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MANAGING DISAPPOINTMENT: REGIME SURVIVAL AND THE NORMALIZATION OF INDONESIA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS 1957-1958

Averio Nadhirianto

Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas
Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia.
E-mail: averio.nadhirianto@ui.ac.id

Abstract

This paper examines Indonesia's policy response during the outbreak of the rebellion of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) and the Universal People's Struggle Charter (Permesta), also referred to as PRRI/PERMESTA, and the involvement of the United States in it. By using the omnibalancing theory, this paper aims to investigate Indonesia's contradictory responses more deeply, which have been given special attention in previous studies. This study uses the historical study method which consists of four stages: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. This study shows that the normalization path taken by Indonesia after the US involvement in the PRRI/Permesta rebellion was a tactical strategy to ensure regime survival which was being hit by a crisis of legitimacy and threatened by state disintegration. Omnibalancing is carried out in two ways, i.e. internal balancing in the form of eradicating PRRI/Permesta elements and rearranging the political system to create Guided Democracy and external balancing in the form of normalizing relations with the United States after its intervention is publicly known. Sukarno's omnibalancing regime then succeeded in ensuring the survival of the government in power and annihilating the PRRI/Permesta while maintaining relations with the United States.

Keywords: Omnibalancing, PRRI/Permesta, Sukarno, United States

Abstrak

Tulisan ini menelusuri respons kebijakan Indonesia pada periode meletusnya pemberontakan Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI) dan Piagam Perjuangan Rakyat Semesta (Permesta), yang juga dirujuk dengan sebutan PRRI/PERMESTA, dan keterlibatan terang-terangan Amerika Serikat di dalamnya. Dengan menggunakan teori omnibalancing, tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki lebih dalam respons kontradiktif Indonesia tersebut, yang tidak diperhatikan secara khusus dalam penelitian-penelitian terdahulu. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan metode kajian sejarah yang terdiri atas empat tahapan, yaitu heuristik, kritik, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Studi ini kemudian menunjukkan bahwa pilihan normalisasi yang diambil Indonesia pasca keterlibatan Amerika Serikat dalam pemberontakan PRRI/Permesta semata merupakan strategi taktis yang diambil untuk menjamin keselamatan rezim yang sedang dilanda krisis legitimasi dan ancaman disintegrasi negara. *Omnibalancing* dijalankan dengan dua cara, yaitu *internal balancing* berupa pemberantasan anasir PRRI/Permesta dan penataan ulang sistem politik yang menciptakan Demokrasi Terpimpin dan *external balancing* yang berwujud normalisasi hubungan dengan Amerika Serikat pasca intervensinya diketahui. *Omnibalancing* rezim Sukarno kemudian berhasil memastikan bertahannya kekuasaan pemerintah dan integrasi negara dengan menumpas PRRI/Permesta sembari secara bersamaan mempertahankan hubungan dengan Amerika Serikat.

Kata kunci: Amerika Serikat, Omnibalancing, PRRI/Permesta, Sukarno

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Toward the end of the 1950s, the United States (US) government made a decision that sparked a civil war in Indonesia by providing covert assistance to the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) and the Universal People's Struggle Charter (Permesta) (Morrisson and Conboy, 1999). Within the Cold War's struggle between the Western and Eastern Blocs, this maneuver can be seen as one of the most crucial episodes of US foreign policy. The U.S. intended to change the political leadership in Indonesia or at least divide Southeast Asia's largest country into two parts, not unlike what had happened in the Korean Peninsula, Vietnam, and Germany (Wardaya, 2007).

There have been several studies that comprehensively studied this affair. Harvey (1984), for example, uses the PRRI/Permesta affair as a testament to show how internal conflict has always been a prominent feature of Indonesia's postcolonial development.¹ According to Harvey (1984), the US was compelled to intervene to prevent Indonesia from falling into the communist sphere. The policy was not pursued any further when the White House became convinced that it could rely on the Army's strength vis-a-vis the communists. In this context, Leirissa (1996) then argues that the intervention is morally acceptable because it is a big part of their global strategy to stop the progress of communism wherever it may appear.

Focusing on US foreign policy, Kahin and Kahin (1997) see US support for PRRI/Permesta as a subversive action. In this case, the US deliberately and calculatingly instigated the emergence of these two movements to topple Sukarno's regime, while at the same time carefully concealing it from the public. For Kahin and Kahin (1997), the relatively swift U-turn of the subversive maneuvers was ultimately carried out thanks to internal pressure from the policymakers themselves, who saw no further advantage in continuing the policy. Furthermore, according to Wardaya (2007), the change in US policy was in part caused by the emergence of the US Embassy in Jakarta to replace the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as the most important source of information for the White House on matters related to Indonesia.

Regarding Indonesia's foreign policy response to the US subversive actions, there are at least two studies that may be referred to. Agung (1973) describes Sukarno's profound disappointment with the US involvement in the PRRI/Permesta Affair. Examining the perceptions of Indonesian foreign policy-making elites in the 1970s, Weinstein (1976) shows how this disillusionment became one of the basis for forming the rather hostile and untrusting perceptions of these elites towards the superpowers, especially the US.

However, this deep disappointment only manifested itself in a dry statement of concern from the Indonesian government toward US actions. Furthermore, history later shows that Jakarta decided to put relations with Washington back to status quo ante. Sukarno took no drastic steps when he learned that US aid had turned out to be a concrete political reality. This action seemed to be in stark contrast to Indonesia's profile at that time as one of the main forces of the anti-colonialism/anti-imperialism front. During the 1955 Asian-African

¹ Harvey (1984) underscores how colonial legacies in the form of inherent structural imbalance between Java and the outer islands became one of the main underlying factors of the conflict. In this case, the PRRI/Permesta pitted the politically dominant but economically weak Java against the latter's more established economy yet possesses relatively little political strength vis-a-vis the central government.

Conference in Bandung, President Sukarno himself proudly proclaimed anti-colonialism/anti-imperialism solidarity between Asian and African countries, he even explicitly criticized Western imperialism (Yeremia 2020).

1.2. Research Question

This paper aims to inquire into Indonesia's contradictory responses, which have yet to be investigated in detail in previous studies. US support for the PRRI/Permesta is the biggest clandestine foreign policy maneuver that the superpower has ever carried out in a third-world country since World War II ended (Kahin and Kahin 1997). This action involved the CIA and the US Armed Forces and claimed more lives than similar interventions, such as the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion in Cuba (Wardaya 2007). In this context, Indonesia's attitude towards the US can be said to be a far cry from her foreign policy commitments, especially considering Indonesia's firm position which at that time was also facing the persistence of the Netherlands – a Western power that was also supported by the US – to maintain its claim of sovereignty in negotiations regarding the West Irian issue.

1.3. Purpose and Objective

This study aims to find that, in light of the omnibalancing concept, Sukarno was far more concerned with the safety of the regime (*regime survival*), rather than any political commitment, including among others the ideas of anti-colonialism/anti-imperialism which he has often echoed since he began to be active during the movement. In this case, Sukarno chose the option of *appeasement* with the US because this action made a real contribution to the efforts to maintain and consolidate its political power in the country, especially after the Army proved to be able to quickly reduce the PRRI/Permesta's combat power. This step was also chosen amidst the risk of perceptions of shifting Indonesia into a country that tends to be pro-Western, which in the end will make Indonesia's credentials as a Non-Aligned country and leader of Asian-African solidarity fade. For example, at that time Indonesia also dared to take a tough stance on the issue of ethnic Chinese who were still considered a potential subversive threat because of their suspected-ties to communist China. This issue in the late 1950s often caused tension in Indonesia-China relations (Mozingo, 1976). Of course, it is very possible to expect that Indonesia will be able to act the same way to all the threats of subversion, both coming from the West and East blocs.

These findings strengthen the previous findings regarding Indonesia's pragmatism in implementing foreign policy and how internal politics significantly color Indonesia's foreign policy choices. Specifically, these findings also show how considerations of political pragmatism from individual leaders became a determining factor in the implementation of foreign policies of third-world countries at that time, amidst the intense rivalry of the two poles of ideological power between the US and the Soviet Union (USSR). In light of the omnibalancing concept, it is this individual political pragmatism that makes third-world countries not easily seen as actors who have no agency or mere pawns. Instead of being actors who can be steered easily, they can take advantage of the US-USSR rivalry. The political pragmatism of individual leaders encourages a regime to carry out careful political calculations to take sides (*alignment*) to reach the alpha and omega of its politics, namely the safety of the regime itself (Miller and Toritsyn, 2005).

This paper consists of five parts. After this introductory section, the second section will present the omnibalancing concept which guided the analysis of the research, on which this

paper is based. The third part will describe the research method used, while the fourth part will present the analysis of primary and secondary data. The concluding section will summarize the research findings and their implications for discussions of contemporary Indonesian foreign policy.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Omnibalancing and Safety Regime Concept

This study uses the omnibalancing theory originating from Steven David's writings which examine the alignment behavior of Third World countries during the Cold War period (Steven, 1991). In principle, omnibalancing specifically wants to explain the partiality of Third World countries in the bipolar international landscape that took place during the Cold War (Nourzhanov, 2012). Omnibalancing itself is an extension of the theory of the balance of power, which in itself is a subsection of Realism. Omnibalancing departs from the basic assumption that the leaders of the Third World regimes, *not* countries per se, will take a balancing stance to defend against threats. What also differentiates omnibalancing from other realist approaches is the recognition of the importance of the country's domestic landscape in influencing foreign policy decision-making (Steven, 1991; Nourzhanov, 2012). Meanwhile, all variants of realists to neoclassical realists still treat the international landscape as an ontologically superior area and see what happens in the domestic sphere as merely a reaction to structural stimuli at the international level.

In addition, while the theory of the balance of power sees the main threat to the state as coming from outside, omnibalancing emphasizes that the "main opponent" of the regime's leadership comes from within the country (Steven, 1991). Furthermore, David places the country's leaders rather than the country itself as a level of analysis. So, David assumes that each regime generally has a big goal, namely wanting to perpetuate its power in any way (Steven, 1991; Welz, 2022). When the main threat to the regime comes from within the country, the regime leader will side with the "secondary opponent", namely foreign countries/actors who are friends of the domestic opposition and also threaten the regime for various reasons such as ideology or power maximization (Steven, 1991).

Appeasing this foreign actor allows the regime's leadership to fully focus on dealing with major internal threats, thus making it a surefire strategy to maintain power (Welz, 2022). In the setting of the Cold War, this assumption was especially relevant in a situation where the US and the Soviet Union often explicitly removed leaders from Third World countries they did not like (Welz, 2022). Omnibalancing works at two levels, namely internally against the main domestic opposition and externally, namely to reduce the threat of foreign countries by conducting appeasements. Omnibalancing thus relies on a situation where the legitimacy of the governing regime is weakening and the stakes for domestic politics are very high. This paper sees that both of these conditions were met when looking at the state of Indonesia ahead of the outbreak of the PRRI/Permesta incident.

Omnibalancing consists of two levels, namely internal and external. This study identifies internal and external balancing strategies carried out by the Sukarno regime such as appeasements; cooptation; repression to pragmatism to maintain power. Based on the analytical framework that has been prepared and examines how the emergence of PRRI/Permesta and evidence of US involvement will not necessarily trigger a balancing or bandwagoning response that will see Indonesia openly asking for help from other powers or

simply joining the US in eradicating the rebels. Seeing Indonesia's position at that time, Indonesia did not have a balancing option capable of ensuring regime safety effectively nor did Indonesia take other steps such as hedging, strategic non-cooperation, hiding, or wedging. The hypothesis to be tested is that, given the situation and conditions at that time, what might have happened was that Indonesia took omnibalancing steps by trying to maintain the status quo ante of good relations before US interference was discovered and at the same time concentrating its energy on eliminating the PRRI/Permesta group. An omnibalancing attitude is a tactical choice that in its development will allow Indonesia to continue building strengths which will make it have a more suitable balancing option on other occasions.

3. Research Methods

This study uses the historical study method which consists of four stages, namely heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. In the heuristic stage, the author collects various relevant materials according to the topic being researched. In addition, the author also obtains valuable materials in the form of theses and dissertations that have direct or indirect links to the themes that have been digitized at the Australian National University, Cornell University, Leiden University, Ohio State University, and others.

Afterward, historical criticism will be carried out on these sources in the form of sorting out the materials that can be used as references and those that must be put aside. Furthermore, the material is subject to internal and external criticism. Internal in the form of measuring the relevance between sources and research topics. External criticism is used to analyze the verbal condition of historical sources, such as checking the authenticity of materials. At the interpretation stage, the writer does clear reading, interpreting, and giving meaning to the existing data and materials using a conceptual basis. Finally, the historiography stage becomes the final part of historical studies in the form of writing history by describing it in a descriptive-analytical manner.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. The Context of the Need for Omnibalance of the Sukarno Regime: Domestic and Regional Instability

Indonesia entered the 1950s as one of only two Southeast Asian countries—besides Vietnam—that succeeded in gaining independence through revolutionary struggle instead of orderly decolonization as occurred in other Southeast Asian countries (Bastin & Benda, 1968; Sidel, 2021). The period since the formal recognition of the Netherlands in 1949 placed Indonesia in a transitional period towards a postcolonial state which was starting the process of building a nation-state (*state-building*) and searching for identity to fulfill the aspirations of independence (Nordholt, 2011). This transitional character is marked by the enactment of the 1950 Constitution as a provisional constitution until a new constitution is enacted after the Constituent Assembly is formed. However, the first 8 years of the Liberal Democracy experiment that was put into effect never brought the desired political stability. From 1949 to 1957, there were 6 cabinets that alternated in power while demonstrating the fragility of the political structure (Lev, 1966; Caldwell & Utrecht, 2011).

This instability was exacerbated by the separatist rebellions i.e. Darul Islam (DI) or the Islamic State of Indonesia (NII) and the Republic of South Maluku (RMS) which had been going on since the revolution (Formichi, 2012; Weis, 2018). The situation of the armed forces which experienced disunity in the early 1950s did not make things any better because it significantly affected the capability of the government in carrying out one of its most important tasks, namely maintaining the territorial integrity of the country (Feith, 1962; Smail, 1968; McVey, 1972; Sundhaussen, 1986). The 1955 election, which was one of the last hopes and was predicted to offer a panacea for political deadlock, was also unable to provide a stable cabinet and even caused concern among some, especially the armed forces and Islamic parties, about the rise of the PKI (Sundhaussen, 1986; Caldwell & Utrecht, 2011). This concern was later proven when the party won local elections in Java in 1957 (Hindley, 1964).

This political instability cannot be separated from the aspect of the economic downturn which does not appear to show significant improvement after independence. The state budget deficit has continued to worsen since 1952 and only experienced improvement during the Korean War (Soebadio, 2002). The inheritance clause of the Dutch East Indies debt payments to the Netherlands, which was so large and borne by Indonesia since the KMB, severely limited the economic initiatives that the government wanted to carry out (Feith, 1962; Fakhri, 2020). The domestic economy is also still dominated by Dutch companies whose economic and financial rights were guaranteed by the KMB (Kanumoyoso, 2001; Madinier, 2015; Fakhri, 2020).

This dominance is compounded by the economic structural imbalances that occur between Java and the outer islands which make Java an import center, whereas other islands such as Sumatra and Sulawesi were the republic's crucial export pillars (Harvey, 1984; Lindblad, 2009). Indonesia itself only had a central bank after nationalizing De Javasche Bank in 1953, before that practically fiscal policy was still in the hands of the Dutch economists who were there (Kanumoyoso, 2001; Lindblad, 2009). Thus, decolonization in the political field was not necessarily followed by economic decolonization and the dream of post-independence prosperity (Wie, 2009; Marks, 2009).

4.2. Southeast Asia 1950s: Cold War Battlefield and Communist Insurgency

Decolonization in Southeast Asia after World War II turned the region into an arena of fierce struggle between the West and East Blocks (Yahuda, 1996). The bipolar situation of the international system makes the two bloc leaders always assume that each of them has bad intentions in every form of interaction. The US would never believe that the Soviet Union was in good faith in its actions and vice versa. Entering the 1950s, the decolonization process itself was also not finished because it left areas that were still under colonial rule, such as Singapore, Brunei to Sarawak. The outbreak of the First Indochina and Korean Wars, plus the communist insurgency in Malaya were some of the events that marked this struggle (Yahuda, 1996).

For Indonesia, the manifestation of the Cold War in Southeast Asia, which was so close, seemed to materialize through the formation of the defense pact between Australia, New Zealand, the United States Security Treaty (ANZUS) in 1951, and the Southeast Treaty Organization (SEATO) on September 8, 1954 in Manila (McIntyre, 1994; Fenton, 2012). Indonesia, which received an invitation to become a member of the latter organization, refused because it did not want an open alliance with any bloc (Wardaya, 2007). The United States, as the leader of the Western Bloc, has indeed appeared to be adept at filling the

domination vacuum left by the Netherlands and France in Southeast Asia. The formation of ANZUS and SEATO shows the domination of US interests as the leader of the Western Bloc over the interests of Southeast Asian countries.

In SEATO, for example, there are only two Southeast Asian countries that are full members i.e. the Philippines and Thailand. The Philippines became a member because the post-independence security agreement from US colonization left her with little choice but to join the blueprint for the Southeast Asian regional security architecture under US leadership. The rest of SEATO members are close allies of the Western Bloc which instead dominates membership such as Pakistan, New Zealand, France, and Australia (Wardaya, 2007).

Therefore, ANZUS and SEATO hardly possess an Asian character and rather represent the concrete interests of the US and the Western Bloc. At that time, Secretary of State Dulles himself saw SEATO as an essential element of US foreign policy in Asia (Fenton, 2012). Within the context of assistance to PRRI/Permesta, US domination can also be seen from foreign countries helping the rebels. All foreign countries that sympathize with and support PRRI/Permesta elements are close US allies in the Southeast Asian region and some of them are SEATO members i.e. Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines (Fenton, 2012; Madinier, 2015). On the other hand, Soviet and Chinese maneuvers were still limited to North Vietnam (Bastin & Benda, 1968). However, the Chinese Communist Party's victory in the Civil War in 1949 provided crucial lessons for the West so that similar experiences would not be repeated in Southeast Asia. The insurgency of Peranakan groups in post-war Malaya also became a microcosm of the struggles of the two blocs in Southeast Asia.

4.3. Internal and External Balancing of the Sukarno Regime

4.3.1. *Killing PRRI/Permesta Until 'Konsepsi': Internal Balancing*

During his reign, Sukarno was seen as a capable leader figure in presenting himself as a unifying figure for the nation and facing domestic political opponents and pressures. This history can be seen from its success in maintaining the unity of the republic in critical situations such as the September-October 1948 Madiun Incident to the 17 October 1952 Incident when the Army's combat cannons were directed at the State Palace in Jakarta. In dealing with domestic opposition, Sukarno used a variety of strategies ranging from dialogue, and co-optation to open violence or repression as happened in the Madiun Affair.

In dealing with the crisis caused by the PRRI/Permesta, Sukarno used these strategies alternately which made him successful in maintaining power and legitimacy. The president and the regime initially attempted to resolve the conflict by sending a special mission consisting of highly respected Minahasa figures such as G.A. Maengkom, F.J. Inkiriwang, Lambertus Nicodemus Palar to Arnold Mononutu. The government also took the initiative to hold a National Conference and Development Conference from September to November 1957 and invited PRRI/Permesta people to Jakarta to seek a solution to their demands (Harvey, 1984; Leirissa, 1997). Unfortunately, when the deliberations were still not finished, an attempt on Sukarno's life occurred, known as the Cikini Affair, which practically closed almost all avenues for negotiations with the rebels that were still ongoing (Sediono, 1958).

While carrying out the strategy of dialogue and co-optation, the Sukarno regime also attempted to split the strength of PRRI/Permesta elements by assigning important figures such as Alex Kawilarang and Joop Warouw to become defense attaches abroad. Kawilarang was sent to Washington while Warouw was stationed in Beijing (Harvey, 1984; Leirissa,

1997). In addition, the government also attracted Andi Pangerang Petta Rani, a Gowa aristocrat who was one of the signatories of the Permesta charter, to Jakarta to become a member of the Supreme Advisory Council (DPA). This action was intended to distance them from the center of rebel power in Sulawesi (Harvey, 1984). However, later these efforts were not very successful because both Kawilarang and Warouw decided to fulfill the mandate given by the PRRI cabinet as commander of the armed forces and minister of public works, respectively secretly returned to Minahasa (Sulaiman, 2008; Liwe, 2010).

The Sukarno regime together with the Army also carried out intensive military operations as well as an economic blockade by sending regiments from Java loyal to the government to seize PRRI/Permesta occupied territories. General Nasution as commander of the armed forces carried out various military operations and economic blockades from 1957 to 1959 in PRRI/Permesta power centers such as the bombing of Padang and Manado to quell the power of the rebels who were directly ordered by Sukarno (Fischer, 1959; Agung, 1973; Liwe, 2010). The economic blockade was carried out by cutting off the Padang sea export route and closing the Sumatran air space from foreign aircraft (Poulgrain, 2014). The food supply to the Central Sumatra region was also blocked so that the population was threatened with starvation. PRRI/Permesta's strength in Sumatra itself had effectively been exhausted after the fall of Bukittinggi which was the capital of the rebels on 4 May 1958 (Harvey, 1984; Mrázek, 1996).

Furthermore, Sukarno's drastic internal balancing efforts to save his power which then created his own Guided Democracy system can be divided into three stages (Mintz, 1965). Sukarno began by declaring "We all made a mistake in November 1945 when we allowed the formation of parties", and then "Let's bury all parties!" in his speech before youth organizations on 28 October 1956 (Sukarno, 1956). In essence, Sukarno, as well as especially the army, condemned the parliamentary system which, in his opinion, did not suit the conditions of Indonesian society (Lev, 1966; Caldwell & Utrecht, 2011). Sukarno highlighted the succession of cabinets and wanted to form his own cabinet which would no longer be responsible to parliament but to himself as president.

This was followed by a "conception" offer, a kind of "Indonesian precise prescription" from Sukarno against all the national chaos caused by "multiparty demons" in his speech on 21 February 1957. It was here that Sukarno explained the ideological foundations and justification of Guided Democracy. The PKI as Sukarno's closest ally immediately issued a statement supporting the Conception. Ali Sastroamidjojo finally returned the mandate (again) to Sukarno on March 14, 1957, at the same time marking the twilight of Parliamentary Democracy (Feith, 1962; Caldwell & Utrecht, 2011). The country was declared in a state of danger and martial law (*staat van oorlog en beleg*) was enforced that very day (Lev, 1966). The imposition of a state of war made power centralized in the hands of Sukarno and the Army as state instruments tasked with ending all rebellions and controlling the national political situation (Sundhaussen, 1986; Said, 2006). Sukarno then formed the National Advisory Council on 11 July 1957 and an extra-parliamentary cabinet that was not responsible to parliament with Ir. Djuanda as prime minister (Lev, 1966; Fakhri, 2020).

The second step was taken in February 1959 by proposing that Indonesia return to the presidential 1945 Constitution. The Constituent Assembly which was formed from the 1955 elections until its last session on June 2, 1959, failed to reach an agreement based on the state: whether Pancasila or Islam, and also on drafting a new constitution. This created a very serious constitutional bottleneck and only added to the chaos within the government's elite

circle (Maarif, 1996). Through the July 5 Decree, Sukarno officially announced the return of the 1945 Constitution and dissolved the Constituent Assembly. A week later he announced a new cabinet which was formally composed of non-party people. Then he elaborated his Conception further by announcing the Political Manifesto (Manipol) in a speech on 17 August 1959 (Lev, 1966; Legge, 1972; Noer, 1987). This Manipol was then developed further by adding five important ideas which according to him were contained in the Indonesian revolution, namely: the 1945 Constitution; Indonesian-style socialism; Guided democracy; Guided Economy; and Indonesian personality. Sukarno took the first letter of each of these ideas and turned USDEK and Manipol into new teachings whose formulations were used as guidelines for all political actors until 1965 (Noer, 1987).

Sukarno completed his final step by dissolving the parliament resulting from the 1955 election and replacing it with a parliament whose members were elected by themselves, which was named the People's Representative Council for Gotong Royong (DPRGR). The DPRGR's position is no longer as strong as before, important rights that should have such as the right to ask questions, interpellation, and inquiry are abolished. This makes it a kind of body whose only function is to carry out various presidential decrees. Such was the attempt by the Sukarno regime to design a domestic political structure that could strengthen its power in the face of domestic opposition.

4.3.2. *Normalization of Relations with the US: External Balancing*

Even though until now the US government has never officially acknowledged its involvement, their assistance was already known to a handful of Indonesian political elites before the news became widely known to the public. Several military officers and officials provided information that they had witnessed evidence of this involvement in the form of delivery of weapons supplies by CIA agents to the rebels (Weinstein, 1969; Novotny, 2010). To deal with this threat, the Sukarno regime used a strategy of appeasement, pragmatism, and control of information about this involvement so that it would not circulate widely in society.

This explains how at that time Djuanda and Sukarno delayed the announcement of the shooting and crash of Allen Pope's plane on 18 May 1958. The announcement was only made on 27 May, 9 days after Pope was arrested through a press conference (Soebadio, 2002). The commander of the East Indonesian army, Lt. Col. Herman Pieters, who directly took Pope to Jakarta, was also prevented from providing further information about the arrest by Djuanda and Nasution so as not to cause further commotion (Kahin & Kahin, 1997). This act of delay was made because the Sukarno regime at that time seemed aware that US political directions were moving towards siding with the government rather than the rebels. Djuanda had even expressed his hope that no more US citizens would be caught if any of them lived in Minahasa or other PRRI/Permesta jurisdictions (Kahin & Kahin, 1997).

The Sukarno regime tried to quell the people's anger by issuing official statements of victims that were far different from reality. Pope was also hidden from the reach of the media and placed in the Kaliurang area and was treated properly and received proper care. Finally, the government postponed Pope's trial for 19 months after the incident and the death sentence handed down was never carried out because Pope returned to his country. Ambassador Howard Jones himself greatly appreciated the government's calm actions in dealing with the Pope case and US involvement in general (Kahin & Kahin, 1997).

The Sukarno administration seemed to want to prevent US intervention in Indonesia from becoming overt and to keep relations from deteriorating further. On March 8, 1958,

Nasution gave an evacuation order for Caltex employees and their families in Pekanbaru which was being controlled by PRRI/Permesta elements because the day before Djuanda was very worried after receiving a request from US attorney Sterling Cottrell for the entry of US troops to protect the oil fields there. Djuanda was very worried that the destruction of the oil fields and the threat to the safety of Caltex employees would be used as a pretext for open US intervention which would give the rebels excellent momentum to push back against government forces. At that time the destroyers from the US 7th Fleet had indeed anchored in Singapore and were only waiting for an intervention order if the Air Force were to scorch the Caltex fields along the coast of East Sumatra. Evacuation was finally carried out and open intervention was successfully avoided (Sulaiman, 2008).

Pragmatic logic and appeasement itself appear from a military aspect. Nasution approached the US and tried to divert his support for the rebels by convincing them that the TNI was a reliable anti-communist force (Sulaiman, 2008). It is common knowledge that despite the fiery rhetoric of the Sukarno regime, in every procurement of defense equipment, Indonesia preferred US weapons over any other country. The Sukarno regime relied heavily on the US to educate future leaders of its armed forces. Education in the US is considered to provide prestige for TNI officers. This preference for the US military is most visible in the officer education curriculum which imitates almost all the teaching materials provided by the US military (Evans, 1989). Even when the rebellion was raging at its highest point, Nasution still secretly tried to buy weapons from the US on April 18, 1958, although he was later refused.

Nasution's switch to buying weapons from Eastern bloc countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia was forced after the refusal (Evans, 1989). Nasution finally warned that communist influence would only continue to increase if the status quo was maintained. This view was agreed upon by some of the top officials of the US State Department and Ambassador Allison (Hutton, 2019). Nasution immediately restarted the program of sending TNI officers to study in the US after reconciliation began in late 1958 when the rebellion was still intensive (Evans, 1989). At this point, the choice of appeasement can be understood as an attempt by the Sukarno regime not to lose partners in military cooperation who are seen as very important in efforts to increase the capabilities of the TNI.

In a discussion with Ganis Harsono one of his foreign policy advisers, Sukarno described his regime's external balancing maneuvers towards the US and in general how to place oneself in the context of the Cold War by relying on the Dutch saying 'van een nood een deugd maken' or more or fewer means trying to take advantage in every critical situation (Harsono, 1985). By making an appeasement to the US, Sukarno also seemed to have avoided the option of being forced to side with the Eastern Bloc. When China provided diplomatic support and credit assistance of US \$ 16 million in the form of rice and textiles, it even offered to send voluntary troops to quell the rebels, it did not necessarily make Indonesia shift its side to the Eastern bloc and away from the US (Mozing, 1976).

In the end, Sukarno's choice of appeasement and pragmatism can also be explained by the fact that the political-economic risks and costs that would arise if Indonesia chose an open confrontation with the US could even eliminate its power. With the deteriorating economic situation and government authority, Sukarno's fate may end like the leaders of other Third World countries who have been removed by the US and become human exiles such as Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala and Mohammad Mosaddegh in Iran. Therefore, Sukarno's move can be understood as an effort to maintain power as the aim of the omnibalancing maneuver.

5. Conclusion

This study uses the omnibalancing theory which focuses on the regime as an object of analysis to investigate Indonesia's policy response to US intervention in the PRRI/Permesta incident. This study shows that there is no concrete evidence that US involvement in the PRRI/Permesta rebellion resulted in a policy response in the form of partisanship (*alignment*) of the Indonesian government regime which is closer to the Eastern bloc countries or openly away from the US. Omnibalancing invites us to change the level of analysis from the state to the regime or state leaders. So, the omnibalancing carried out by the regime of one country will not necessarily be in line with the interests of the country it leads. In the Indonesian context, omnibalancing was a tactical response by the Sukarno regime to deal with US threats when Indonesia did not yet have a stronger balancing option. In addition, the Sukarno regime has two distinctive characteristics of third-world countries as Steven's postulates, namely the weak legitimacy of the regime and the high level of contestation in the domestic political landscape. For Indonesia, the so-called "Cold War" was by no means "cold" because Indonesia was forced to be actively involved in the bloody military contact that resulted from the uprising and only resulted in further suffering and economic destruction.

According to Baskara Wardaya, the biggest consequence which later had a very long impact from US assistance to the PRRI/Permesta was the total disappearance of a modicum of trust that Sukarno and Indonesian political elites might have had left in the U.S. (Wardaya, 2007). Meanwhile, Daniel Novotny and Helen-Louise Hunter consider that Sukarno's suspicions of the Indonesian elite since the 1958 intervention still persist today (Hunter, 2007; Novotny, 2010). It was this effort to restore trust that was carried out by his successor, John Kennedy, when he supported Indonesia's campaign for the liberation of West Irian which ended in a diplomatic victory and the inclusion of the area as an integral part of Indonesia until now. This "reconciliation" effort also departed from Cold War considerations which made any research on US foreign policy in the period between the end of World War II and the collapse of the Soviet Union must place it in that context.

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