

It used to be said that the twentieth century was that of the awakening of Asia; we can see now that it is more correct to say it is the century of the awakening of the colonial world. Although revolts against foreign domination that had occurred in Indonesia ever since the seventeenth century show that the sense of national pride was deeply embedded in the Indonesian people, it cannot be denied that the awakening outside Indonesia increased the desire for independence. Japan's defeat of Tsarist Russia in 1905, Mustafa Kemal's victory in Turkey in 1908, and the awakening of the Chinese people under the leadership of Dr Sun Yat Sen in 1911, all strengthened the conviction that a struggle for independence would be ultimately successful in Indonesia.

At the turn of the century a woman became the forerunner of modern nationalist Movement. Aristocratic Kartini fought for education for women and pleaded for a position of respect for her people. On 20 May 1908 a group of students at the doctors college in Jakarta, inspired by Dr Wahidin Sudirohusodo, set up an organization called Budi Utomo with the original aim of expanding education so as to raise the level of the people. In 1911, Haji Samanhudi set up an organization for the small business people around Solo in central Java, particularly to protect their batik businesses against the inroads being made by Chinese businessmen. This was the Sarekat Dagang Islam which gained a rapid following far outside Solo, and aroused fears in the colonial authorities, who banned its meetings.

The Islamic element in this organization then came to the fore and the name was changed to Sarekat Islam and, at its first congress in Surabaya, East Java, in

January 1913, its leader Haji Umar Said aminoto announced that it was not a political party and had no idea of opposing the colonial government. In 1915 all the little originations of Sarekat Islam were joined together into a single body with central organization, which held its first national congress in Banda in 1916, by which time its total membership had reached almost one million.

Meanwhile, a true political party had been set up late in 1916 by Dr E.F.E Douwes dekker, with a membership open to everyone live in the country who felt himself to be an Indonesian citizen. Aim of the Indische Partij, as it was called, was the independence the Indies, free from Dutch colonial rule. After only 5 months, the Dutch authorities banned thin party and exiled its leaders: Dr. E.F.E. Douwes Dekker to Kupang, Timor, Cipto Mangunkusumo to Banda and Suwardi Surjaningrat, who changed his name later on to Ki Hajar Dewantoro, the island of Bangka off the east coast of Sumatra. Later on, the three men wore allowed to remove themselves and their immediate to the Netherlands it self, from which they returned to Indonesia after the outbreak of World War I.

A number of other members of the banned Indische Partij join the association called “Insulindo”, which had been set up in 1907 for Dutch people residing in Indonesia. The infl of ex-members of the Indische Partij effectively changed its chara////////// and after Dr Douwes Dekker and his friends had returned to Indonesia it became a political party with ideals of independence. It ipened its doors to all peoples in //////////// and changed its name to National Indische Partij.

In the intervening years, big changes had also taken place // Sarekat Islam, which became infiltrated with communistic ideas.

Several Dutch socialists had come to the Netherlands Indies work, notably H. Sneevliet and A. Beers. In 1907 ... Sneevliet set up the I.S.D.V., the Indies Social Democratic Association as a // of the same organization in Holland, where in a while it split into two with its left wing supporting the Bolshevik // organization. This action was paralleled in Indonesia, where the left // of the I.S.D.V. affiliated with the Comintern in 1919 and in May 1920 changed its name into the Indies Communist Party. The right wing of the ISDV became the Indies Social Democratic Party. I.S.D.

Sarekat Islam became involved in all this because Semaun, // of the leaders of the central body of Sarekat Islam, continued to keep his seat there even when it became apparent that he sided // the communist element in the I.S.D.V., of which he was also a leader. In the IVth Congress of Sarekat Islam held in Surabaya in 1921, // was decided to establish party discipline, meaning that Sarekat Islam would not maintain the membership of someone who belonged // another political organization. In result of this decision many members left Sarekat Islam, which became a political party in 1923 // with the name of Partai Sarekat Islam (P.S.I).

The Communist Party paid much attention to the growing trade unions and in 1923 there were some strikes for better working // conditions commencing with a strike of railway workers led by Semaun. With a prohibition on the encouragement of strikes the famous article 161 of the Criminal Code the col //

government clamped down on the right to meet and gather and Semaun and his colleagues were sent into exile, but were later allowed to leave Indonesia. Nevertheless, the Communist Party continued to be active as a mass organization and in 1926 there was another series of strikes also mainly organized by the communists. But, due to uncertainty among the leadership, the strikes were badly organized and instead of all commencing on a single date, as was probably intended originally, they broke out sporadically over several months at different places in Java and Sumatra, and so were put down easily and often with great severity. A concentration camp was opened in a wild, malarial-infested country in "Dutch New Guinea" to accommodate the hundreds of exiles and the Communist Party was suppressed.

By this time a number of smaller organizations had appeared that had a political background. There were the various youth associations Jong Jawa, Jong Sumatera, Jong Selebs and so forth. In the Netherlands, among the Indonesian students sent to Dutch universities, there was an association since famous as "P.I" Perhimpunan Indonesia, and this had a clearly stated goal of Independence. It sent delegations to international conferences, such as that of the League Against Colonialism and Imperialism, but it avoided affiliation with the Comintern.

After the suppression of the Communist Party in Indonesia, the P.S.I. was the only large party, but in spite of its adherence to the principle of non-cooperation with the colonial government, did not entirely fulfil the need for a radical party. This situation led to the formation of the Perserikatan Nasional

Indonesia the Indonesian nationalist Association, which had been preceded by the General Study Club. These bodies were set up in Bandung by Sukarno, and in 1928 the Association became Party the P.N.I. The ideals of the P.N.I. were parallel to those of the students // the Netherlands, and it had a radical program of mass action, non-cooperation with the colonial authorities and it pioneered unity among all the non-cooperating political organizations, setting the federation “P.P.P.K.I” to that end.

Parallel to the growth of the Nationalist Movement, the colonial authorities had equipped themselves with various protect//////// regulations, notably those infringing freedom of the press and providing for the closing down of papers that were critical of events, other regulations banning strikes and limiting freedom of assembly, a system of internal passports and the infamous “Exorbi//////// Rechten” of the Governor-General allowing him to exile people with trial if he considered they endangered Dutch Interests.