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A CHOICE OF NATIONALITY: OVERSEAS CHINESE IN INDONESIA

Problems and Issues Raised by the Sino-Indonesian "Agreement on the Issue of Dual Nationality"

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Djakarta
(Mailed from Singapore)
May 28, 1955

Thousands of flags fluttered in Bandung on the opening day of the Asian-African Conference. But the main conference buildings were the only spots where the flags of all 29 participating nations were on display. Almost everywhere else throughout the city, only two were visible: Indonesia's red-and-white emblem and the five-star flag of Communist China.

In Bandung, as in so many cities in Southeast Asia, the majority of shopkeepers and businessmen are Overseas Chinese, many of whom still have strong bonds of loyalty to their homeland. When Chou En-lai arrived, thousands of them streamed out toward the airport to wave and cheer.

The position of these Overseas Chinese has long been a source of friction in Southeast Asia, and since the establishment of a Communist regime in China, many of the newly-independent countries of Asia have become increasingly conscious of the "Overseas Chinese problem." Nehru and U Nu both discussed it with Chou En-lai in their meetings last year, and Indonesia had been negotiating with Communist China since 1953 to reach an agreement on one important aspect of the problem, the question of dual nationality.

Chou En-lai chose the occasion of the Bandung Conference to conclude an agreement with Indonesia, as a gesture of good will, and on April 22 the Sino-Indonesian "Agreement on the Issue of Dual Nationality" was signed.

This treaty has been praised as a major step toward "solving" the Overseas Chinese problem in Indonesia and as a precedent for similar agreements between Communist China and other Southeast Asian countries. During the past month in Indonesia I have discovered, however, that few nongovernment people in

Indonesia, whether Chinese or Indonesian, would accept such claims. Actually, the treaty will not go into effect until it is ratified by both sides, and at present there is every indication that it will encounter stiff opposition in the Indonesian parliament,

Even if the treaty is ratified, it is unlikely either "to solve" Indonesia's Overseas Chinese problem or to set a pattern which will be followed by many other Southeast Asian countries, Instead, the treaty may create new uncertainties and difficulties.

One thing is certain at this point, however; the signing of the treaty has brought to the fore many of the issues and dilemmas which the Overseas Chinese problem poses in Indonesia. As a result the next two years will be an important period in the history of Indonesia's Overseas Chinese. During this period, it will become increasingly difficult for both the Chinese and Indonesians to avoid facing the inconsistencies and contradictions in their attitudes and policies.

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THE CHINESE COMMUNITY IN INDONESIA--BACKGROUND

Although small Chinese enclaves have existed in Southeast Asia for many centuries, large-scale immigration to the area which is now Indonesia really began in the 17th century. The establishment of Dutch control over the region in the early 1600's (the Dutch East India Company was founded in 1602) and the disorders within China accompanying the downfall of the Ming Dynasty (1644) were among the factors stimulating a flow of Chinese from coastal provinces to the rich islands of "Nanyang," the "South Seas." The Dutch had mixed feelings about these Chinese immigrants and sometimes treated them with harshness and contempt, but the usefulness of the enterprising Chinese merchant as a middleman between European colonialist and native resident eventually outweighed all other factors, and Chinese immigration was encouraged.

During the first years of the Dutch period, almost all of the Chinese who cane to the Indies were Rokkiens, from the area near Amoy in Fukien Province; Hokkiens predominated in the steady flow of immigration for two centuries, and they still form a majority of the Chinese population in Indonesia, especially on Java and Madura. During the 19th century, however, Chinese immigration diversified: Hakkas, who had begun coming to Borneo in significant numbers in the 18th century, spread to many areas such as Sumatra, Bangka, and Billiton, as well as Java; they became the second largest group among the Overseas Chinese in the Indies. Other groups followed: Kwangfus (Cantonese), Teochius (from Swatow), and Hailams (Hainanese).

The flow of Chinese to the Dutch East Indies accelerated in the early years of this century. Between 1900 and 1930, it averaged over 28,000 a year, and during the last ten years of that period the rate was over 40,000 annually, These immigrants spread all over the Indies, and although the majority of them went into trade and commerce, large numbers were to be found in other occupations: gold and tin mining on Borneo, Bangka, and Billiton; some farming on those islands and in isolated. districts on Java; estate labor on rubber and tobacco plantations on Sumatra (although recently Chinege have been largely displaced by Javanese on these plantations); and small industries throughout the region,

The wide distribution and economic diversification of the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies have made them less subject to broad generalizations than are Overseas Chinese, in some other areas, but nonetheless it is accurate to say that the majority of them became urban and commercial. They assumed the role of middlemen (although not necessarily that of a "middle class" in the Western sense). From the start--even before the arrival of the Dutch--they fitted into traditional Indonesian society between the old native aristocracy and the peasants. Later, they became the principal economic intermediaries between Dutch big businessmen and colonial rulers and the mass of the Indonesian population. The Chinese eventually predominated among all shopkeepers and traders* and controlled much of the. import and export trade with other Asian countries. In rural areas they took over retailing, agricultural credit operations, and crop purchasing. In the cities they became the skilled workers and manufacturers, as well as businessmen,

Reliable, up-to-date statistics on the Chinese in Indonesia are not available, but considerable information about the Chinese community under Dutch rule a quarter of a century ago can be obtained from the 1930 Dutch East Indies census. (Even the 1930 census was not complete, but it provides the latest statistical data available,)

In the 1930 census 1,233,000 ethnic Chinese were enumerated throughout the Dutch East Indies. Close to half of these (582,000) were on Java, while the rest (651,000) were scattered among the other islands. The ratio of men to women was roughly three to two (749,000 to 484,000); this ratio was even more disproportionate among recent immigrants, only a few of whom could afford to bring wives. Hokkiens accounted for 45 per cent. (553,166) of all Chinese, Hakkas for 16 per cent (200,239), Cantonese for 11 per cent (135,643), and Teochius for 7 per cent (87,582), while the remainder represented minor groups or were of unknown origin. The Hokkiens were the group with the strongest roots in the Indies; over three-fourths of them in 1930 had been born in the Indies, while by contrast two-fifths of the Hakkas, over two-thirds of the Cantonese, and almost two-thirds of the Teochius had been born elsewhere, which with few exceptions meant China. Among the Chinese as a whole, roughly two-thirds (over 750,000) had been born in the Indies, and it was estimated that two-thirds of these had fathers who were also born there.

In 1930, of the total Chinese working force in the Dutch East Indies (469,935), almost 37 per cent (171,979) were merchants and 20 per cent (93,988) were engaged in industry; among the remainder, there were roughly 10 per cent each in agriculture and gardening (50,440) and mining and petroleum (45,596), while 8 per cent (35,624) worked on large estates.

From 1930 until the outbreak of World War II, Chinese immigration continued at a high and increasing rate. During the seven-year period 1932-1938, for example, 118,000 Chinese immigrants arrived in the Dutch East Indies, and whereas the total in 1932 was only 12,000, in 1937 and 1938 it amounted to 31,000 and 20,000 respectively. Then came the war, which caused a virtual cessation of immigration, and in recent years the flow has never approached prewar dimensions,

Since achieving independence after World War II, the Indonesians have lacked accurate, detailed information on their Chinese minority, because no census has been possible. Current estimates, necessarily based on a good deal of guesswork, range therefore from one and one-half million to three million, The real figure probably is between two and two and one-half million. The division into subgroups has not altered very much since 1930; according to one recent estimate, 47 per cent are Hokkiens, 21 per cent Hakkas, 12 per cent Cantonese, and 8 per cent Teochius. Perhaps 900,000 Chinese now live on Java and Madura, with heavy concentrations in cities such as Djakarta (250,000-300,000) and Surabaja (110,000) where they comprise over 10 per cent of the population, Numerical strength relative to total population varies tremendously, however; in a few focal areas the Chinese outnumber Indonesians; in West Borneo, East Sumatra, and some of the islands in between they comprise roughly one-sixth of the population; but in moat areas they are merely a fraction of one per cent of the total, For Indonesia as a whole, the Chinese now make up only 2 to 3 per cent of the population, and it is estimated that close to 70 per cent of these Chinese have been born in Indonesia.

The "problem" of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia does not arise, therefore, from sheer numbers. It is created by the fact that this small minority, which has remained distinct and for the most part unassimilated, has acquired economic power and influence all out sf proportion to its numbers and has maintained emotional and political ties with its Chinese homeland,

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THE CITIZENSHIP PROBLEM

Although the problem of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia is extremely complex, the Indonesian Government has recently focused its attention on the question of dual citizenship. At the present moment--unless and until the recently-signed

Sino-Indonesian treaty is ratified--every person of Chinese blood in Indonesia is considered by the Chinese Government to be a Chinese citizen, regardless of whether he or she is an Indonesian citizen as well. This fact has dramatically symbolized all the complications arising ,from possession of a powerful, unassimilated minority,

Traditionally, the Chinese have had a strong sense of their racial solidarity and superiority,' and in 1909 the principle of jus sangufnis, which bases nationality upon racial origin rather than place of birth, was written into Chinese law, The Chinese who migrated to Indonesia considered themselves Chinese, therefore, and have been so regarded up to the present by all governments in China,

In Indonesia, however, the legal status of the Overseas Chinese has varied from time to time. At first the Dutch, following a fairly general practice in Southeast Asia in the early colonial period, appointed Chinese "captains" in key communities and dealt with the Chinese population almost exclusively through these men, leaving internal community affairs to the Chinese themselves. Then, under the multiple court system which developed in Java, the Chinese, up to 1824, were subject in civil cases to European courts (applying European law, with a few exceptions) and in criminal cases to native courts (applying Indonesian, Chinese, or Arab law)--except in three main urban areas where they came under European criminal law also. In 1824, however, this changed and all cases involving Chinese on Java were placed under native courts (although after 1848 it was possible for "foreign Orientals" to place themselves voluntarily under European law for certain transactions). Then in 1855 the trend reversed, and Dutch law affecting many fields, including those most important to economic affairs (property, contract, commerce, etc.), waa made applicable to "foreign Orientals"; from that time on the Chinese again came under European courts in most civil cases, although they continued under native court jurisdiction in criminal cases.

Throughout the early period of Dutch rule, after 1740, restrictions on Chinese residence and travel--based on a sort of segregation policy--steadily grew, until Chinese theoretically could live only in certain designated quarters, and required passes for travel in the interior. It was not until after 1900 that these restrictions were removed and the policy of segregation was abandoned, step by step,

Between 1914 and 1925, the legal position of the Chinese was further altered, through a series of laws which removed them completely from the civil jurisdiction of native courts; and failure to achieve a similar status in the criminal field prior to World War II was probably due more to the lack sf sufficient European courts than to Dutch opposition to the move in principle.

Legal separation of the Chinese from the Indonesians did not mean, however, that the Chinese acquired the same

citizenship status as the Dutch. In citizenship, Chinese born in the Indies had a status similar to that of the Indonesians.

Until 1892, Dutch citizenship differentiated between public law citizenship, applicable only to those born in the Netherlands and their descendants, and civil law citizenship, which included persons born in Dutch colonies and was specifically applicable to Chinese as well as Indonesians born of parents living in the Dutch East Indies. (Chinese born in China were, of course, aliens.) This ,duality was ended in 1892, but the status of Indonesians and "foreign Orientals" was left vague; they were merely considered inhabitants or residents of Dutch territory. Then, from 1910 on, Dutch law made a new distinction between citizens and subjects; Chinese born of parents living in the Dutch East Indies were included in the latter group. This 1910 law, although it made many of the Chinese subjects of the Dutch, did not benefit them very much, because the Chinese, like the Indonesians, were not really granted first-class citizenship.

Dutch policy, in short, was to treat the Overseas Chinese legally as a group differentiated from both the Indonesians and the Dutch. At the same time, however, the Dutch tried to deny China's claim that Chinese born in Indonesia still retained Chinese nationality. Before signing a consular convention with the Dutch in 1910, the Chinese government was forced to agree that East Indies law would be conclusive in determining Dutch or Chinese nationality. (But the Chinese never really observed this agreement, and they registered with their consulates any person of Chinese blood.)

This was the complicated background to the Chinese citizenship problem when the Indonesians proclaimed their independence immediately after World War II.

The Indonesians set out to try Lo end legal plurality. At the Round Table discussions between the Indonesians and Dutch in 1949, a formula was worked out which was designed to make it easy for Indonesia-born Chinese to become full Indonesian citizens. On the basis of the so-called "passive" principle of choice, it stipulated that former Dutch subjects (i.e., Chinese born of parents living in Indonesia) would automatically acquire Indonesian citizenship unless they specifically rejected it during a two-year period between December 27, 1949, and December 27, 1951.

I have not been able to obtain dependable figures on how many Indonesia-born Chinese rejected Indonesian citizenship by registering with the Chinese Embassy during this 1949-1951 period, but some sources place the figure between 600,000 and 800,000. If this is correct, it means that at the start of 1952 the Overseas Chinese population in Indonesia was made up of close to one-third China-born aliens, one-third Indonesia-born aliens, and one-third Indonesian citizens of Chinese origin, with somewhere between 600,000 and 800,000 in each of these three categories. Mononutu, Indonesian Ambassador to Peking, generally

confirmed this when he told me in Djakarta that he accepts the estimate of two million persons of Chinese race in Indonesia now, of whom 800,000 are Indonesian citizens and 1.2 million are aliens, including both China-born and Indonesia-born,

After the December 27, 1951, deadline had passed, it was generally believed in Indonesia that the citizenship. of Chinese living there had been finally decided, But the formula used during 1949-51 did not satisfy some leaders of the Nationalist Party (PNI) who formed the present cabinet in 1953. The PNI Cabinet, therefore, set about drafting a new citizenship law, based on the so-called "active" principle, requiring a positive choice of citizenship. According to this more restrictive formula, the Indonesia-born Chinese would have to indicate a definite choice of Indonesian citizenship, or be considered Chinese, (This law has been drafted and, after much criticism, modified, but it has not yet been presented to parliament.) At about the same time, the Indonesians began discussing with the Chinese Communist's a possible agreement by which Peking would openly renounce all claims of dual citizenship affecting Indonesia-born Chinese who might choose Indonesian citizenship on the basis of this "active" principle, The Indonesian government's reasons for initiating these discussions have never been elaborated on publicly, but it is true that if there is no renunciation of dual citizenship claims on China's part, the status of Chinese in Indonesia could remain ambiguous--both in the minds of the Overseas Chinese themselves and in the view of the Chinese Communist regime, regardless of steps taken by the Indonesian government.

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THE SINO-INDONESIAN "AGREEMENT ON THE ISSUE OF DUAL NATIONALITY"

Discussions between Indonesia and Communist China on dual nationality began in late 1953 when Mononutu went to Peking as Indonesia's ambassador, and, according to his account, they were initiated by him, Formal negotiations began about a year later. From November 2 to December 23, 1954, a four-man Indonesian group headed by Mononutu carried out "preliminary negotiations" with a four-man Chinese group headed by Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Chen Chia-kang in Peking. On December 29, the negotiators issued a joint communique stating that they had "laid a good foundation for the conferenca on dual nationality at ministerial level to be held by the two countries in the near future."

Negotiations were resumed this spring, and were carried on from March 29 to April 20 in both Djakarta and Bandung. Finally, on April 22, Sunario and Chou En-lai, Foreign Ministers of the two countries, attended a short ceremony at, the residence of West Java's Governor in Bandung and signed the "Agreement on the Issuo of Dual Nationality Between the Republic of Indonesia and the People's Republic of China." In a brief speech at the

signing, Chou implied China's willingness to make similar agreements with other countries. (Privately, he told Romulo of the Philippines and Prince Wan of Thailand of this willingness.) He also promised to implement the agreement. "I guarantee that the Government of the People's Republic of China," Chou said, "will firmly carry out the Treaty signed today, I hope that persons of Chinese origin with dual nationality as a result of past history will, after making their choice of nationality in accordance with their own will, strictly abide by the letter and spirit of this Treaty and increase their sense of responsibility toward the country the nationality of which they have chosen."

After the signing, Mononutu told me that the Indonesian Government was well satisfied with the treaty, He stated that one of the difficult points in the negotiations had been Peking's desire for some statement guaranteeing nondiscrimination against Indonesian citizens of Chinese origin. This Indonesia refused to grant, Mononutu said, maintaining that this is purely an internal matter and that the only guarantee which could be given was that alien Chinese would receive the same treatment as all other aliens. Mononutu (a PNI appointee) also pointed out that the treaty conforms to the "active" principle which the PNI wishes to incorporate into a new Indonesian citizenship law.

Mononutu also underlined the fact that Peking insisted on approaching the dual nationality question through bilateral agreements. It would be very simple for the Chinese Government to make a unilateral renunciation of claims to dual citizenship affecting all Overseas Chinese, but there are important reasons why it does not want to do this, Such a renunciation would affect Chinese in countries such as Thailand and the Philippines, and it is "common gossip" in Peking that the Chinese Communists regard the nationality question as a lever to influence capitals such as Bangkok and Manila, with which Peking has no diplomatic relations at present.

The only official texts of the agreement to date are those in the Chinese and Indonesian languages, but an English version released by the Indonesian Ministry of Information can be regarded as semiofficial.

The agreement begins by stating that "anybody who at the same time has the citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia and of the People's Republic of China shall choose between the two citizenships on the basis of his or her own will." A two-year period, starting from the date of ratification, is stipulated for this choice (for all those over 18 or those under 18 who are already married), The procedure involved is as follows: those wishing to be Indonesian must go to designated Indonesian Government officials or to the Indonesian Embassy, Consulates, or "temporary offices" in China and state the "desire to abandon" Chinese citizenship; those wishing to be Chinese must go to designated Chinese Government officials or the Chinese Embassy, Consulates, or "temporary offices" in Indonesia and state the

desire to abandon Indonesian citizenship. A "simple expression of desire" is sufficient, and thereafter an individual will be "considered to have chosen" one nationality, and thereby will "automatically lose" the other nationality.

Anybody who does not "express the choice of citizenship" within two years "shall be considered to have chosen the citizenship" of China if his father is "of Chinese descent." This provision is somewhat vague, but at present it is almost universally assumed in Indonesia that "descent" refers solely to racial background. If there are no legal relations with the father, or the father's citizenship is unknown, a person who fails to choose will take on the citizenship of his "mother from the father's side." Persons under age (i.e., 18, unless married) have the citizenship of their parents' choice (normally the father's, but in some circumstances the mother's) until coming of age; then they have one year to choose for themselves, and if they fail to do so will cbntinue holding the citizenship which they held when under age.

Another provision stipulates that a person who has chosen Indonesian citizenship will "automatically" lose it if he leaves Indonesia to "establish permanent residence" elsewhere and has "regained the citizenship of the People's Republic of China on his or her own will." The same thing applies to those who have chosen to be Chinese if they leave China and regain Indonesian citizenship. Children born in China or Indonesia take, from birth, the citizenship of their fathers. (However, a Chinese child becomes Indonesfan if adopted by an Indonesian before he is five, and the same applies to adoption of Indonesian children in China.) Finally, in marriages between Chinese and Indonesians both man and wife retain their original citizenship unless they voluntarily apply for and obtain the citizenship of the other.

Toward the end of the agreement, it is stated, "The two contracting parties agree in the interests of the welfare of their respective citizens residing in the country of the other contracting party, to urge the party's respective citizens residing in the country of the other contracting party.....to abide by the laws and customs of the State in which they reside and not to participate in political activities of the country in which they reside." Furthermore, "The two contracting parties agree to give mutual protection according to the laws of the respective country to the legal rights and interests of the respective citizens residing in the country of each contracting party."

The agreement is to come into force on the day of exchange of the instruments of ratification, "which shall take place in Peking," and it will be in force for 20 years thereafter, continuing unless one side wishes to annul it on one year's notice.

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REACTIONS TO THE SINO-INDOPJESIAN AGREEMENT

Cheu En-lai made an important concession in principle when he signed this agreement, No Chinese government in the past has agreed so clearly to renounce the citizenship claims of any large group of persons of Chinese race. It was a concession made from a position of strength, by the most powerful Chinese government in modern history, and it had implications affecting Peking's relations with 10 to 12 million Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and with almost all the governments within the region, In the long run such a concession could be very significant.

The timing of the signing of the agreement--during the Bandung Conference--made it a major propaganda move, not only toward Indonesia but also toward Southeast Asia as a whole, Much has been written about the potentialities of Overseas Chinese as a "fifth column"; the signing of this agreement was an effective propaganda countermove against such charges.

Peking's major immediate motive in signing the agreement undoubtedly was to strengthen friendly relations with the Indonesian Government, Communist China's foreign policy toward Indonesia is currently one of attraction, involving concessions and compromises in several fields, The position of the Overseas Chinese, and Indonesian concern over it, have been major obstacles to close relations, Even the anti-Communist leader of the Masjumi, the largest political party in Indonesia, said to me: "As soon as the problem of citizenship is solved, it will be much easier to solve all other problems of Indonesian-Chinese relations." By making a concession, in principle, on the dual nationality issue, Chou En-lai scored psychologically with the present Indonesian Government. (Shortly after the signing, Prime Minister Sastroamidjojo announced that he was going to visit Peking,)

From the viewpoint of the present Indonesian Government, it was felt that the agreement would clarify the status of the Chinese-in Indonesia. On the basis of the "active" principle, Indonesia-born Chinese would have to choose and become either aliens or citizens, and the Chinese Government promised to respect their choice, This, it was believed, would make it easier both to assimilate the citizens and to control the aliens by cutting off Indonesian-Chinese citizens from outside protection or intervention, and by making Chinese aliens clearly subject to restrictions directed against all aliens, There are indications, however, that not all Government leaders shared the same motives, Apparently, some hoped that, to facilitate assimilation, as many Chinese as possible would choose to be citizens, while others believed that the "active" principle would increase the number of Chinese subject to controls and restrictions as aliens, Whatever their motives, however, the key leaders in the present government thought the treaty was a good thing.

It soon became apparent, however, that many people in Indonesia disagreed with them, Almost immediately after the

contents of the agreement were revealed, public criticism began, Within the next few weeks,. every important Indonesian opposition party--including the PSI (Socialist Party), Masjumi (Islamic) Party, Catholic Party, and Christian Party--denounced the agreement; an element of party politics was involved, but many legitimate arguments against the agreement were brought forward, Even the PKI (Communist Party) and the pro-Peking newspaper Sin Po were not entirely enthusiastic about it, and admitted that it would need careful interpretation. Baperki, an organization composed mainly of Indonesian-Chinese who favor assimilation (the organization is led by pro-Communists), published a detailed critique of the agreement. During this period I discussed the agreement with many Indonesians and Chinese and found the majority opposed to it; those among the Chinese whom I found to be most strongly critical were Chinese-Indonesian citizens with comparatively deep roots in Indonesia, A groat many people agreed with the Indonesian paper which stated: "We fear that our Government has fallen into the trap."

Many of the questions concerning the agreement raised by foreign observers were related to Peking's political motivation and sincerity, The period when the treaty negotiations took place was one in which the Chinese Communists actually intensified their appeals to Overseas Chinese and gave little real indication of willingness to abandon interest in them, Overseas Chinese were included in China's census figures last year, Representatives of Overseas Chinese (including four from Indonesia) attended China's National Assembly in the fall. Peking has recently taken steps to encourage investments by Overseas Chinese, to attract their children to homeland schools, to facilitate remittances to their native districts, to give easier treatment to their relatives in China. On New Year's Day, 1955, the head of Peking's Overseas Chinese Commission said in a "Message to Overseas Chinse": "The powerful fatherland has wade the 12,000,000 fellow countrymen abroad enthusiastic and proud, Their firm rallying round the fatherland has manifested how the Chinese residents abroad love and support the fatherland." All of this seemed very inconsistent with the Sino-Indonesian agreement, and raised questions about Peking's sincerity in signing it. Did the Chinese Communists, possibly, hope that the "active" choice principle might actually result in a large number of Chinese citizens in Indonesia who as clear-cut aliens would rely increasingly on outside support? Did they believe that the registration process would bring Chinese citizens in Indonesia under closer Embassy scrutiny and control? Did they think that the necessity of choosing Indonesia or Peking would place the pro-Taiwan Chinese in a difficult position and reduce their Influence? Did they, even, look forward, as some anti-Communist Chinese allege, to the possibility of greater infiltration of Indonesian politics through Chinese who may become Indonesian citizens but still secretly remain loyal to their homeland? Did they think it would be possible to follow a dual policy based on public cooperation and secret subversion? All of these could be considered at least possibilities, until actions proved otherwise.

These were not the kinds of questions raised by most people in Indonesia, however; both the Indonesians and the Overseas Chinese concentrated their criticism on the agreement itself, Sjahrir, head of the PSI (which has a larger Indonesian-Chinese component than any other important party), said to me: "Many Chinese who are already Indonesians now have to choose all over again. If they don't, they will acquire the same citizenship as their fathers--that is, they will be Chinese. It is likely, therefore, that many of them will revert to being Chinese, We think this is bad, because we believe it is desirable to induce the Chinese to become patriotic Indonesians." An Indonesia-born Chinese editor of a leading publication remarked to me: "I have been an Indonesian up until now, but now I don't know. I will have to choose all over again, The danger is that many Indonesia-born Chinese won't understand the new situation and won't do anything, Then they will become citizens of Communist China, "

The main theme of most criticism was the fact that the agreement by reopening the whole question of Chinese citizenship would introduce a period of uncertainty, undermine any sense of legal security the Indonesian-Chinese might feel, and generally muddy the waters instead of clarifying the issue. Baperki pointed out that those who have chosen Indonesian citizenship (even though "passively") now must decide all over again; tho children of Chinese citizens resident in Indonesia will become Chinese rather than Indonesian (which will result in a constantly increasing alien population); because the agreement is only for 20 years, the issue has not been solved permanently, a fact which could be used to justify special policies toward Chinese with Indonesian citizenship; "the agreement has nullified all efforts of the government.....since 1945 to turn citizens of foreign descent into responsible citizens"; "legal security has been made less secure." It called for a guarantee that all Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent will remain Indonesian citizens and will have only Indonesian citizenship,

Many critics pointed out the anomalies which could result from the agreement. For a two-year period, cabinet members and parliament members of Chinese descent could be considered potential aliens, as could all those Chinese with Indonesian citizenship who have registered to vote in the forthcoming national elections, Chinese scattered in small towns and villages might be the ones most likely to fail to register, thereby becoming Chinese citizens, yet many of them are the people who have become most rooted in Indonesia.

There were other criticisms as well. Chinese returning to China, it was pointed out, could easily revert to Chinese citizenship if Peking decides to make the procedure simple; choosing Indonosian citizenship might, therefore, be purely opportunistic and temporary, for some. Anti-Communfst Chinese wishing to retain Chinese citizenship complained that the agreement provided no alternative to registering with Peking's Embassy; they would have liked some sort of "stateless" status.

The flood of criticism made it clear that when the Sino-Indonesian agreement comes before parliament for ratification, opposition to it will be great, Some observers even think that the agreement might be defeated, and the present cabinet could fall on this issue,

If the PNI is able to mobilize all possible support and get the agreement passed, what will happen? At this point it is by no means certain, but some people I talked with were willing to make guesses, The China-born Chinese will, of course, not be affected at all; they will remain aliens. The Indonesia-born Chinese will have to make a decision, and for many this will involve not simply a question of political loyalty but the weighing of factors such as whether Indonesian citizenship or Chinese Communist political support will be more advantageous to their interests, particularly economic interests, in the future, The best guess is that a majority who do choose will decide to become Indonesian citizens, but a considerable number may, out of ignorance, do nothing and revert to being Chinese citizens. Of those who chooss to be Indonesians, the majority will be made up of persons who tend to be politically neutral toward homeland Chinese politics (these persons probably predominate among the Indonesia-born), but some will be pro-Taiwan Chinese who will base their action on opportunism. (The Nationalist Government on Taiwan will continue to consider them Chinese citizens anyway.) Of those who choose to be Chinese, many will be those who have committed themselves strongly to a pro-Peking political stand,

The debate on and public criticism of the agreement in Indonesia is not likely, in any case, to encourage other governments in Southeast Asia to follow Indonesia's example without careful consideration. Of the other areas most concerned with their Overseas Chinese population, furthermore, only Burma seems to be a possible convert in the foreseeable future to the formula contained in the Sino-Indonesian agreement, Thailand and the Philippines do not have diplomatic relations with Peking and are unlikely now to consider any step which would make part of their minorities citizens of Communist China, In Singapore-Malaya, where the Chinese make up close to half of the total population, any formula raising the possibility of a large proportion of the Chinese there becoming aliens who give allegiance to Peking is enough to cause sleepless nights for those struggling with the problems of creating a unified nation.

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THE REAL PROBLEM: ASSIMILATION VERSUS DISCRIMINATION

The Overseas Chinese problem is very much on the minds of people in Indonesia now. Every major Indonesian leader I met was willing to talk at considerable length about it. What they had to say gave a clear indication that the citizenship issue is

only a small part of a broader problem, These are some of their remarks.

Sastroamidjojo (PNI Prime Minister): "A majority of the Chinese here cannot even speak Chinese. And of the two million Chinese in Indonesia a majority were born here. They play an important part in the economy, and we need their skills,, ...But we are aiming at eliminating the idea of a minority.. ,..The policy of this government is to create a multiracial nation like America."

Natsir (Masjumi chief): "China is two problems for us-- a Chinese problem and a Communist problem. Even if China were not Communist, the Chinese would be a problem, Under the Dutch, our economy was under the Chinese, who got a grip on common life.. ..Many Indonesia-born Chinese really feel Indonesian, but there are also many who are half-Indonesian, half-Chinese., ,..They were used in the Dutch period as mediators between the big Dutch concerns and the people, So it is at present very difficult to build up the economy as long as the Chinese are in that position. Now China happens to be Communist, and ideological questions come to the fore. So we are on the defensive on both the internal Chinese problem and the ideological problem."

Sjahrir (PSI (Socialist) chief): "It will not be an easy process to absorb the Chinese. They have had a superior status to that of the Indonesians, partly as a result of the Dutch policy of using then as a middle class, but also because they are clever, industrious people who believe they are superior, and have some basis for it." The problem is "to induce the Chinese to become patriotic Indonesians."

Aidit (PKI (Communist) chief): "Discrimination against Chinese-Indonesians is a result of the former Dutch policy. They gave a privileged position to the Chinese. That is why there arc the existing antagonisms, The PKI stands for an end to economic discrimination against Indonesians of any origin."

Statements such as these hint at a central problem which far overshadows the citizenship question in importance. It is a problem compounded of two main factors: the lack of assimilation of the Chinese into Indonesian society, and the econonic predominance of the Chinese in the Indonesian econony, Since only two to three per cent of the population is Chinese, lack of assimilation would not itself be too important if the Chincse did not hold such a vital position in the economy, and the disproportionate econonic influence of this group would be of less concern if the Chincse were assimilated. The citizenship issue would certainly fade into the background if the Chinese were either more assimilated or less economically strong,

Tho dilemma posed for the Indonesians by this problem is the fact that they would like both to assimilate the Chinese and to lessen their economic influence, hut these two aims usually conflict when translated into policy, and neither of the aims

seems to be attainable in the foreseeable future. The Indonesians see no alternative to discrimination against the Chinese (regardless of their citizenship) in order to curb their economic power at present, but this makes their proclaimed assimilation policy appear unrealistic and unfair to the Chinese. In fact, neither economic restriction nor assimilation seem to be working effectively.

One of the fallacies in the Indonesians' present approach is their failure, despite current efforts to clarify citizenship, to distinguish between different kinds of Chinese in Indonesia. Restrictive economic measures are applied to all Chinese--citizen and noncitizen alike--on a racial basis. This obscures the fact that there are wide and significant differences between various groups among the Chinese in Indonesia.

While I was in Djakarta, a large party was held by a group of wealthy Chinese in the lobby of my hotel. Most of the men wore Western clothes, and a large percentage of them conversed in Dutch. Among about 75 women, only three wore Chinese dress; of the remainder, about half wore Western frocks and the others a modified form of the Indonesian kain (sarong). A large number of these women talked to their children in Bahassa Indonesian. Yet despite these evidences of acculturation, produced by both Dutch and Indonesian influences, the whole group was clearly and distinctly Chinese. They were peranakan, or Indonesia-born Chinese.

One of the main dividing lines, socially and culturally, within the Chinese community in Indonesia is that between the Indonesia-born old-timers and the China-born newcomers; the differences between the two groups are considerable. The Chinese born in Indonesia are called peranakan in Indonesia, or chiao sheng or baba in Chinese. The China-born immigrants are called totok sinkheh, or entjek. The distinction between these two groups is significant, even though all Chinese in Indonesia are hua chiao, or Overseas Chinese. These terms are not merely technical or descriptive: they are loaded with cultural connotations. Traditionally, both the peranakans and totoks have felt superior to each other, and different from each other.

The totoks are completely Chinese in a social or cultural sense. They speak, eat, and live almost exactly like their relatives in China. In big cities they tend to congregate in the central "Chinatowns" like Glodok in Djakarta and Panggung in Surabaja. They send large remittances to Fukien or Kwangtung, and try to maintain fairly close ties with the families they have left. They exhibit in extreme form the commercial zeal and tireless energy considered typical of Overseas Chinese, and consequently in business they tend to dominate, often overshadowing many of the peranakans (I have heard estimates of the totoks' share of Chinese-controlled business in Indonesia, which are as high as 80 per cent, although this seems too high to me.) There is a saying that "grandfather makes fortune, son spends it, and grandson goes to work," which contains an element of truth; generally, newcomers seem to work harder and do better in business than a lot

of peranakans whose families have been in Indonesia for several generations, The totoks also make up a majority of the most active membership of regional, clan, and similar Chinese communal organizations, They are the ones most involved in political activities which are linked to the China homeland, They tend to feel superior to the Indonesians and, in many respects, to the peranakans because of the evidences of non-Chinese influence on them.

By contrast, the peranakans as a group are different in many respects, There are great variations within the group of course, between those who are second or third generations and those who are fifth or sixth, but one can nonetheless say that there are definite peranakan characteristics and even a distinct peranakan way of life, produced by Indonesian and Dutch cultural overlays on a Chinese base, Many of the peranakans look different from the totoks. They are darker as a result of an intermixture of Indonesian blood, Chinese women did not begin migrating to Indonesia in significant numbers until after 1900, and before that a large number of Chinese men married Indonesian women, The sex ratio of men and women in this racially-mixed group is much more nearly equal than within the totok group. Perhaps the most striking thing about the peranakans, however, is language; although they consider themselves Chinese, many of them do not speak any Chinese dialect, Most peranakans of the third or later generations, in fact, do not speak Chinese. Many have lost all contact or family ties with China. Among the wealthier ones, a sizable number until recently made strenuous efforts to imitate the Dutch, sent their children to Dutch-language schools, and spoke Dutch as a' native language, Others speak Indonesian as a native language (sometimes with their own idioms), and show the results of strong Indonesian influence in other ways. There are distinct peranakan food dishes, blending Chinese and Indonesian elements, and a modified Indonesian form of dress for the women. Various theatrical forms combining Chinese and Indonesian elements have developed. And, in subtle ways, many of the peranakans seem to have been influenced by the Indonesians' more leisurely approach to life,

But, despite all of this evidence of acculturation, the peranakans remain distinctly Chinese--and this includes even those who do not speak Chinese and have cut all Contact with China, Their wives and their children have been absorbed into the Overseas Chinese community. With very few exceptions, they have clung to their Chinese names. They maintain Chinese temples, and a surprising number of them have ancestor plaques in important places in their homes, (Totoks told me that the peranakans cling to many customs which are rapidly dying out in the urban areas of China itself.) They organize.as Chinese, They regard themselves as Chinese, and are so regarded by the Indonesians, In short, although the acculturation of the peranakans in Indonesia has been striking (much greater than that of comparable Chinese in places like Singapore), there has been very little complete assimilation (of the kind which hss taken place in Thailand),

Acculturation has led the' peranakans into a cultural and social ~~cul de sac~~ where they remain, a somewhat hybrid but unassimilated group, which has sunk deep roots in Indonesia but has not been absorbed into the Indonesian population,

It is difficult to explain why more assimilation has not taken place, but the Chinese innate sense of cultural superiority is certainly one important factor. The Muslim religion has also been a major obstacle. Very feu Chinese in Indonesia have embraced Islam, and the difference between pork-eaters and pork-haters is considerable. I have not seen any statistics on this, but one Muslim peranakan scholar told me that Indonesia probably does not have over 10,000 Chinese Muslims.

Almost all Indonesian leaders whom I met said that the Chinese should be assimilated, but very few of them seem to have faced the problem squarely. In view of past experiences, 'it certainly appears that complete assimilation will be difficult, to say the least. But even if the more modest aim of increased acculturation were accepted, the present approach of the Indonesians is full of contradictions. Specifically, the current economic restrictions imposed on the Chinese probably more than counteract any government effort to encourage acculturation.

The Prime Minister said to me that "there is no economic discrimination against the Chinese at all," but he is the only man, Indonesian or Chinese, among those I met during a month in Indonesia who made such a claim. Actually, although it is not written into law, the present policy of the Indonesian Government is to impose severe restrictions on the Chinese, on a racial basis without regard for citizenship or cultural ties, in order to protect Indonesian businessmeh and to develop a new Indonesian commercial and business class. No Chinese (by race), for example, can obtain an import or export license, and this includes peranakans as well as totoks. The basis for this is the distinction, followed by Indonesian Government bodies administering economic regulations, between warganegara asli (pure Indonesian citizens) and warganegara bukan asli or warganara asing (not pure or foreign citizens, including all people of Chinese race), as well as between perusahan na'sional (national firms, belonging to persons of Indonesian blood) and perusahan asing (foreign firms, belonging to people of non-Indonesian race). On this basis, Chinese who are Indonesian citizens are treated economically in many respects as if they were foreigners, and in innumerable ways the government discriminates against foreigners in order to try to assist Indonesians. In short, the Chinese are at best second-class citizens in business matters--which are all-inportant to them.

This economic discrimination inevitably has the effect of making the Chinese feel mose distinct and,separate. And it is not the only factor operating in this direction. Economically, politically, and culturally, many of the present trends among the Chinese in Indonesia seem to be setting the Chinese more apart

and identifying them even more than before as a distinct alien group,

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ECONOMIC TRENDS

Many Indonesians blame the Dutch for building up Chinese economic power by consciously using them as middlemen in dealing with the Indonesian population, There is some justification for this belief, The Dutch did use the Chinese and even, during certain periods, farmed out tax concessions and the like to then, But this is hardly the whole explanation. Even in countries like Thailand, where no colonial power can be blamed, the Chinese, through hard work, thrift, and enterprise, have become the most important economic class in society* Elimination of colonial rule has not changed the Chinese character.

Over the' years, the Chinese in Indonesia have come to monopolise retailing, internal trade, and small manufacturing, and'to play an important role in other fields such as import and export. It is possible to overrate their economic power; in terms of over-all foreign capital invested in Indonesia, the Chinese share has been relatively small as compared with the Dutch, (One 1939 estimate indicated that, of total foreign investment, only about ten per cent was Chinese--while well over half belonged to the Dutch, who owned most of the big plantations, tin mines, and oil fields,) But Chinese do control the distributive system of the economy, and in effect they are the commercial class in Indonesia,

The aims of Indonesia's leaders now are not only to take over Dutch enterprise eventually but also to protect and develop a new Indonesian class of businessmen to displace the Chinese, or at least to reduce their importance. To achieve the latter aim, the government now discriminates against the Chinese as wargenegara asing. Both the aim and the policy of the Indonesians are understandable, but there is little doubt that they retard integration of the Chinese.

The discrimination affects many fields, Chinese cannot obtain licenses for imports or exports. They have difficulty in' getting permits for industrial operations, They are discriminated against in the allocation of credit by government banks. They are not included in aid to industries by government economic agencies, And so on, Most of this discrimination is exercised by officials at the lower administrative levels of the government and is based on policy rather than written law.

The Chinese are also limited in their right to buy land. It is difficult to get any clear idea sf the legal situation affecting landowning, but it is generally agreed that Chinese cannot

buy unlimited amounts of farmland, even though they have some urban holdings and have taken over some Dutch planatation leases, A Dutch law in the mid-19th century restricted alienation of farmland to non-Indonesians, and no new law on the subject has yet been passed by the Indonesian Government, The Chinese, especially in rural areas, were also hurt by mob action taken during the Indonesian revolution, Many Indonesian farmers repudiated debts to Chinese moneylenders, and some Chinese property was destroyed (partly because so many Chinese were associated with the Dutch or took a neutral stand toward the revolution). This, as well as physical insecurity, led to a Chinese migration to the cities.

One might expect, from all this, that the Chinese in Indonesia have suffered economically. Instead, the reverse seems to be the case. Almost every Chinese I talked with admitted, after describing the discrimination, that the economic position of the Chinese has actually improved during the past decade, even though the Chinese role in some economic activities such as rural moneylending has declined, The explanation lies in Chinese adaptability. One indication of this is the fact that there is a recognizable shift of Chinese attention toward industry in Indonesia, now that industry is no longer discouraged as it was under Dutch colonial. policy and foreign trade is more complicated for the Chinese. The Chinese have also moved in to take over some of the economic enterprises which the Dutch are steadily leaving, although it is unlikely that Chinese companies, usually limited in capital because they are organized on a family basis, can really take over the largest Dutch firms.

The principal explanation for Chinese prosperity, however, has been the ability of Chinese businessmen to evade the restrictions against them and to take advantage of the inefficiency and corruptibility of the new Indonesian Government. As one Chinese said to me: "In the present situation it is impossible to do business legally, so you have to do it illegally. In an abnormal situation, the smarter person adapts faster, and we are smarter in business," The Chinese have adapted by working through Indonesian fronts. A great number of so-called "Ali-Baba" companies (Ali is a common Indonesian name; baba means a Chinese) have sprung up; they are fragile economic marriages of convenience, in which the Indonesian partner gets a share of the profits for obtaining licenses or permits, while the Chinese provides the capital and skill and actually carries out the business transactions, In the import-sxport field, there are hundreds of Indonesian "brief-case importers," so-called because they have a brief case only and not a regular office, who work with Chinese importers. (One Chinese importer told me that there are almost 4,500 such front men now, compared to only a few hundred legitimate importers.)

Many Chinese businessmen were completely candid in describing to me how these "Ali-Baba" arrangements work. Sometimes Indonesians are taken on the boards of Chinese companies; sometimes they are set up on their own. One Chinese described a typical

import deal of his, He made his arrangements with a "brief-case importer," providing him with the capital, the data on the purchase price 'of the commodity desired, and the factory order from an Indonesian firm requesting the commodity, The Indonesian front man then obtained from the government the required import permit and foreign exchange, which he turned over to the Chinese, For this service the "brief-case importer" was paid, as his profit, over 100 per cent of the gross value of the imported goods! The Chinese are able to pay such huge commissions (generally between 100 and 150 per cent), and still make a profit for themselves, because the unrealistic Indonesian foreign exchange rate makes it possible to obtain allocated foreign exchange for about one-third of its real value.

Thus, both the Chinese businessmen and their Indonesian front men make high profits, The people who suffer, of course, are the ordinary Indonesian consumers, who are forced to pay very high prices for imported goods such as textiles, The economy as a whole also suffers, And there is little doubt that the Chinese are improving their economic situation--at a time when per-capita national income in Indonesia is declining.

The Indonesians are aware of these facts, and all but a few frankly admit them--in private, But they justify the discriminatory policies as being a necessary, albeit somewhat costly, method of developing an Indonesian business class, Many maintain that economic limitations on the Chinese should continue until such an Indonesian class is developed; since they do not want to write racial discrimination or second-class citizenship into their laws, however, they are now groping with great difficulty toward finding some formula based on nonracial factors such as income which might be written into new laws (e.g., a land law) in order to limit the economic activities of the Chinese,

But it is doubtful whether present discrimination aimed at the Chinese is producing sufficient results in protecting and fostering Indonesian businessmen to justify the costs to consumers, to the economy as a whole, and to public morality, A few successful Indonesian businessmen have developed, especially from among people Pike the Sumatran Menangkabau, who have always had a shrewd business sense and have been able to take advantage of discrimination in their favor. However, many of the Indonesian front men making easy profits seem to be more interested in conspicuous consumption than in business, They make up a parasitical class of nouveaux riches, who are largely nonproductive and are a dubious addition ——— donesiansociety, It is possible, of cour'se, that in time an increasing number of them may acquire capital, skills, and experience, and rather than consuming their profits will begin to reinvest more of them, But results to date are not very encouraging,

Although the Indonesians' desire to develop an indigenous, non-Chinese business group is understandable, therefore, progress toward this goal is sloe, and despite the economic discrimination

against them; the Chinese' seem to be increasing their share of profit from the Indonesian economy. The fact that they must operate illegally as second-class economic citizens, moreover, makes them increasingly antisocial and aware of their separate interests as Chinese, and it decreases the chance of successfully integrating them into Indonesian society.

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POLITICAL TRENDS

Ever since the birth of modern nationalism in China, almost half a century ago, the Overseas Chinese have been drawn into political movements centered at home. In recent years, this has meant that many have been involved in the struggle for influence and power between the Chinese Communists and the Kuomintang. It is curious, in a sense, that political leaders in China have continued to devote so much attention to the Overseas Chinese, because the contribution of the Overseas Chinese to home politics--mainly financial and moral support--has declined, and in some respects the Overseas Chinese are a liability in China's foreign relations with Southeast Asia. Rut the competition for political allegiance and loyalty between the Chinese Communists and Kuomintang has gone on. In response to complicated influences (nationalist sentiment, squabbles within the Overseas Chinese communities, the political climate internationally and also in their countries of residence, threats and intimidation, propaganda and ideological conflict, and practical opportunism) tho Chinese abroad have shifted their political orientation one way or the other. In Indonesia, the recent trend has definitely favored the Chinese Communists, and at present a majority of the politically-conscious Chinese in Indonesia are pro-Peking.

Most of the Chinese actively involved in this Communist-Kuomintang tug of war in Indonesia are China-born (totoks), but it is significant that the number of peranakans drawn into it seems to be on the rise. This fact is symptomatic of the strong attraction exerted on the Overseas Chinese by a powerful, dynamic government at home.

Estimates of the number of Chinese in Indonesia who express allegiance in various ways to either the Chinese Communists or Nationalists are necessarily based upon guesswork. Actually many of them, particularly the peranakans who have the deepest roots in Indonesia, maintain consistent neutrality. Among those involved in the struggle, both the Communists and the Nationalists have a small hard core of unwavering supporters. The shifts take place, therefore, among the predoninantly totok group of non-neutral but uncommitted Chinese in the middle. There have been several major shifts in the orientation of the majority of this group since 1949. When the Communists first came to power in China, they swung pro-Peking. As a result of the Korean War and

the campaigns in China against landlords, counterrevolutionaries, and businessmen, the trend reversed somewhat. Then, after the Geneva Conference, Peking's new prestige, as well as more moderate Chinese Communist policies internationally and domestically, resulted in a swing back toward Peking, At present some observers in Indonesia estimate that of the politically-involved Chinese in the country, perhaps 20 per cent are divided almost equally between the hard-core supporters of both the Chinese Communists and the Kuomintang, while the rest are split at least 60-40 in favor of the Communists.

Political guesses of this sort are based principally upon the orientation of the Chinese associations, schools, and newspapers in Indonesia, since this is the main barometer of shifting Chinese attitudes,

As everywhere in Southeast Asia, the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia arc both highly organized and highly fragmented into regional, clan, guild, and commercial associations, found at all levels down to the villages in many areas. (The majority of members are totoks;) There is a Chinese Chamber of Commerce in almost every town of importance, but the regional associations vary according to the local situation. In Djakarta, for example, the majority of Hakkas are organized according to home hsiens (counties) for the most part, and the largest organizations are those of the Hokkiens, Cantonese, eochius, Hainanese, and Hokchius, In Surabaja, where Hokkiens predominate, the people from Fukien are divided into Hokkien, Hokchia (Fu-tsing), Henghua, and Hokchiu associations, while all kwangtung people except the Hakkas combine as one organization,

The situation in Indonesia is quite different from that in some other countries, however, in that the Chinese regional associations and Chambers of Commerce are politically not of primary importance; they confine themselves mostly to welfare and commercial matters. Political leadership is exercised by broad general associations which include all other important Chinese groups as members, Such associations exist in every major locality, and they are combined as national organizations. These centralized federations trace their origin to the Hua Chiao Tsung Hui (Overseas Chinese General Associations) established during the war by the Japanese to control the Chincse community in Indonesia. After the war they persisted under a new name as pro-Kuomintang Chung Hua Tsung Hui (Chinese General Associations). Then, in 1950, they splintered; competing, pro-Communist organizations were set up (e.g., the Chung Hua Chiao Tuan Tsung Hui in Djakarta and the Chung Hua Chiao Lien Tsung Hui in Surabaja), The organizational membership of these general associations is the most obvious indication-of political allegiance among the Chinese in Indonesia, At present, the membership of the pro-Communist groups is larger, and the trend is still in their favor. It is noteworthy, however, that the pro-Communists have not been able to take over control of the older Chung Hua Tsung Hui, which they first tried to do, but have been forced to

set up competing organizations of their own and Lo work for defections from the pro-Kuomintang groups. (This applies not only to the General Associations but also to many other types of organizations.) At present, nonetheless, the pro-Peking associations have more member organizations than. the pro-Taiwan ones; in Djakarta the ratio is 73 to 41, and in Surabaja it is roughly 60 to 30. The Chambers of Commerce have generally stuck to the pro-Taiwan side, however, and some of the organizational units under the pro-Taiwan associations have more members than their pro-Communist counterparts.

The Chinese schools, which are privately supported by the Chinese community and reflect in their teaching the political orientation of their main sponsors, are divided along roughly the same lines. Politically, the most important institutions are the senior middle schools, and it is estimated that 60 or 70 per cent of these throughout Indonesia are pro-Communist (or at least pro-Peking). In Djakarta, only two of them are clearly pro-Taiwan, three are strongly pro-Peking, and two tend to be "leftist"; the student body in the pro-Taiwan schools amounts to only 2,000-3,900, compared with 10,000 in the others. In Surabaja, of all Chinese schools only 5 out of 28 are pro-Taiwan.

Similarly, the Chinese press is divided, but the competition between pro-Communist and non-Communist newspapers is intense, even though papers which are clearly pro-Kuomintang are not so important. In Djakarta, the center of the Chinese press in Indonesia, there are two pro-Peking and three pro-Taiwan Chinese-language papers, while of the two Indonesian-language Chinese papers one is pro-Communist and the other is anti-Communist. The largest Chinese-language paper, Sin Po (Hsin Pao), is strongly pro-Communist, but the largest Indonesian-language Chinese paper, Keng Po (Ching Pao), is anti-Communist. In terms of total circulation, anti-Communist Chinese papers have a larger circulation in Djakarta than the pro-Communist ones (roughly 68,000 to 48,000), but the circulation of pro-Peking papers is larger than that of pro-Taiwan ones (roughly 48,000 to 33,000); not all those who oppose the Communists support the Kuomintang, by any means. In Surabaja, there are three Chinese-language papers; the Communist and Kuomintang organs are both small, but the biggest paper leans toward Taiwan even though it is independent.

There are many factors which help to explain the recent, and current, trend toward support of the Peking regime by Overseas Chinese in Indonesia.

One is the positive, nationalistic appeal of a strong government in China. For many Overseas Chinese this is simply a matter of pride. For some, it creates hope that a powerful home government can protect and support them abroad. The rise of China to world power status has inevitably increased the political attraction toward the homeland among Overseas Chinese, and where it has not been counterbalanced by other factors it has tended to shift opinion in favor of Peking.

Another and very important factor has been the existence of a large and active Chinese Communist Embassy in Indonesia, This Embassy was set up in the spring of 1950. The first Chinese ambassador, a former pro-Communist agitator in Indonesia, spent large sums of money for political purposes, distributed masses of propaganda, and was so blatant in his activities that some Indonesians were openly disturbed. He lasted until the end of 1952. Then, after a period without any ambassador in Djakarta, Peking late last year sent a new man who has tried more subtle, although probably not less energetic, tactics. In the words of one Chinese, he is "disturbing the water under the surface" rather than operating loudly and overtly.

The Chinese Embassy is able to exert influence and pressure on the Chinese community in Indonesia in many ways. Although no proof is available, its large staff (only a few are on the diplomatic list, but one foreign diplomat estimates that the Chinese have "at least 100 people" in their Embassy) is generally believed to be spending a lot of money, which is used to influence the press, schools, organizations, and leading individuals. It is known that the Embassy collects sizable amounts of money, in the form of "contributions" to various causes, from leading Chinese businessmen. It is still carrying on a major propaganda effort, directed especially toward students and teachers. It invites and pays for numerous trips by groups of Indonesian Overseas Chinese to China, and these people when they return are expected to vote the right way in their associations and on their school boards. It is sending a large number of Chinese students from Indonesia to China for free middle school and college education; according to conservative estimates, between 1,500 and 2,000 have been returning to China annually during the past three years. The Embassy is also able to intimidate Chinese who have relatives back home and businessmen who can be hurt by the actions of Communist-controlled associations in Indonesia. And, although ideology is certainly not primary in determining the outlook of the Overseas Chinese as a whole, it is attracting many of the Chinese youth in Indonesia.

The Embassy does not do most of this directly, although it does hold frequent and large parties and has considerable direct contact with the Chinese community. Nor does it depend on the Chinese Communist Party, because although it may exist underground the Chinese Communist Party is illegal in Indonesia. The main front organizations ueed by the Embassy are the Communist-oriented general federations of Chinese associations. In Djakarta it is the 51-member Working Committee of this federation which is in constant touch with all segments of the community, collects and disburses funds, organizes and propagandizes.

All of the activities directed by the Embassy bring Chinese into close political contact with the homeland. There have been, however, some factors operating in the opposite direction. The Chinese in Indonesia are first and foremost businessmen, and many (even some who go along with the Connunists) realize that

communism is basically incompatible with their private commercial interests. Others react against the harsh treatment of their relatives in China (although recently this has been modified by the Communists). Also a factor is the decline in intimate contact with their home districts since the Communists' rise to power. Even though the Indonesian Government maintains cordial relations with Communist China, it has attempted to restrict relations between the Overseas Chinese and their native provinces. In 1950 it forbade, with a few exceptions, remittances from the Chinese to their families back home, (Remittances have continued illegally, however, at a fairly high rate; one foreign observer estimates they now total U.S.$20-$30 million annually, but this figure seems extremely high to me,) Indonesia bars the re-entry into Indonesia of Chinese students who go to China for their education. It has stringently restricted further immigration, allowing the entry of only a few Chinese per year, (In this too, however, there is still an illegal flow, mainly via Sumatra and Borneo.) Th'ere is no, doubt, therefore, that actual personal and financial contacts with China have declined, even though the force of political and emotional attraction has in some respects increased.

Another very important factor influencing the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia has been the general political climate in the country. The Indonesian Government has consistently tried to maintain friendly relations with the major communist nations (as part of a neutralist policy aimed at "coexistence") and has tolerated communism domestically, Since the present cabinet came to power with PKI support in 1953, the Indonesian Communist movement has been given almost free rein to develop its organization and propaganda. In this situation, opposition to communism means opposition to Indonesian Government policies.

Within the past year, the Indonesian Government has also taken strong repressive measures against pro-Kuomintang activities. Secret police have kept close watch on Kuomintang members and have arrested some on flimsy charges. I talked with one Kuomintang editor who is almost afraid of his shadow; he had been thrown into jail for several days without any specific charges being made against him, Before the Bandung Conference, Kuomintang leaders in both Djakarta and Bandung were summoned by the police and warned that they would be held responsible if any incidents took place when Chou En-lai arrived. Display of Chinese Nationalist flags outdoors has been banned, (communist flags can be flown.) Most important of all, a few key Kuomintang leaders have been arrested and then deported to Taiwan. The most dramatic case was the deportation in late December last year of Chang Hsun-yi and Chu Chang-tung, two of the most militantly anti-Communist Chinese leaders, on vague charges of political activities.

This crackdown on the Kuomintang has been led by Indonesian Minister of Justice Djody Gondokusomo, who is accused both of having financial motives and of being influenced by the Chinese Embassy and the Communist Party. (Some previous Indonesian Governments have played the Kuomintang and the Communists off against

each other.) Whatever the motives, the repressive measures have in fact intimidated the pro-Taiwan group, and its members are now lying low, afraid to be active, lacking in funds, and opposed by majority sentiment, In view of all this, it is rather strange that the Kuomintang continues to be a legally-permitted organization (it has existed for over 40 years and claims to be a community institution), while the Chinese Communist Party is banned.

None of the political pulling and tugging within the Chinese community has very much direct influence on Indonesian politics. It is of some importance indirectly, however, Despite a lack of concrete proof, it is generally believed that some "contributions" from Chinese businessmen eventually find their way into the coffers of the Indonesian Communist Party and make up a significant source of its ample political funds. The leaders of international communism are obviously relying on the Indonesian Communists, not the Chinese, to compete for power within Indonesia, but the Chinese are probably depended on for financial support,

By and large the Overseas Chinese have stayed out of Indonesian politics and have tried to work along with those in power, Only a few are in government. At present there are eight in parliament (the constitution provides for a minimum of nine, but they are one short), all of whom are peranakan members of Indonesian parties and only two of whom arc? generally regarded as defenders of Chinese interests as such, There are two Chinese members of the cabinet, heading the health and finance ministries, but they are not very important, Generally, speaking, the Chinese still are not interested in government service. There are a few Chinese in each of the major Indonesian parties,' including the Muslim parties, but probably the only party in which their membership exceeds in percentage terms their position in the population as a whole is the PSI (Socialists), This party has, according to its chief, 5,000-10,000 members of Chinese origin out of a total membership of about 100,000. None of this adds up to an important role in local politics, and if anything the Chinese have been important in Indonesian politics not as participants themselves, but as a target for the Indonesian nationalism which has motivated most of the parties,

At the moment the only significant Chinese political grouping in Indonesia is an organization called Eaperki (Consultative Body of Indonesian Citizenship), and it is, strictly speaking, neither a party nor Chinese. Baperki is an organization, founded in March 1954, which is dedicated to nondiscrininatory treatment of all Indonesian citizens (Arabs, Eurasians, Indfans, etc., as well as Chinese). Its membership is overwhelmingly Chinese, however, and although it claims to have no ideological basis, its top leaders are pro-Communist and pro-Peking. It now has 112 branches and 35,000 members, and it is running about 70 candidates in the forthcoming Indonesian elections, hoping to elect perhaps three members to parliament.

Baperki is currently the only Chinese organization which

has any chance of developing into a party operating in Indonesian politics, and there is no evidence yet of any significant trend toward greater Chinese interest in the local political scone, A few peranakans are asking themselves whether or not they should take more interest in politics, and if so whether participation in existing parties or development of a Chinese political movement would be better, but the majority of Chinese are still following a policy of noninvolvement,

The most important political activities among the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia, therefore, link them to China rather than to Indonesia, and many international and domestic factors seem to be reinforcing rather than weakening this link at present,

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SCCIAL AND CULTURAL TRENDS

The economic and political influences affecting the Overseas Chinese are the most apparent ones, but there are several other recent developments of long-range significance which also seem to be helping to set the Chinese apart rather than assisting to integrate them into Indonesian society.

The Chinese have become increasingly urbanized in Indonesia during the last decade, The main transfer from countryside to city took place during the revolutionary postwar years, particularly during 1946 and 1947 when there were several outbursts of violent nationalism directed against the Chinese, (Ironically, the worst outburst--which was probably the only anti-Chinese violence since 1740 which might legitimately be called a "pogrom"--took place at Tangerang, inhabited by Chinese farmers who are among the most assimilated Chinese in Indonesia.) As a result, there was a fairly large-scale move into the cities, and a large percentage of those who moved have settled down and show no inclination to return to the countryside. This increased urban concentration naturally brings the Chinese into closer contact with each other and emphasizes their isolation from Indonesian influences.

Chinese education has expanded a great deal in Indonesia during the past ten years, although Chinese schools have been slowly growing since about 1900. One contributing factor in the recent expansion has been the decline of Dutch education in Indonesia, Before the war many Chinese sent their children to Dutch-Chinese schools (which used the Dutch language), but the value of a Dutch education now is slight, Instead of shifting their children to Indonesian schools, many peranakans have acqaired a new interest in Chinese education. Nationalist feeling has, of course, been a primary motive behind totok support of more Chinese education, The number of Chinese schools is constantly increasing, therefore, and these schools are overflowing

with students. In Djakarta, for example, there were only three senior middle schools before the war, but now there are seven, and their crowded classrooms cannot meet the demand. There is no government restriction on privately-supported Chinese schools (in marked contrast to school laws of Thailand) and practically no regulation of them. The teachers are China-born, and the cur icula which the schools follow are focused on China. One of the several Chinese schools which I visited in Djakarta, fos example, teaches in its top class six hours of Chinese, six of English, and only one of Indonesian weekly; and its five hours weekly of history, geography, and citizenship are oriented wholly toward China. It is still true that Chinese education is not as well developed in Indonesia as in some other countries, but Chinese education is definitely on the upswing.

Related to this is the growing use of the Chinese language in Indonesia. In the past, a surprisingly large number of peranakans, especially the Hokkiens, did not know any Chinese, but during the past few years there has been a definite upsurge in interest in Chinese. Many peranakans now want, their children to know Chinese, and a few have learned it for the first tine themselves. A majority of the students at every middle school which I visited came from families which now do not speak Chinese at home; their own homes may well be different in the fnture.

The Chinese press has felt the effects of these trends. There are two types of Chinese newspapers in Indonesia; those published in Chinese and those published in Indonesian. Both of these are still important, but the relative importance of the Chinese-language dailies is increasing,

The centralization of Chinese community organizations into nationwide general federations undoubtedly has also had an effect of emphasizing the solidarity and cohesiveness of the Chinese. The head of one of these federations told ne that there are definitely more peranakans taking part in his organization than there would have been before the war, even though a few have recently been scared off by Kuomintang-Communist conflict.

All of these trends have affected the outlook of the Chinese in Indonesia in many ways, some of them fairly subtle. For example, a well-known Chinese in Djakarta whose family has been in Indonesia for many generations said to me that, whereas in the past peranakan families generally discouraged their daughters from marrying totoks, he knows of several cases where they now encourage it. On other hand, intermarriage between totoks and Indonesians has steadily decreased and is now almost rare.

The pull of most of these influences is toward China, not toward Indonesia.

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THE FUTURE

If the situation of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia seems complicated and confusing to outside observers, it apparently is almost equally so to the Indonesians and Chinese themselves,

Nobody is certain how the Sino-Indonesian agreement on dual nationality, if ratified, will affect the situation, The only certainty is that it will not really "solve" the "Overseas Chinese problem" in Indonesia.

The Chinese community in Indonesia, subjected to innumerable influences and pulled or pushed by conflicting forces, will remain an extremely important group, But whether it becomes better integrated into Indonesian society or becomes more distinct as an alien group, as it seems to be becoming now; whether it turns inward or continues to turn outward, as at present; whether it opposes the Communists or continues the current pro-Communist trend--these are questions which will be decided by many complex factors, both international and domestic,

The policies of the Indonesian Government will definitely be one important factor. At present, however, although the Indonesians wish to assimilate the Chinese, they do not seem to have worked out a real assimilation policy, and their discriminatory policies, although understandable, actually seem to be creating new barriers to integration of the Chinese. The period ahead is one in which the Indonesians will probably be forced to try to clarify their policies toward the Chinese, This will be a difficult task. Even if the citizenship question is eventually cleared up, the Indonesians will have to decide many questions. What should be done to encourage assimilation? Some Indonesians are now thinking in terms of beginning with control over education, How can an Indonesian business class be encouraged without treating Chinese with Indonesian citizenship as second-class citizens? Attempts are now being made to work out restrictive measures which avoid a racial basis, What should be done to Chinese in Indonesia who remain aliens?

On their side, the Chinese may also be forced to do some serious thinking about their position. To what extent are ties with the China homeland an asset or a liability? How much can the Chinese influence Indonesian policies toward them by what they think and do? Is it desirable or not for the Chinese to abandon their traditional policy of noninvolvement and enter Indonesian politics, either through existing parties or through parties of their own?'

Questions such as these may not be finally answered in the period immediately ahead, But they will probably be raised with increasing frequency.

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