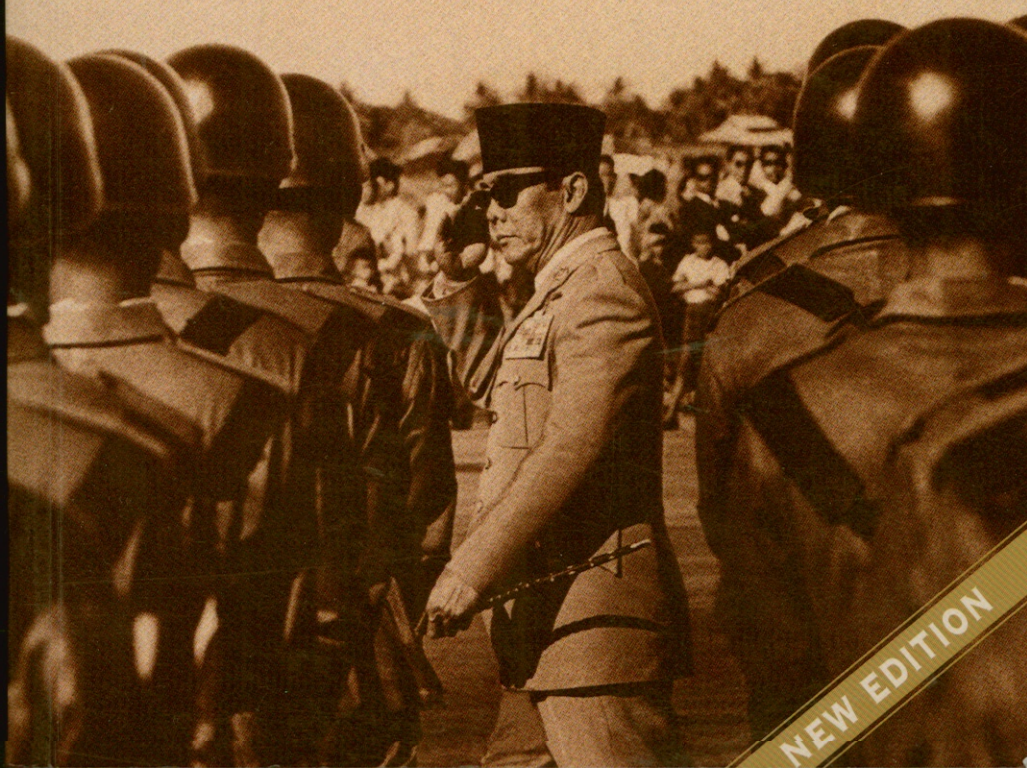


SUKARNO

A Political Biography

J. D. LEGGE



NEW EDITION

Contents

- Preface *page 5*
- Prologue *page 11*
- 1 | Boyhood *page 26*
- 2 | Origins of Nationalism *page 41*
- 3 | Apprenticeship in Nationalism—
Surabaya and Bandung 1916–1926 *page 61*
- 4 | First Steps as a Nationalist Leader:
The Search for Unity 1926–1929 *page 89*
- 5 | The Fact of Division 1930–1932 *page 123*
- 6 | Exile *page 153*
- 7 | Collaborator or Patriot? *page 173*
- 8 | The Proclamation of Independence *page 206*
- 9 | Chairman of the Revolution *page 229*
- 10 | Figurehead President *page 268*
- 11 | The Making of Guided Democracy *page 317*
- 12 | Great Leader of the Revolution *page 352*
- 13 | Ideological Reformulations *page 380*
- 14 | Foreign Adventure and Domestic Balance *page 401*
- 15 | The Fall of Sukarno *page 430*
- Bibliographical Note *page 460*
- Index *page 463*
- Photo Credits *page 480*

Preface

to the Third Edition

The first edition of this book appeared in 1972, shortly after Sukarno's death. Much has happened since then and much has been written about Indonesia's struggle for independence and about the early years of the republic. It is a question whether the passage of time and the resulting changes in perspective will affect the way we judge the political career of Indonesia's first president.

Earlier observers of the post-war scene in East and Southeast Asia in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s were witnessing a fundamental reshaping of the political structure of the whole region as old empires collapsed and new elites, themselves the products of colonial rule, asserted themselves. Students of these events focused on political and social upheavals, the development of new nationalisms and the emergence of new states, developments which were seen as part of an entirely natural process, a response to colonial rule brought to fruition by the course of global conflict. And the aspirations of those engaged in the struggles of the time were examined as part of that process. It was in that context that leaders like Sukarno were viewed. Half a century later, against a longer time span, the paradigms of the past may be called into question. How do we now see the rise of Indonesian nationalism, the struggle for independence and the goals of the new republic? If it seemed a natural process at the time, do we still see it that way? Or, as the new state failed to produce the prosperous and democratic society that had been hoped for, does nationalist ideology any longer seem an appropriate framework for the understanding of political action? If not, how does that affect our current assessment of earlier actors on the political stage?

Certainly Sukarno's own reputation has fluctuated over the years. Long accepted as the leader and perhaps the creator of a

1. For a recent discussion of nationalism as viewed today see B. R. O'G. Anderson, 'Indonesian Nationalism Today and in the Future' in *Indonesia*, No. 67, April 1999.

new nation, he was discredited in the mid-1960s, edged gradually from office between 1965 and 1968 and honoured fairly perfunctorily at the time of his death in 1970. He then became largely forgotten—or at least ignored. The early years of Suharto's presidency which followed Sukarno's fall were years of reform and economic development, repairing the excesses of Guided Democracy. But even as the New Order regime became more authoritarian and corrupt there was at first little revival of nostalgia for the excitements and volatility of the Sukarno years.

During the 1990s, however, growing disaffection with the regime's repressive features, its corruption and nepotism, led to demands for reform (*reformasi*) and in that changed context, memories of the parliamentary period of the 1950s did serve to evoke an interest in Sukarno himself, an interest that was greatly stimulated by the emergence of his daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri, as a new actor on the political stage. In 1993 she was elected to the chairmanship of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), one of the two non-governmental parties allowed to exist after a radical simplification of parties in 1973. (The other was the Muslim-oriented United Development Party or PPP and both were more than balanced by the government-supported party, Golkar.) Megawati's election to the leadership of the PDI was a reflection of popular support, a fact which made her a potential threat to the political controls of the Suharto government. Her popularity was increased three years later when the government moved to oust her from the party chairmanship and supported a violent attack on the party's Jakarta headquarters.

Against the background of economic crisis in East Asia as a whole, Suharto's presidency came under increasing pressure, even within Indonesia's political elite, and though he secured re-election for a seventh term as president at the meeting of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) in March 1988, discontent began to express itself more openly in street demonstrations. These included the actions of organised student protest movements, which culminated in the shooting of four students on the campus of Trisakti University in Jakarta. (The event had echoes of the student protests of 1966 which formed part of the pressures leading to the fall of Sukarno.) The widespread rioting that