armed and trained local Muslim and Christian youth groups with whom they traveled from village to village, killing suspected PKI members and sympathizers and at times slaughtering entire villages alleged to support the PKI, with the RPKAD eventually bringing its reign of terror to Bali as well (Crouch; van Langenberg 49; May; Cribb, “Genocide in Indonesia” 233; Scott). Other than in Aceh, massacres did not begin without instigation from the military (Young).

PKI members and other victims offered little organized resistance in the face of the overwhelming tide of organized and popular violence (Farid; Cribb, “Genocide in Indonesia”). The Killings claimed victims throughout Indonesia, with the most violent areas being Aceh, Bali, Central Java, East Java, and Northern Sumatra. Victims were subjected to torture, mutilation, and extreme brutality. While the target of the violence was ostensibly “communists,” and many PKI members and supporters were among the victims, the chaos of the Killings provided an opportunity for settling of local and personal scores related to land, religion, sexual jealousy, or ethnicity, with victims labeled as communists after the fact (Kalyvas 478; Dwyer and Santikarma).⁶ These local motivations, however, should not distract from the military’s role in promoting and supporting the “popular” side of the Killings (Roosa 24–25).

By the end of 1965, the Killings slowed, in part due to the desire of the Indonesian military to rein in civilian groups in order to avoid anarchy (Crouch 154; Robinson, *Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali* 296). Massacres carried over, though, into 1966 as the military engaged in “mopping up” operations against remaining actual and alleged PKI cells, and abuses continued over the next several years. In the worst of the known later episodes, over 800 alleged communist prisoners were massacred at Purowaddi in late 1968 (May 203–206).

⁶ While there was some targeting of ethnic Chinese during the Killings, following allegations that communist China was behind G-30-S, there were not large scale massacres of Chinese, and violence against them was similar to prior outbursts of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia (Cribb and Coppel).

Throughout the late 1960s, hundreds of thousands of PKI members and alleged communists were also kept in detention camps in harsh conditions and at times used as slave labor (see chapters in Kammen and McGregor). Despite the mass scale of the Killings and the elimination of the PKI as a political force, the military government, which came to be known as the “New Order,” frequently invoked the threat of communism to justify its authoritarian policies and discrimination against the descendants of victims, whom it labeled “children of the PKI...‘infected’ by ‘political uncleanness’” (Dwyer and Santikarma 297–299).

The ultimate number of victims murdered during the Killings remains uncertain, with estimates ranging from a clearly-biased Indonesian government figure of 78,000 up to a high estimate of 2 million (Cribb, “Introduction: Problems in the Historiography of the Killings in Indonesia” 12). US foreign correspondents who were able to travel within Indonesia after March 1966 estimated that at least 300,000 and most likely 500,000 people had been killed (Roosa 25), while an Indonesian army officer estimated the death toll at about 500,000 in January 1966 (Easter 61). The best recent estimate suggests that the mid-range figures were correct and approximately half a million deaths occurred due to the Killings (Cribb, “The Indonesian Massacres” 233), though some argue this figure is still an underestimation (Dwyer and Santikarma 290–291n2).

Despite the high death toll, according to the Articles of the United Nations Convention on Genocide, the Killings do not constitute a genocide, since victims were killed on the basis of their membership or alleged affiliation with the PKI, a political organization, rather than a national, ethnic, religious, or racial group. Political groups were excluded from the Convention on the basis of objections from Eastern Bloc countries, and recent judicial precedent in trials on Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia have reinforced the idea that victims of genocide must be

members of “stable” rather than “mobile” groups, with political group membership considered more mutable (Ratner and Abrams 26–38). Scholarly definitions of genocide that include the collective mass victimization of members of political or social groups targeted as such and aimed at group destruction (Fein; Charny; Chalk and Jonassohn), however, clearly do apply to the Killings, and some scholars have argued that the Killings should be accepted as genocide under a definition of genocide including such ‘politicides’ (Cribb, “Genocide in Indonesia”).

The Killings would also appear to meet the legal standards of intent for group destruction that are necessary for a crime to be considered genocide, with many previous cases setting the precedent that knowledge of the destructive consequences for a group of individual actions may create culpability, even if an individual him or herself did not specifically possess genocidal intent (e.g. Ratner and Abrams 35–37). Such a desire for group destruction did in fact exist among the Indonesian military high command, however. The military did not just target the actual plotters behind G-30-S, but everyone considered communist, meaning millions of PKI members and members of associated organizations (Roosa). The military also called for and aimed to carry out the elimination of communists and viewed communism as a biological phenomenon, able to be inherited and thus necessitating extermination (Thaler 215), suggesting that in this case, as in civil war-era and Francoist Spain (Balcells), political identity came to be viewed not as ascriptive, but as an integral, unchangeable part of a person. Under these conditions, the legal rhetoric of the Genocide Convention, which excludes the targeting of political groups, is incommensurate with the Convention’s mission to condemn and eliminate targeted violence against essentialized collectivities. A strong argument can therefore be made that those who aided and abetted the Killings were complicit in genocide.

The political identity of the victims contributed to a lack of international outcry or action over the Killings. US officials were pleased with the anti-communist nature of the Killings, and no members of the Johnson administration spoke out against them, despite U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy's (D-NY) plea during a January 1966 speech, "We have spoken out against inhuman slaughters perpetrated by the Nazis and the Communists. But will we speak out also against the inhuman slaughter in Indonesia, where over 100,000 alleged Communists have been not perpetrators, but victims?" (Roosa 26).

In Australia and the United Kingdom, government policy was to avoid doing anything to impede the Killings, and to aid in the propaganda campaign against the PKI. Australian Ambassador to Indonesia Keith Shann was strongly anti-communist and embraced the military takeover. Radio Australia, the most popular foreign station in Indonesia, was instructed not to broadcast anything that could contradict the official Indonesian army line and to "highlight reports discrediting the PKI and showing its involvement" in G-30-S (Easter 62–63, 68), while Shann also acted to assure Indonesian military commanders that they "would be completely safe in using their forces for whatever purpose they saw fit" (Easter 65).

The British were of a similar mindset, spreading anti-PKI propaganda through radio and print outlets and passing messages via U.S. officials that they would not escalate the fight in Malaysia while the anti-communist purge was ongoing (Easter 63–64). The British ambassador in Jakarta, Andrew Gilchrist, on October 5, 1965, wrote to the British Foreign Office that he had "never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective [political] change..." and worrying that the Indonesian army was not acting with enough urgency to target PKI leaders (Curtis 387), while the Foreign Office wanted to "encourage anti-Communist Indonesians to more vigorous action in the hope of crushing

Communism in Indonesia altogether” (Easter 63). Gilchrist later came to have doubts about what the Indonesian military had done (in part with his assistance), writing to propaganda chief Norman Reddaway, “What have we to hope from the [Indonesian] generals? 400,000 people murdered, far more than total casualties in Vietnam--nobody cares. ‘They were communists.’ Were they? And are communists not human beings?” (Easter 65). Neither the British nor the Australians, however, ever publicly condemned either the military takeover or the Killings.

The Soviet Union, which had been supplying the Indonesian military with arms in the early 1960s, kept its distance, distrusting the PKI, which was more closely aligned with China. Soviet officials and official news sources, however, did condemn the Killings, decrying them as the result of actions by right wing counterrevolutionaries seeking the elimination of communism, and asking in *Pravda* in February 1966, “What for and according to what right are tens of thousands of people being killed?” (Boden 514–516). Soviet anger over the Killings was expressed to Indonesia’s new foreign minister, Adam Malik, who had himself been heavily involved in the Killings (see below), during a visit to Moscow in October 1966, and the Soviets continued to show concern over the treatment of Indonesian communists (Boden 521–522).

China, which had enjoyed close relations with Sukarno and the PKI, condemned the military and popular organizations’ conduct during the Killings, but was concerned primarily with attacks on Chinese citizens and ethnic Chinese, as well as diplomatic facilities, and the Chinese government had no leverage to press for an end to the violence. Chinese Ambassador Yao Zhongming left Jakarta for China in April 1966 and was neither sent back nor replaced (Corcoran).

The Cold War mentality of Western powers prevented any questioning of the New Order government established under Suharto, and the Killings were interpreted as part of a victory

against communism. Within Indonesia itself, there was no effort for accountability and the Killings have either been ignored or celebrated. Communists continued to be demonized up until the fall of Suharto in 1998, and the killings of the generals by G-30-S were the only deaths deemed worthy of commemoration (Heryanto; Roosa; Farid). Furthermore, the lack of condemnation and general impunity for the perpetrators of the Killings may have encouraged Suharto and the New Order to engage in genocidal mass killing a second time in their invasion of East Timor (Thaler), when the US and other Western powers were once again complicit (B. Simpson).⁷

The US Role in the Killings

While some scholars may overplay the US role in the reaction to G-30-S, the rise of Suharto, and the sidelining of Sukarno (e.g. Scott), the US clearly sought to undermine Sukarno and the PKI and to bolster the military through covert action, propaganda, aid programs, and diplomatic activities. US relations with Indonesia under Sukarno were conflictual due to Sukarno's close relations with the PKI and communist countries, his policy of confrontation with Malaysia, the threat his alliance with the PKI posed to US business interests (see Kim), and his strong anti-imperialist rhetoric. Though it restricted aid to Indonesia significantly in response to Sukarno's policies, the US left open military assistance and "civic action" programs to maintain ties with the military (e.g. Brands; Evans),⁸ part of close relations with the military developed at the turn of the beginning of the 1960s. According to a memo from Secretary of State Dean Rusk to

⁷ See also Nevins, this volume.

⁸ 'Civic action' was used to denote the training and use of military personnel in general economic development and infrastructural projects (see B. R. Simpson),

President Lyndon Johnson, these assistance programs were aimed primarily at “*permitting us to maintain some contact with key elements in Indonesia...interested in and capable of resisting Communist takeover*” (Scott 248n46 emphasis original), and civic action programs also likely provided cover for covert anti-communist activities (Roosa 184).

The United States government had a history of meddling in Indonesian affairs, supporting failed armed insurgencies in the 1950s aimed at deposing Sukarno, including large-scale covert paramilitary actions, and even a bombing campaign (e.g. Kahin and Kahin; Conboy and Morrison). After that debacle, however, the US turned to a policy of heavily aiding the Indonesian military. The National Security Council described the Indonesian army as the “principle obstacle to the continued growth of Communist strength,” arguing that the army, in concert with civilian anti-communist politicians, could turn the tide against the PKI (Roosa 181–182). These military aid policies carried over through the Kennedy administration.

Members of President Lyndon Johnson’s administration and US diplomats in Indonesia sought to constrain Sukarno’s leftist tendencies and to undermine the PKI while ensuring the Indonesian military, and especially the army, remained in a position of strength as a US ally and a “bulwark against the PKI” (Roosa 182). US officials in Indonesia in 1964 thus had close ties to the military and General Nasution, whom they knew was a staunch anti-communist and who was considered “America’s ‘golden boy’” (Roosa 182–183). In January 1964, as deteriorating relations with Sukarno led some in the U.S. government to call for a cutoff of military assistance to Indonesia, National Security Council Staff Member Michael Forrestal argued that the US needed to be careful not to give “Nasution an unintended indication that the U.S. is abandoning its political support of the Indonesian armed forces.”⁹ In March 1964, US Ambassador Howard

⁹ State Department, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968 Volume XXVI, Indonesia; Malaysia-Singapore; Philippines* [henceforth *FRUS*], Document 5. “Memorandum From Michael V. Forrestal of the National

Jones asked Nasution how the military would respond if the PKI “attempted [to] exploit current economic difficulties through strikes, riots, etc.,” to which Nasution replied that “Madiun (1948 crushing of PKI attempted coup) would be mild compared with army crackdown today.”¹⁰ In response to later calls to end nearly all aid ties with Indonesia, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy wrote to President Lyndon Johnson in August 1964, stating that “we ought to keep a few links, however tenuous, to the Indo military, still the chief hope of blocking a Communist takeover,” while Secretary of State Dean Rusk argued that military assistance “was an important link to the Indonesian military, and this long-term asset value is still considerable,” while also suggesting the “Continuation of technical assistance, non-military training, and supply of non-sensitive equipment for the National Police including the Mobile Brigade, to preserve US influence in this important power center.”¹¹ In February 1965, Forrestal wrote to Jones to suggest that the US, despite rough relations with Sukarno, “should let the Army have the Java portion of the telecommunications equipment we promised them” in order to maintain good relations with the army because “it would probably also help them in the event there were trouble with the P.K.I. on Java.”¹²

Throughout 1964 and 1965, the US was aware that tensions were rising within Indonesia and sought to ensure that events played to its advantage. The US did not want to lose “100 million people, vast potential resources, and a strategically important chain of islands” to the

Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy),” Washington, January 6, 1964. Print pp. 10-12; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d5>.

¹⁰ *FRUS*, Document 40. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, March 19, 1964. Print pp. 80-82; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d40>. The Madiun uprising was a communist revolt during Indonesia’s independence war against the Dutch and was seen by many Indonesians as a treasonous stab in the back (see Swift).

¹¹ *FRUS*, Document 67. “Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson,” Washington, August 31, 1964. Print pp. 144-148; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d67>.

¹² *FRUS*, Document 107. “Letter From Michael V. Forrestal of the National Security Council Staff to the Ambassador to Indonesia (Jones),” Saigon, February 19, 1965. Print pp. 226-228; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d107>.

communist camp.¹³ Beyond Nasution and the military, US officials in Indonesia developed close ties to Minister of Trade Adam Malik, one of the leading civilian anti-communists, who met with Ambassador Jones in November 1964 to discuss the formation of an anti-communist coalition among Muslim and right-wing political parties, labor federations, and youth groups,¹⁴ the civilian demographics later heavily involved in the Killings with Malik's organizational support and fundraising. At a particularly low point in US-Indonesian relations in March 1965, Special Representative for Indonesia Ellsworth Bunker wrote a lengthy report, after consultations with Nasution and Malik, among others, in which he recommended that the US meet its commitments to provide communications equipment to the Indonesian military and that even if other programs were cut, the US should retain military assistance training officers at the embassy in order to "keep maximum contact with the Indonesian military."¹⁵ The sale of the communications equipment, to be stationed in Java, was approved and moving forward by July 1965.¹⁶

US officials at this time were worried that an anti-communist movement would have a hard time gaining traction while Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia was still ongoing, concerned that efforts to undermine the PKI, given its close ties to Sukarno, would be seen as an effort to divide the nation in a time of war and would in fact strengthen the PKI, and so they tried to determine ways to resolve the conflict.¹⁷ The CIA was also concerned that in the event of

¹³ *FRUS*, Document 119. "Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and James C. Thompson, Jr., of the National Security Council Staff to President Johnson," Washington, March 24, 1965. Print p. 253; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d119>.

¹⁴ *FRUS*, Document 89. "Intelligence Memorandum," OCI No. 2057/64, Washington, December 2, 1964. Print pp. 189-191; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d89>.

¹⁵ *FRUS*, Document 121. "Report From Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to President Johnson," Washington, undated. Print pp. 255-263; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d121>.

¹⁶ *FRUS*, Document 127. "Memorandum of Conversation," Washington, July 20, 1965, 5:35 p.m. Print p. 272; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d127>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; *FRUS*, Document 93. "Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," Djakarta, December 15, 1964, 5:45 p.m. Print pp. 198-200; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d93>; *FRUS*, Document 95. "Telegram From the Embassy in Malaysia to the Department of State," Kuala Lumpur, December 17, 1964, 5:45 p.m. Print pp. 203-204; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d95>.

Sukarno's death, considered a strong possibility due to uncertainty over his health, "the initial struggle to replace him would be won by Army and non-Communist elements," but that "unless the non-Communist leaders displayed more backbone, effectiveness, and unity than they have to date, the chances of eventual PKI dominance of Indonesia would quickly mount."¹⁸ By February 1965, the US government was determined to more actively influence the internal situation in Indonesia, developing a covert action plan for the State Department and CIA to support Indonesian anti-communist groups and to "chip away at the PKI." According to the planning document, "Specific types of activity envisaged include covert liaison with and support to existing anti-Communist groups, particularly among the [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], black letter operations, media operations, including possibly black radio, and political action within existing Indonesian organizations and institutions" [bracketed material included in the declassified document].¹⁹

Though the US did not take any direct actions aimed at toppling Sukarno, they certainly were not opposed to his removal from power if it involved the military or other anti-communist forces taking power. In March 1964, Ambassador Jones met with Nasution and hinted that the US would support the military in the event of a coup (Evans 28). In April 1965, Jones wrote to Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs William Bundy that he was "privy to plans for a coup here" and that while "to play safe, I informed my contact that the U.S. Government can in no way participate in any effort of this kind. I nevertheless conveyed clearly my own sympathy with his objectives," though this particular coup plot did not come to fruition.²⁰ While

FRUS, Document 103. "Special Memorandum Prepared by the Director of the Office of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency (Kent)," Washington, January 26, 1965. Print pp. 219-220; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d103>.

¹⁹ *FRUS*, Document 110. "Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee," Washington, February 23, 1965, note 1. Print: pp. 234-237; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d110>.

²⁰ *FRUS*, Document 120. "Editorial Note." Print p. 254; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d120>.

Jones was considered a moderate by the US standards of the time, in early June 1965 he was replaced as ambassador by Marshall Green, who took a harder anti-communist line, and sought to ensure that the US “Maintain whatever contact possible with military and other elements in power structure, looking toward post-Sukarno period.”²¹

The US likely did not expect the G-30-S plot, nor the swift and successful reaction by Suharto and the army. It was also unlikely to have expected the scale and ferocity of the Killings; intelligence estimates in July 1965 suggested that in the event of Sukarno’s death or marginalization, the “military would almost certainly exercise greater authority than at present, but would be unlikely to risk civil war to initiate a roll back of the Communists.”²² As Bunnell (59) put it, the US plan was to lie low, and “There was always the cautious confidence that the army could and would prevail in a post-Sukarno showdown with the PKI, but the form and timing of such a showdown could not be predicted.” Jones had been told in January 1965 by a reliable source that the military might undertake a “coup that would be handled in such a way as to preserve Sukarno’s leadership intact,” and Jones and other Western diplomats thought that “an unsuccessful coup attempt by the PKI” could provide the spark for a military reaction (Roosa 189–191), yet when their hopes came true and G-30-S happened, the US was caught off guard. The State Department was unsure of the extent of PKI involvement in G-30-S, and this was one case in which the CIA stated that it “had had absolutely nothing to do with it.”²³

With the news that the army was establishing control, however, US officials began to be cautiously optimistic that their dreams for an anti-PKI military reaction might come to fruition.

²¹ *FRUS*, Document 135. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, August 23, 1965, 0930Z. Print pp. 285-287; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d135>.

²² *FRUS*, Document 126. “National Intelligence Memorandum,” Washington, July 1, 1965. Print pp. 270-271; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d126>.

²³ *FRUS*, Document 143. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Acting Secretary of State Ball and Secretary of Defense McNamara,” Washington, October 1, 1965, 9:30 a.m. Print pp. 301-302; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d143>.

Acting Secretary of State George Ball thought that if the army could take power, Nasution and his ilk might purge the PKI to consolidate control.²⁴ Already on October 5, Ambassador Green sought to ensure that the US maintain its contacts with the military and distribute anti-PKI propaganda, suggesting that the failure of G-30-S and the army's reaction "may embolden [the] army at long last to act effectively against Communists." The memo recommended that the US "Spread the story of PKI's guilt, treachery and brutality (this priority effort is perhaps most needed immediate assistance we can give army if we can find way to do it without identifying it as solely or largely US effort)."²⁵ Ball replied that the US should try to avoid publicly being tied to the army, and that previous military assistance programs and contacts should have provided the military with sufficient capabilities and assurances as to US support, while Voice of America radio programs should spread the anti-PKI propaganda being produced in Indonesia, "without at this stage injecting U.S. editorializing," though Ball expressed concern to Rusk later that night that the army was not moving fast enough against the PKI.²⁶ Rusk also worried the army would not seize the opportunity to go after the PKI, and stated that, "if [the] army's willingness to follow through against PKI is in any way contingent on or subject to influence by US, we do not wish [to] miss [the] opportunity [to] consider US action."²⁷

As of October 12, the US was already aware that attacks on PKI members were being organized by the army. In a conversation between Ball and U.S. Senator William Fulbright, Ball

²⁴ *FRUS*, Document 144. "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Acting Secretary of State Ball and Senator William Fulbright," Washington, October 1, 1965, 3:45 p.m. Print pp. 302-303; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d144>.

²⁵ *FRUS*, Document 147. "Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State," Djakarta, October 5, 1965, 1435Z. Print pp. 307-308; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d147>.

²⁶ *FRUS*, Document 148. "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," Washington, October 6, 1965, 7:39 p.m. Print pp. 308-310; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d148>.

²⁷ *FRUS*, Document 153. "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia," Washington, October 13, 1965, 7:03 p.m. Print pp. 320-321; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d153>.

stated that “Although [the army] were afraid to move directly against Sukarno and the PKI, they were encouraging the Muslims and other groups to do so.”²⁸ On October 14, US Army attaché Colonel William Ethel delivered assurances to Nasution’s aide that the British would stand down and let the Indonesian army deal with the PKI, which the aide commented was “just what was needed by way of assurances that we (the army) weren’t going to be hit from all angles as we moved to straighten things out here,” before proceeding to tell Ethel that Communist cadres and Chinese were being rounded up.²⁹ Ethel then organized the delivery of portable radio equipment to the Indonesian army’s leadership.³⁰ On October 17, the American Embassy noted that attacks on the PKI were spreading outside Jakarta, with Central Java, East Java, and Northern Sumatra seen as potential tinderboxes for anti-communist violence.³¹ Ethel was continuing to work closely with Nasution’s aide, and on October 18, Ambassador Green wrote: “I gain [the] distinct impression that [the] army is proceeding methodically against Communists.”³² Only two days later, Green reported on hundreds of executions around Jakarta, expressing pleasure at the army’s activities.³³ On October 22, Rusk, in his summation of the situation, showed he was aware that the army was “cleaning up” and aiming for the “elimination of the PKI,” as well as that “non-communist civilians...[were] becoming actively anti-PKI,” before reaffirming US

²⁸ *FRUS*, Document 152. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State (Ball) and Secretary of State Rusk,” Washington, October 12, 1965, 5:40 p.m, note 3. Print p. 319; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d152>.

²⁹ *FRUS*, Document 154. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 14, 1965, 1020Z. Print pp. 321-322; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d154>.

³⁰ *FRUS*, Document 155. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 14, 1965, 1020Z. Print pp. 322-323; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d155>.

³¹ *FRUS*, Document 156. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 17, 1965, 0030Z. Print pp. 323-326; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d156>.

³² *FRUS*, Document 157. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 18, 1965, 0845Z. Print pp. 327-328; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d157>.

³³ *FRUS*, Document 158. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 20, 1965, 0330Z. Print pp. 329-330; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d158>.

support for the military in case a PKI insurgency broke out.³⁴ At the same time, the American Embassy sought to figure out “how to help the Army to win, but without revealing that assistance,” in its power struggle with Sukarno.³⁵ By late October, the embassy in Jakarta was receiving frequent reports about the massacre of PKI members and alleged communists throughout the country, often with great brutality, with army encouragement.³⁶ With all of this knowledge, Rusk on October 29 still thought small pockets of PKI resistance constituted a significant threat and laid out plans to aid the army in eliminating this resistance and further sidelining Sukarno. In doing so, he addressed different ways to supply “small arms and equipment” to the army.³⁷ An inter-agency task force also began planning to deliver communications equipment and other covert aid to the army.³⁸ The Department of Defense and the White House Staff agreed that such aid should be unconditional, “because they feel it is important to assure the Army of our full support of its efforts to crush the PKI.”³⁹

Green soon had knowledge in early November of army forces committing massacres in the outer islands and the RPKAD paratroopers training and arming Muslim youth organizations

³⁴ *FRUS*, Document 159. “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia,” Washington, October 22, 1965, 7:14 p.m. Print pp. 330-333; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d159>.

³⁵ *FRUS*, Document 161. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 26, 1965, note 3. Print pp. 335-337; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d161>.

³⁶ *FRUS*, Document 162. “Editorial Note.” Print pp. 338-340; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d162>.

³⁷ *FRUS*, Document 163. “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia,” Washington, October 29, 1965, 3:48 p.m. Print pp. 340-343; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d163>.

³⁸ *FRUS*, Document 164. “Memorandum From the Assistant for Indonesia (Nuechterlein) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Friedman),” Washington, October 30, 1965. Print pp. 343-345; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d164>.

³⁹ *FRUS*, Document 168. “Memorandum From the Assistant for Indonesia (Nuechterlein) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Friedman),” Washington, November 4, 1965. Print pp. 351-353; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d168>. The Department of Defense also planned to monitor shipping to prevent any deliveries of arms to the PKI.

in Central Java,⁴⁰ while extremist youth group leaders bragged to the consulate in Medan in Northern Sumatra about organizing large-scale killings.⁴¹ A U.S. intelligence memorandum in late November stated that “[PKI] members and sympathizers are being rounded up and interned by the military; others are being purged from local government positions; and in Central Java PKI adherents are reported to be shot on sight by the army,”⁴² yet no change in U.S. policy took place. Green stated in a memo at the beginning of November that, “Nasution seems at long last to have been spurred to act on and, in tandem with Suharto and other [tough?] deeply motivated military leaders, [move] relentlessly to exterminate PKI as far as that is possible to do.”⁴³ With this knowledge, in early December, Green even requested 50 million rupiah (over US\$200,000) to channel through Adam Malik to the Kap-Gestapu civilian anti-communist coalition.⁴⁴ The US also decided in December to provide requested medicines and medical equipment to the army, as officials from the CIA, State Department, and National Security Council agreed on the need for the army to “know who their friends were,” giving the US the chance of “getting in on the ground floor” with the likely new government.⁴⁵ The Indonesian army, though, did not necessarily need further assurances of US support, for, as one State Department official said, “The Army knows that [the Pentagon, the CIA, and the State Department] approve of its actions

⁴⁰ *FRUS*, Document 169. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, November 4, 1965, 0845Z. Print pp. 353-356; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d169>.

⁴¹ *FRUS*, Document 174. “Telegram From the Consulate in Medan to the Department of State,” Medan, Indonesia, November 16, 1965, 0115Z. Print pp. 366-368; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d174>.

⁴² *FRUS*, Document 178. “Intelligence Memorandum,” Washington, November 22, 1965. Print pp. 375-379; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d168>. This document also highlights that the Soviets had continued arms shipments to the Indonesian military, even as it was engaged in its ‘anti-PKI’ campaign.

⁴³ *FRUS*, Document 165. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, November 1, 1965, 1200Z. Print pp. 345-347; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d165>.

⁴⁴ *FRUS*, Document 179. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, December 2, 1965. Print pp. 379-380; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d179>.

⁴⁵ *FRUS*, Document 181. “Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Koren) to the Director (Hughes),” Washington, December 4, 1965. Print pp. 381-382; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d181>.

against the PKI, and that all three are disposed to help the Army in this effort.”⁴⁶ At the end of 1965, the Department of Defense was making plans to supply the army with food and medicine in case they undertook a coup against Sukarno in 1966, along with contingency plans for the resumption of overt military and economic aid if conditions were favorable;⁴⁷ and with power shifting ever further toward the military, President Johnson was reportedly intent not to “miss the boat in Indonesia.”⁴⁸ By February 1966, Green gave an assessment stating that since October 1, 1965, “the PKI has been destroyed as an effective political force for some time to come,” and that “the Communists...have been decimated by wholesale massacre.”⁴⁹

The US had not only been providing material and moral support to the Indonesian army and Kap-Gestapu, they had also been providing information. In a report in 1990, journalist Kathy Kadane unveiled evidence, gathered from former US officials in the Johnson Administration, that staff at the US embassy in Jakarta had actually provided lists of PKI members to the Indonesian army for targeting. According to Kadane’s report, US officials “systematically compiled comprehensive lists of Communist operatives, from top echelons down to village cadres. As many as 5,000 names were furnished to Adam Malik, who passed them on to Kap-Gestapu and the army, and the Americans later checked off the names of those who had been killed or captured, according to the U.S. officials” (Kadane). Embassy official Robert Martens, who had been interviewed for the article, responded to Kadane’s piece in a letter arguing that he

⁴⁶ *FRUS*, Document 167. “Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Cuthell) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Bundy),” Washington, November 3, 1965. Print pp. 348-351; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d167>.

⁴⁷ *FRUS*, Document 187. “Memorandum From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara,” Washington, December 30, 1965. Print pp. 390-392; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d187>.

⁴⁸ *FRUS*, Document 192. “Memorandum of Conversation,” Washington, February 14, 1966. Print pp. 399-401; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d192>.

⁴⁹ *FRUS*, Document 191. “Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson,” Washington, February 15, 1966. Print pp. 401-402; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d191>.

had only passed on the names of “a few thousand” senior cadres and that his information was based on published PKI materials.⁵⁰ According to Kadane’s report, though, based on Martens’s statements, these “included names of provincial, city and other local PKI committee members, and leaders of the ‘mass organizations,’ such as the PKI national labor federation, women’s and youth groups” (Kadane), clearly a broader swathe of people than Martens was willing to admit, many of whom were unlikely to have been hard-core, militant PKI leaders. This assessment is supported by Roosa (298n76), who states that the PKI “Central Committee consisted of about eighty-five people, and each of the roughly twenty provincial committees had about ten people. If one adds the leaders of the various affiliated organizations, such as trade unions, the total is about five hundred. Martens had to be listing district- and subdistrict-level party members.” Martens maintained that he acted alone, and subsequent reviews of Kadane’s interviews could not conclude that his superiors were definitively aware of his actions (Wines), though it is clear that his lists were useful to the Indonesian army and to Kap-Gestapu, who had relatively poor information (Kadane).

In March 1966, the army finally moved decisively to push Sukarno off the scene, and the US embassy was well apprised of the plans. On March 10, a giddy Adam Malik shared with Green the news that a coup by soldiers loyal to Suharto and Nasution was in the offing. Green replied that he hoped for a new, productive intergovernmental relationship, and “asked Malik to feel free to share the burden of our conversation with Nasution and Soeharto.”⁵¹ Two days later, the coup occurred (though Sukarno nominally remained president), and in the coming weeks, the US began releasing aid to Indonesia that had been held up while Sukarno was in power. At the

⁵⁰ *FRUS*, Document 185. “Editorial Note.” Print pp. 386-387; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d185>.

⁵¹ *FRUS*, Document 199. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, March 10, 1966, 0900Z. Print pp. 414-416; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d199>.

same time, Green worked closely with Suharto, even as the US saw that purges of alleged PKI sympathizers and attacks on Chinese civilians continued.⁵²

US officials were both quick to embrace Suharto, and equally quick to either acclaim or ignore the destruction of the PKI and the violence it entailed. A background paper for a National Security Council meeting in August 1966 described the Killings explicitly, stating that “The Army hunted down and executed the principal Communist leaders. In small cities, towns and villages, groups of youths embarked on a systematic campaign of extermination of Communist Party cadres, encouraged by the Army and motivated by religion, historic local grievances, and fear for their own fate had the Communists taken power. While the exact figure will never be known, an estimated 300,000 were killed.” The paper went on to recommend increasing aid to Indonesia and to further cooperation with the military.⁵³ As Kolko (181) mentions, “‘The reversal of the Communist tide in the great country of Indonesia’ was publicly celebrated, in the words of Deputy Undersecretary of State U. Alexis Johnson in October 1966, as ‘an event that will probably rank along with the Vietnamese war as perhaps the most historic turning point of Asia in this decade.’” According to Howard Federspiel, who was an Indonesia expert at the State Department in this era, U.S. officials were little bothered by the huge number of victims resulting from the Killings: “No one cared, as long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered” (Kadane). Finally, Marshall Green, while acknowledging the “deplorable blood-letting” of the Killings, still laid all blame at the feet of the PKI in his memoirs (Green 58–61).

⁵² *FRUS*, Document 206. “Memorandum From Donald W. Ropa of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow).” Washington, April 18, 1966. Print pp. 427-428; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d206>; *FRUS*, Document 209. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, May 27, 1966, 0505Z. Print pp. 431-434; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d209>.

⁵³ *FRUS*, Document 215. “Memorandum From Secretary of State Rusk to President Johnson,” Washington, August 1, 1966. Print pp. 449-457; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d215>.

Suharto and the military meanwhile consolidated their authoritarian rule as the “New Order” regime. Suharto remained in power for the next 32 years until 1998. Green anticipated this authoritarian outcome already in November 1965, noting that the “Army is not thinking purely in military terms or intending [to] turn [the] political future of Indonesia over to civilian elements. Army is moving its people into all aspects of government and organizational framework with view [towards] keeping control [of] political trends and events.”⁵⁴

The US continued to support Suharto and the New Order regime, and worked with the military despite its record of human rights violations (Simons). As demonstrated clearly by the publicly available primary documents, the US government in the case of the Killings approved of and was complicit in a mass killing that many consider a genocide, and developed close, sustained relations with the perpetrators.

Documents on US Complicity in the Killings

While the US was not directly involved in the perpetration of the Killings, significant evidence exists regarding US material, diplomatic, intelligence, and rhetorical support for the Indonesian military; US efforts to undermine the PKI and incite the population against it; and US awareness of the Killings and endorsement of them. Documents referenced here are drawn from the *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, Volume XXVI, Indonesia; Malaysia-Singapore; Philippines, or *FRUS*, part of the series of books produced by the US State Department compiling declassified primary documents from the State Department, intelligence

⁵⁴ *FRUS*, Document 169. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, November 4, 1965, 0845Z. Print pp. 353-356; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d169>.

agencies, and the White House. Many documents related to Central Intelligence Agency activities in Indonesia during this period still have not been released, though historian Brad Simpson is heading a project at the National Security Archive at George Washington University to try to get further documents declassified using Freedom of Information Act requests.⁵⁵ Due to space restrictions, the texts of only six key documents are reproduced in full below, but see the citations in the previous section for further documents, which are available online or in print. The documents include an “Editorial Note” describing extracts of US documents that were not reproduced in the volume, but which contain key information related to the US role in the Killings. Footnotes from the *FRUS* documents are not included.

Document I. As the Killings began in October 1965 in the aftermath of G-30-S, US officials in Indonesia were in contact with army officers and were aware of the ongoing purge of the PKI and mass executions, yet there was no condemnation of these killings and the US was primarily concerned with ensuring that the Indonesian army stand up to the nonexistent threat of a PKI insurgency. In a telegram to Washington, Green described anti-PKI efforts around Jakarta and stated his strong approval for the army’s “determination and organization in carrying out this crucial assignment.”

158. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State⁵⁶

Djakarta, October 20, 1965, 0330Z.

⁵⁵ The Indonesia/East Timor Documentation Project, National Security Archive, George Washington University (<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/indonesia/index.html>).

⁵⁶ *FRUS*, Document 158. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, October 20, 1965, 0330Z. Print pp. 329-330; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d158>.

1090. 1. Army and other actions against PKI have been covered in detail in our sitreps and regular reporting. Question now is extent to which party's effectiveness and potential have actually been impaired.

2. While situation still fluid, evidence to date indicates party has received major, though not necessarily mortal, blow to its image, considerable damage to its communications and command structures, and some damage to its organizational strength through arrest, harassment and, in some cases, execution of PKI cadres.

3. Extent of this damage cannot be definitely fixed but is certainly significant. In area of communications and command, we have direct evidence [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] that PKI itself already regarded its communications to be virtually shattered a week or so ago, even before army repression had reached its peak. Some thousand[s] of PKI cadres have reportedly been arrested in Djakarta area alone and several hundred of them have been executed. We know that Njono, head of Djakarta PKI and Politburo member, was arrested and may have been executed and there are unconfirmed reports of other arrests of top leaders including Anwar Snauee. Army sweeps of Kampung areas have also disrupted channels of communication, and loss of buildings, effects of curfew in Djakarta shut-down of telephone and telegraph system, etc., are forcing PKI to employ inefficient and cumbersome devices no matter how well prepared their underground network may have been.

4. Thus far, however, basic PKI organizational potential would appear to be largely intact and capable of recovering quickly in a purely organizational sense if its status were recognized by the government and army attacks were stopped. However, there would still be severe damage to its image that, taken by itself, would tend to impair recruitment and decrease possibilities for

successful prosecution of United Front tactics. Also, even now party will face uphill fight in regaining degree of popular acceptance and ostensible prestige it enjoyed before Sept 30. At same time, if return of PKI did take place and could be shown as sign of anti-PKI weakness and indication that opposition to PKI was useless, loss [of] popular image could be at least partially offset by psychology of intimidation [sic] and by terror.

5. If army repression of PKI continues and army refuses to give up its position of power to Sukarno, PKI strength can be cut back. In long run, however, army repression of PKI will not be successful unless it is willing to attack communism as such, including associations with China and other bloc countries and Communist ideology, including many of [the] key pillars of Sukarno doctrine. Army has nevertheless been working hard at destroying PKI and I, for one, have increasing respect for its determination and organization in carrying out this crucial assignment.

6. PKI capability for insurgency reported septel [in a separate telegram].

Green

Document II. Throughout late October and November, the US embassy in Jakarta was receiving reports of large-scale violence against communists and alleged communists throughout Indonesia, though US priorities were still to ensure that the army was unencumbered and that there was no resistance or resurgence from the PKI. The *Foreign Relations of the United States* editors in this editorial note are overly generous to the US officials at the time in stating that “The fact that many of the killings took place in outlying areas tended to obscure their magnitude,” as reports of hundreds and thousands of people killed by the army and civilians

should have warranted further investigation. Rather, ideological blinkers led US officials to see these deaths as unimportant or in fact good, part of an effort to defeat communism.

162. Editorial Note⁵⁷

The Embassy in Djakarta was hampered in its reporting on events in the areas outside the capital by the general confusion and chaos of the initial conflict between the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) on one hand and the Indonesian Army and anti-Communist forces on the other. At first the [U.S.] Embassy viewed the fighting and violence as a potential military/guerrilla conflict and concentrated on the PKI's armed activity and its potential for terrorism. In telegram 1215 from Djakarta, October 27, 1965, the Embassy recounted multiple reports of increasing insecurity and mounting bloodshed in Central Java, but could not determine whether it was caused by the PKI moving towards terrorism and sabotage, "local PKI cadres reacting uncoordinatedly to pressures upon them," or the Army "purposely moving to wipe out questionable elements and gain control." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 84, Djakarta Embassy Files: Lot 69 F 42, POL 23) On October 28 the Embassy reported that a PKI source alleged that the PKI was about to engage in a "war of liberation" and cited incidents of PKI terrorism to support this conclusion. The telegram stated, "There [is] no question, even allowing for exaggeration, that PKI acts of terrorism have increased." (Telegram 1248 from Djakarta, October 28; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 INDON) On October 28 the Embassy Country Team reviewed the situation and sent its appraisal. Although the report emphasized the deteriorating security situation in Central Java, East Java, Bandung, and Djakarta, the team could not say "whether

⁵⁷ *FRUS*, Document 162. "Editorial Note." Print pp. 338-340; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d162>. For concision, I have omitted a paragraph discussing an article by a foreign service officer from the embassy in Jakarta who sought to argue that only 105,000 people died during the Killings.

these incidents were isolated acts of local communists or beginning of a coordinated act of terror and sabotage.” The report concluded that Indonesia was heading for a “period of chaos, since PKI has residual strength and arms, but balance seems on Army side.” (Telegram 1255 from Djakarta; October 28; *ibid.*)

At the end of October 1965, the Embassy began to receive reports of killings and atrocities against PKI members, which were generally reported upon in the context of continued armed PKI resistance. On October 29 the Embassy reported that “Moslem fervor in Atjeh apparently put all but few PKI out of action. Atjehnese have decapitated PKI and placed their heads on stakes along the road. Bodies of PKI victims reportedly thrown into rivers or sea as Atjehnese refuse 'contaminate Atjeh soil.'” (Telegram 1269 from Djakarta; October 29; *ibid.*, RG 84, Djakarta Embassy Files: Lot 69 F 42, Pol 23–9) By November 8 the Embassy reported that in North Sumatra and Atjeh “the Army with the help of IP–KI Youth organizations and other anti-Communist elements has continued systematic drive to destroy PKI in northern Sumatra with wholesale killings reported.” On November 13 the Embassy had a report from the local police chief that “from 50 to 100 PKI members were being killed every night in East and Central Java by civilian anti-Communist troops with blessing of the Army.” A missionary in Surabaya reported that 3,500 PKI were killed between November 4 and 9 in Kediri and 300 at Paree, 30 kilometers northwest of Kediri. (Telegrams 1374 and 1438 from Djakarta, November 8 and 13, and telegram 171 from Surabaya, November 13; *ibid.*) These types of anecdotal reports continued well into the first months of 1966. In airgram A–527 from Djakarta, February 25, 1966, the Embassy reported estimates of the PKI death toll in Bali at 80,000 with “no end in sight.” The Embassy attributed the murders to sharp conflict there between PKI and the Indonesian National Party (PNI), but also to the “tradition of family blood feuds” and suggested

that “many of the killings that are taking place under a political cover are actually motivated by personal and clan vendettas.” (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 INDON)

Gradually the Embassy came to realize that Indonesia was undergoing a full scale purge of PKI influence and that these killings were overlaid with long standing and deep ethnic and religious conflicts. The fact that many of the killings took place in outlying areas tended to obscure their magnitude. The Embassy still had no good estimates of the number of Indonesians who perished. In airgram A–641 to the Department, April 15, 1966, the Embassy stated that the problem was the impossibility of weighing “the countervailing effects of exaggeration (which is especially common in Indonesia) and the interests of persons involved to cover up some of the crimes. The truth can never be known. Even the Indonesian Government has only a vague idea of the truth.” The Embassy admitted, “We frankly do not know whether the real figure is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000 but believe it wiser to err on the side of the lower estimates, especially when questioned by the press.” (Ibid., POL 2 INDON)

Document III. With the Indonesian army consolidating its hold on power and continuing to pursue the PKI and its supporters, the CIA sought to determine the best ways in which to covertly aid the army. In a memo written in November 1965, the CIA acknowledged the uncertainty around the army’s political control and the risks of assisting a military outside of established government channels, but recommended that aid was worth the risks given the army’s strong anti-communist actions. The CIA argued that now that the army was acting against the PKI, “we should avoid being too cynical about its motives and its self-interest, or too hesitant about the propriety of extending such assistance provided we can do so covertly,” counseling the provision of small arms, medicine, and other materials should the army request them.

172. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency⁵⁸

Washington, November 9, 1965.

SUBJECT

Covert Assistance to the Indonesian Armed Forces Leaders

1. The requests of the Indonesian military leaders for covert assistance in their struggle against the Partai Kommunis Indonesia (PKI), create a definite risk for us of deliberate assistance to a group which cannot be considered a legal government nor yet a regime of proven reliability or longevity. Early assessment of the political direction and longevity of this military leadership must be accomplished and, before any overt or readily visible assistance could be offered, its legal authority as well as its de facto control must be confirmed explicitly. As long as Sukarno fights a clever rear-guard delaying action politically, this is not likely soon to occur.

2. On the other hand, the Army leaders appear determined to seize the opportunity of the current confused circumstances to break the organizational back of the PKI, to eliminate it as an effective political force, and to prevent emergence of any crypto-Communist successor party. Recent intelligence from within the PKI party ranks clearly indicates that the PKI has begun to abandon hope of salvation through Sukarno's political legerdemain and has therefore decided it must, however ill-prepared and disorganized, fight back against the Army. Despite the overwhelming military superiority of the Armed Forces, the roots of Communism, of PKI membership, and of mass support nurtured for years by the constant flood of pro-Communist

⁵⁸ *FRUS*, Document 172. "Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency," Washington, November 9, 1965. Print pp. 361-363; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d172>.

media, are so deep in many areas that the Army is very likely to be faced with a lingering insurgency situation. Specifically, much of Central Java is in very poor shape. Hard intelligence on the area shows a sizeable potential for resistance, and PKI sources indicate plans for a redoubt area there. Considering the economic problems Army leaders will face as they gradually assume more and more authority under their own program for a non-Communist future, the law of rising expectations is against them; they cannot divert popular attention from economic ills as Sukarno has for many years, and the weight of several years neglect of economic problems and realities may fall upon them. Therefore if the PKI can build even small areas of resistance in Central Java and West Sumatra, they will have the ideal bases from which to mount campaigns of harassment, subversion and sabotage as the emergent non-Communist government attempts to grapple with responsibilities already close to overpowering.

3. In addition, the Army must find some formula for continuing its relationship with Sukarno in a way that will retain real control for themselves without necessitating a preemptive hostile move against Sukarno which might cause him to defy or deny them, and thus provoke divisions in their own ranks. In this insurgency situation therefore, the Army has no real guarantee of ultimate success; hazards to its survival are many and varied.

4. One of the Army's major needs will be civilian support. They have instituted psychological warfare mechanisms, control of media prerequisite to influencing public opinion and have harassed or halted Communist output. They have also mobilized certain bases of mass support, especially among Moslems. Unfortunately in these areas where the PKI has been able to initiate an insurgent campaign or local resistance, as in Central Java, the Army has not been able to protect those anti-Communist civilians who have fought the PKI and pro-Communist rebel

troops. If this situation continues, the populace in some of these areas may be intimidated from affording aid to the government forces regardless of their convictions, or they will be decimated.

5. True, the future policy of the Indonesian Army if it should succeed in controlling or eliminating Sukarno as an effective factor is not entirely clear. Two probabilities do however seem fairly significant about its future stance:

a. It will certainly be less oriented towards Asian Communist Bloc and will be decidedly Nationalist (though not without some Marxist and anti-Western concepts), perhaps with a strong neutralist flavor and hopefully with a concentration upon Indonesia's internal welfare.

b. Its future attitude regarding the West and the U.S. in particular will certainly be affected favorably by the degree to which the U.S. can now provide what limited aid the military leaders feel they require in their struggle to survive.

6. In short, we must be mindful that in the past years we have often wondered when and if the Indonesian Army would ever move to halt the erosion of non-Communist political strength in Indonesia. Now that it has seized upon the fortuitous opportunity afforded by the PKI's error in the 30 September affair and is asking for covert help as well as understanding to accomplish that very task, we should avoid being too cynical about its motives and its self-interest, or too hesitant about the propriety of extending such assistance provided we can do so covertly, in a manner which will not embarrass them or embarrass our government.

7. In reviewing the types of assistance which can be provided covertly, we believe that mechanisms exist or can be diverted or created to extend either covert credits for purchases or to deliver any of the types of the materiel requested to date in reasonable quantities. [1-1/2 lines of

source text not declassified] The same can be said of purchasers and transfer agents for such items as small arms, medicine and other items requested. [*1 line of source text not declassified*] wherein we can permit the Indonesians with whom we are dealing to make desired purchases and even indicate to them where items may be purchased without our being in on the direct transaction. Some degree of control can be exercised through these accounts to insure that the letters of credit cannot be misused for other than specified purposes. [*2-1/2 lines of source text not declassified*] which can be made available on very short notice. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] equipment would be more expensive and would require a little more time to deliver. It would however probably be more appropriate if equipment is to be handed by Indonesian Army officers to selected civilian auxiliaries.

8. We do not propose that the Indonesian Army be furnished such equipment at this time. This should be determined only after exhaustive conversations with Sukendro and his associates and, to the extent securely feasible, with Nasution's subordinates at Djakarta. In these we would probe for necessary details, e.g., precisely why they need additional arms, how they intend to use them, to whom they intend to give them, how they intend to control the release and registration of weapons and to control the groups who receive them, and many other questions.

9. If the Indonesian Army leadership continues to insist to us that they need this type of assistance to crush the PKI, and even if they furnish the above details, we would still be incurring political risk and the possible risk of loose handling of the arms in satisfying the request. These risks, however, must be weighed against the greater risks that failure to provide such aid which the Army claims it needs to win over the PKI might result in reduction of the Army's future political position and concomitant erosion of what may be a unique opportunity to

ensure a better future for U.S. interests in Indonesia. It is difficult to predict definitively that aid of this type is absolutely vital to that future. If the Army leaders justify their needs in detail, however, it is likely that at least will help ensure their success and provide the basis for future collaboration with the U.S. The means for covert implementation, either of transmittal of funds for necessary purchases or delivery of the requested items themselves in discreet fashion, are within our capabilities.

Document IV. As the US was preparing to aid the Indonesian army if asked, US officials in Indonesia were receiving more information about the scale and nature of the Killings. In mid-November, the US Consul in Medan, Theodore Heavner, reported staff conversations with civilian youth movement leaders whom he described as “bloodthirsty” and engaged in a “reign of terror” against anyone associated with the PKI. This report, though, sparked no change in US policy or criticism against the army or civilian anti-communist groups.

174. Telegram From the Consulate in Medan to the Department of State⁵⁹

Medan, Indonesia, November 16, 1965, 0115Z.

65. 1. Two officers of Pemuda Pantjasila separately told Consulate officers that their organization intends [to] kill every PKI member they can catch. November 14 Secretary [of] Medan City Pemuda Pantjasila said [the] policy [of] his organization is to ignore public calls for calm and order by Sukarno and other leaders. He stated Pemuda Pantjasila will not hand over captured PKI to authorities until they are dead or near death. He estimated it will take five years

⁵⁹ *FRUS*, Document 174. “Telegram from the Consulate in Medan to the Department of State,” Medan, Indonesia, November 16, 1965, 0115Z. Print pp. 366-368; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d174>.

to eradicate all PKI. Similar statements were made few days earlier by leader North Sumatra cultural arm of Pemuda Pantjasila.

2. *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* sources indicate that much indiscriminate killing is taking place (FNM-1516). *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* Consulate sources have connected some of this violence with declaration [of] “holy war” against PKI by local Moslem leaders. While press has carried relatively little on such violence, November 10 newspapers carried account of “revolutionary youth” cornering and beating to death PKI member North Sumatra legislature.

3. Press has also in recent days carried reports of five mutilated bodies discovered in Medan streets. PKI terrorists blamed. Commenting on these reports, above sources stated it is press policy to play up deaths of anti-Communists in order justify attacks on PKI members.

4. Same sources indicate strong hostility toward PNI and expressed determination [to] “clean up” that organization.

5. Secretary Medan Pemuda Pantjasila at one point said bitterly that only way solve Indonesia's problems is to shoot dead both Subandrio and Sukarno. His companion agreed. Other Pemuda Pantjasila leader said on separate occasion that if Sukarno refuses ban [on] PKI he [will] likely be overthrown. Comments by other Consulate sources suggest growing hostility toward Sukarno generated by his evident reluctance [to] ban PKI. Worth noting that Medan press to date has carried no word of Sukarno's recent attacks on U.S.

6. *Comment:*

(A.) Attitude [of] Pemuda Pantjasila leaders can only be described as bloodthirsty. While reports of wholesale killings may be greatly exaggerated, number and frequency such reports plus attitude of youth leaders suggests that something like real reign of terror against PKI is taking place. This terror is not discriminating very carefully between PKI leaders and ordinary PKI members with no ideological bond to the party. FNM-1515² suggests that army itself is officially adopting extreme measures against PKI with plans to put many thousands in concentration camps.

(B.) PNI was out in force on both November 9, when they presented statement to General Mokoginta, and on November 10 heroes day celebration. PNI avoided endorsement of demand for ban on PKI on both occasions. PNI remains large and apparently strong here and there is real possibility of violence between PNI and militant anti-Communist groups. (Pemuda Pantjasila and PNI youth clashed briefly on November 2, and Pemuda Pantjasila members reportedly carried knives and clubs to November 10 mass meeting in anticipation of clash with PNI.)

Heavner

Document V. With military leaders setting their plans in motion for the destruction of the PKI, officials on the U.S. National Security Council recommended the provision of communications equipment to Indonesian army officers. Though initially framed as necessary for the personal security of military commanders, the document goes on to describe the need for anti-Communist generals “to coordinate planning with trusted subordinates” in order to follow through with Nasution and Suharto’s “desires...to crush the PKI,” arguing that poor communications has imperiled the fight against the communists. The document concludes by recommending that communications equipment be provided, despite the risks of such assistance.

175. Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee⁶⁰

Washington, November 17, 1965.

Subject: Supply of Communications Equipment to Key Anti-Communist Indonesian Army Leaders

1. Summary

The purpose of this operational proposal is to assure that certain key anti-Communist Indonesian Army leaders will have adequate communications equipment for use in their fight against the Communist insurgents. Such equipment is in insufficient supply in Indonesia. This lack has, in consequence, imperiled the personal security of important anti-Communist Army leaders and has jeopardized their effectiveness in combating the Communists' efforts to eliminate non-Communist influence favorable to us in their Government.

This request for equipment by several leading Indonesian officials has the support of the U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia and is concurred in by the State Department's Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs.

There are some risks in the delivery of this equipment, but [*1 line of source text not declassified*] with proper precautions in making deliveries to the ultimate recipients will minimize such risks. The Indonesians cannot now ostensibly nor actually purchase this equipment in the U.S. without exception being made to U.S. export license controls, thereby implying U.S. Government collusion. Any exposure of this activity would embarrass not only the U.S. Government, but certain high Army officials in the Indonesian Government. Much care will be taken in this regard.

The cost of the requested equipment is approximately [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]. The supplies themselves come to [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] will be required to package and ship.

On 5 November 1965 the 303 Committee approved a similar request to send medical supplies to Indonesia.² This operation is proceeding on an urgent basis. It is hoped that the 303 Committee will approve the above program, which it is expected will proceed with the same urgency.

2. Problem

The immediate need is to provide on an urgent basis the present Indonesian Army leadership with secure voice and CW communications. Such equipment will provide a continuity of communications among the various Army units and their anti-Communist leaders and between certain of these leaders and U.S. elements. Given the uncertain loyalties within various Army commands and within Army communications proponents, existing communications equipment cannot be relied on to satisfy this need.

⁶⁰ FRUS, Document 175. "Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee," Washington, November 17, 1965. Print: pp. 368-371; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d175>.

3. Factors Bearing on the Problem

On 13 October 1965, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] were furnished from [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] stocks for use of the guards protecting Nasution and other key Army officers. The continuing insufficiency of this equipment in the hands of leading anti-Communist Army leaders has imperiled their own personal security and could make it difficult for them in a crisis to communicate securely with each other and/or with the U.S. A [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] communications expert surveyed the needs in late October in conjunction with the Djakarta country team. The Indonesian Army does not have funds to purchase the equipment but asks that it be given to them covertly and as rapidly as possible.

a. Origin of the Requirement

The various requirements for communications equipment came [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] from the U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, from the Minister of Defense Nasution's aide, and from General Sukendro.

b. Pertinent U.S. Policy Considerations

On 5 November 1965 the 303 Committee approved an operational proposal for Indonesia responding to a request for medical supplies.

c. Operational Objectives

A covert contact [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] must be maintained with certain Indonesian Army leaders who also require additional means of communicating securely among their own components in their struggle with the Communists. In the confused situation of conflicting loyalties in the Indonesian scene today, the security and personal safety of the leading anti-Communist leaders and safety of their families from intimidation and kidnapping, is of vital importance to their continuance of the struggle to prevent any return to the status quo before the 30 September coup. The possible assassination of Nasution, Suharto, Umar or a number of other generals would constitute serious setbacks for the U.S. Furthermore, in order to coordinate planning with trusted subordinates, they must have private communication facilities, frequently out of direct channels, in order to be really secure. There is equipment available within the Indonesian Army units for routine communications but recent events have shown clearly that not everyone, even in high ranks of the Indonesian Armed Forces, can be relied on to be loyal to, or even sympathetic with, the desires of Nasution and Suharto to crush the PKI, especially if in virtual defiance of Sukarno.

d. Equipment

[*6 paragraphs (13 lines of source text) not declassified*]

e. Risks Involved

Any publicity on this operational program would be highly embarrassing both to the U.S. Government and to the Indonesian Army leadership. Extreme care will be taken in all aspects of this operation, especially that pertaining to shipment of the requested equipment. [4 lines of source text not declassified] A covert delivery procedure has been devised to the ultimate Indonesian recipient.

f. Training

A qualified and senior Army communications officer, designated by Sukendro, would be provided [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] with special covert training at a safe site in use of the equipment. He would be required to bring with him the following necessary data: details of the several proposed net patterns, including locations of components and general concept of operations for the net; the frequencies between 45 and 52 megacycles which could be used in Indonesia (to afford maximum security from local monitoring) so that, based upon these specifications, our communicator would be able to tune the equipment to the desired frequencies and provide advice concerning a secure signal plan and communications procedures.

g. Funding

The overall cost is estimated at [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. The equipment itself will be approximately [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] for shipping and packaging.

4. Coordination

This operational proposal has been recommended by the U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia and has been concurred in by the State Department's Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs.

5. Recommendation

That the 303 Committee approve this program.

Document VI. Despite their knowledge of the atrocities being planned and perpetrated by civilian anti-communist groups, U.S. officials decided to aid these groups. U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Marshall Green in early December 1965 recommended financial assistance to Adam Malik to help the civilian Kap-Gestapu movement, whose “activities to date have been important factor in the army's program, and judging from results, I would say highly successful,” with the group

“still carrying burden of current repressive efforts targeted against PKI, particularly in Central Java.”

179. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State⁶¹

Djakarta, December 2, 1965.

1628. For Assist. Sec. Bundy from Amb Green. Ref: Deptel 708, Dec 1, 1965.

1. This is to confirm my earlier concurrence that we provide Malik with fifty million rupiahs requested by him for the activities of the Kap-Gestapu movement. [*1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified*]

2. The Kap-Gestapu activities to date have been important factor in the army's program, and judging from results, I would say highly successful. This army-inspired but civilian-staffed action group is still carrying burden of current repressive efforts targeted against PKI, particularly in Central Java.

A. Malik is not in charge of the Kap-Gestapu movement. He is, however, one of the key civilian advisers and promoters of the movement. There is no doubt whatsoever that Kap-Gestapu's activity is fully consonant with and coordinated by the army. We have had substantial intelligence reporting to support this.

B. I view this contribution as a means of enhancing Malik's position within the movement. As one of the key civilians, he is responsible for finding funds to finance its activities. Without our contribution Kap-Gestapu will of course continue. On the other hand, there is no doubt that they need money. The latter, despite inflation, is in tight supply, and the comparatively small sum proposed will help considerably.

⁶¹ *FRUS*, Document 179. “Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Djakarta, December 2, 1965. Print pp. 379-380; web: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d179>.

C. [1–1/2 lines of source text not declassified] Our willingness to assist him in this manner will, I think, represent in Malik's mind our endorsement of his present role in the army's anti-PKI efforts, and will promote good cooperating relations between him and army.

D. The chances of detection or subsequent revelation of our support in this instance are as minimal as any black bag operation can be. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

Green

Conclusion

After perpetrating politicide in the Killings with no adverse consequences, the Indonesian military and its New Order regime in subsequent years engaged in genocidal mass killing in East Timor and harsh and possibly genocidal counterinsurgency in West Papua (Thaler; Roosa 225), with continued US support, military aid, and investment (e.g. B. Simpson).⁶² That impunity and foreign approval for the Killings was followed by further mass killings suggests that perpetrators who face no consequences for engaging in mass killings may decide this is a useful tactic and will employ it repeatedly (Thaler). US backing of the New Order also set a dangerous precedent of support for right-wing authoritarian regimes engaged in mass killings, prioritizing ideology and realpolitik over human rights, with parallels to the Killings in Bangladesh (Mansur, this volume) and in Latin America (Dietrich; Der Ghougaissa; and Totten, all this volume). Finally, this study of the Killings suggests that the language of the Genocide Convention may be too narrow, and that in cases where political affiliations are considered by perpetrators as integral, unchangeable components of one's identity and a political group is targeted as such, this should also be considered genocide. This shift might provide opportunities to survivors of repression

⁶² See also Nevins, this volume.

during the Killings and descendants of victims for international legal redress for their suffering—suffering that has largely been swept under the rug of history.

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