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Muslims, Politics, and Violence in Indonesia: An Emerging Jihadist-Islamist Nexus?

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Foreword

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous nation and third largest democracy, is also the world's largest Muslim country and a pivotal state in Southeast Asia. Given its size and importance, including its strategic location, Indonesia is critical to stability in Southeast Asia. It has been the anchor of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and a key player in the ASEAN Regional Forum, the only organization in the Asia-Pacific region that brings the United States together with Japan, China, ASEAN and others to discuss security issues. Indonesia is also home to about $25 billion in U.S. investment, hosting more than 300 major U.S. firms. This year the country has undergone two steps in what is the largest single election in the world—legislative elections in April, and the first round of Indonesia's first-ever direct presidential election in June. The final step, a second-round presidential run-off, takes place this month.

Among many significant trends in this democratic transition, none is as pressing as the rise of political Islam, in both moderate and radical guises. During the 30-year New Order period, President Suharto's relationship with Muslim groups was marked by political expediency; he sought their support when he needed it, but otherwise adopted a philosophy of secular rule that kept Muslim groups and their agendas under control. In the transition to democracy since Suharto's fall in 1998, the moderate Islam embraced by the majority of Indonesians helped to lay the foundations of civil society. The absence of strong political leadership since Suharto's fall, however, has allowed the flourishing of radical Muslim groups seeking to promote an Islamist agenda, including *sharia*, (Islamic law). While some of these Islamist groups have pursued their goals through legal channels such as elections and legislation, others, such as Jemaah Islamiyah, a terrorist group with ties to Al Qaeda, and Laskar Jihad, have used intimidation and violence.

In this NBR Analysis, Dr. Zachary Abuza traces the development of Islamism from a "politically emasculated social phenomenon" to a counter-force to the state, which in the eyes of many Indonesians has failed to pursue economic and political reform. Dr. Abuza argues that Islamist political parties are effectively using public policy, while withdrawing overt references to Islam and *sharia*, to implement a social agenda that gradually erodes secular institutions.

Emphasizing that radical groups expand their membership and support base primarily by deepening people's religious devotion rather than their political ideology, he argues that understanding the Islamists' religious worldview, which generally is not a priority of policy analysts, is nevertheless essential to the discussion of how to deal with them.

Indonesian public opinion of the West and America soured dramatically in the wake of the U.S.-led wars on terrorism and in Iraq. Dr. Abuza contends that by moving into the political mainstream through capitalizing on the resurgent anti-Western sentiment, Islamist groups are gaining influence and increasingly setting the agenda, while moderates and the "silent majority" of Indonesians merely react, reluctant to speak or act effectively against the radicals.

Dr. Abuza concludes that because the majority of Muslims in Indonesia are still moderate, the country can be expected to remain a model of tolerance, secularism, and pluralism in the short term. There exists real cause for concern and caution over the longer term, however, because 1) Indonesian Muslims are showing evidence of greater piety, devotion, and conservatism than in the past, 2) radical Islamism is making inroads through various means, 3) economic performance remains poor and unemployment high, and 4) anti-Western sentiment may remain significant. Given these realities, the "pond" for recruiting young people into radical groups is both "wider and deeper" than ever before. He stresses the need for the Indonesian government to promote tolerance and pluralism while "surgically" striking against Islamists who espouse violence, in order to allow democracy to take hold and political institutions to develop to the point that they will effectively be able to meet the challenges of sustaining a strong and pluralistic society.

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Muslims, Politics, and Violence in Indonesia: An Emerging Jihadist-Islamist Nexus?

Zachary Abuza

During the New Order period, political Islam was largely suppressed by President Suharto in an effort to consolidate Indonesia as a secular state. Since then, however, it is emerging as a powerful force for political change. Democratization has allowed increased political space not only for moderate Islamic parties, but also for more radical Islamist groups and militant jihadists. Among these are Jemaah Islamiyah—which is suspected of maintaining links with Al Qaeda—and Laskar Jihad. These groups seek to secure the national implementation of *sharia* law, defend what they perceive as Muslim interests, and ultimately create a pan-Islamic state in Southeast Asia. By tapping into the growing Islamic consciousness of Indonesia's population, these groups have found a "deepening" and "widening" pool of recruitment. This has been a major factor contributing to increased terrorism and greater sectarian violence in Indonesia's rural provinces. Moreover, while pledging its support in the war on terrorism, the Indonesian government has often been reluctant to take action against these groups for fear of any political backlash and widespread anti-Western sentiment. Indeed, many leading politicians regard these groups as co-religionists or fellow nationalists. The role of religion is often left out of studies of terrorism and sectarian violence in Southeast Asia, but it is one that merits reassessment in view of the conservative Islamic revival within Indonesia and the steady gains made by Indonesia's Islamist political parties.

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Introduction

Islam in Indonesia has always been defined by tolerance, moderation, and pluralism. Whereas in the Middle East Islam has been seen as anathema to democratization, in Indonesia, Islam created the foundations of civil society that made the transition to democracy possible. As Robert Hefner has eloquently argued, Islam was the force of civil society that facilitated Indonesia's transition to democracy.[1] The burgeoning of civil society is positive, but the loosening of constraints on it has allowed "uncivil" society to flourish as well. Most Muslims in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, support the secular state, and only a small minority advocates the establishment of an Islamic regime governed by *sharia*, or strict Islamic law. Most Indonesians eschew literal interpretations of Islam and violence perpetrated in its name. Indeed, Muslim thinkers in Indonesia have made some of the greatest intellectual and theoretical contributions to the debates over Islam and human rights, Islam and democracy, and Islam and women's rights. Nonetheless, political violence has sharply escalated in post-Suharto Indonesia and is increasingly associated with the rise of political and radical Islam.

The fall of Indonesian President Suharto radically altered the political environment in the archipelago. The strongman's resignation left a weak democracy in which there was intense political competition between interim president B.J. Habibie and his successor, moderate Muslim leader Abdurrahman Wahid (better known as Gus Dur), and a parliament that had a newfound and intense sense of empowerment. Under the New Order regime (1965–98), the Indonesian Parliament (DPR) had "very little input in either the formulation or implementation of state policy. Nor did the DPR exercise vigorous oversight of the executive branch."[2] Suharto's successors have often been stymied by a parliament that is no longer quiescent. Strong central government control also broke down as the provinces clamored to redress the historical legacy of over-centralization and demanded more autonomy and revenue sharing. Indonesia's Big Bang decentralization of 2001 has had profound effects. As the World Bank notes, "Within one year, the Big Bang decentralized much of the responsibility for public service to the local level, almost doubled the regional share in government spending, reassigned two-thirds of the central service to the regions, and handed over more than 16,000 service facilities to the regions."[3] Yet the local governments had weak administrative capabilities, having been emasculated under the New Order regime, wherein local government coexisted with branch offices of a larger and more powerful central government that controlled resources.

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[1] Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

[2] Ramlan Surbakti, "Formal Political Institutions," in Richard W. Baker, Hadi Soesastro, et al., eds., *Indonesia: The Challenge of Change*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, p. 68.

[3] The World Bank, *Decentralizing Indonesia*, Report No. 26191-IND, June 2003, p.i.

Political violence, mostly perpetrated by the state, was routine under the New Order regime. Since Suharto's fall, political and sectarian sub-state actors have also wracked the country with violence. The causes of this are multifold. They include the breakdown of the overly centralized and authoritarian New Order regime, as well as the abolition of the *dwi fungsi* (dual function) role of the military (TNI), which previously enjoyed a direct role in civil administration. The split of the Indonesian National Police (INP) from the TNI in 1999 has also led to political violence, as competition between the two over scarce resources and attempts to discredit each other have hampered cooperation.[4]

Previously, the country's best human intelligence network was run by BAIS, the military intelligence service. Since 2000 the police force has been forced to develop its own network of informers. The civilian State Intelligence Bureau, (BIN), likewise has a tense relationship with both the INP and BAIS, competing over jurisdictions and budgets. BIN is infuriated that the police, which denied the existence of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) cells before the terrorist bombing in Bali on October 12, 2002, is now receiving significant international assistance.

Communal resentment over the New Order policy of *transmigrasi* (transmigration), the forced relocation of Javanese to the more sparsely populated outer islands, has been another important source of conflict. Long simmering resentments over land, local political control, and economic disparities erupted into intense violence in several locations in the archipelago beginning in 1997, as communities sensed the sudden decline of central government control.[5]

The central government, for its part, was too concerned with its own future and maintaining political stability. While the transition to democracy in Indonesia has been successful and relatively nonviolent, it has also at times been chaotic. Three presidents have held office since 1998, and some institutions such as the TNI have lost their formal political power, while others, such as the parliament and local governments, have seen their power suddenly increased.

Finally, a corrupt and relatively ineffective judiciary has limited the ability of the state to prosecute acts of violence. Time and again, militants have been acquitted, charges dropped, or light sentences received. For example, no sentences were handed down with the signing of either the Malino I or Malino II accords that attempted to end sectarian violence in the Malukus and Sulawesi, while militant leaders such as the Laskar Jihad's Jafar Umar Thalib

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[4] Kevin O'Rourke, *Reformasi: The Struggle For Power in Post-Soeharto Indonesia*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2002, pp. 395–97.

[5] Jacques Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Molouccan Islands," *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 2002, pp.57–85; O'Rourke, *Reformasi*, pp. 395–97.

had his case dropped twice. A senior leader of JI, Abu Jibril, recently rendered from Malaysia to Indonesia, is expected only to face charges of immigration violations, and not of leading and inciting sectarian violence in the Malukus. The only terrorist suspects that the Indonesian government has vigorously prosecuted are those directly involved in the Bali bombing; three of the leading defendants were sentenced to death, convictions that were upheld in a speedy appeals process. But even now the verdicts are uncertain as the new constitutional court has ruled that the terrorism law cannot be applied retroactively. While Indonesia has jailed more JI members than any other country in the region, the sentences have been light, indicating that the government may be happier to have JI members publicly renounce political violence than to actively prosecute them.

In sum, much of the increased violence since 1998 has been perpetrated in the name of Islam. One of the features of Indonesia's changed political landscape has been the new prominence of radical Muslim groups, which since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the Bali bombings have taken on particular significance.

Why Islamic-motivated violence? The sudden emergence of democracy allowed radical Muslims to quickly establish political parties that were committed to implementing *sharia* law and transforming Indonesia into an Islamic state. For these groups, the changes appeared to be a panacea after the corrupt secularism of Suharto. Other Muslim leaders simply formed "*laskars*" (militias) to defend the interests of Muslims, as state security services allowed continued bloodletting in East Kalimantan, the Malukus, and Central Sulawesi. These leaders felt that that the state had abrogated its responsibility to defend Muslims. Suharto's fall had another important effect: hundreds of radical Muslim exiles, including Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, returned to Indonesia and demanded political space, encouraged by statements by political leaders that the aspirations of all people and groups could no longer be ignored. In mid-2000, Ba'asyir established the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), ostensibly a civil society organization that tries to implement *sharia* peacefully through the democratic process.

More alarming has been the discovery of JI, a large network of terrorist cells linked to Al Qaeda and responsible for two major terrorist attacks, in Bali and in Jakarta in October 2002 and August 2003. Founded in Malaysia by Indonesian radicals living in exile in the early 1990s, JI has emerged as an important Al Qaeda affiliate. While Al Qaeda operatives began supporting sectarian violence in Indonesia in the late 1990s, JI has a clear agenda: to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia that will then emanate out, creating a pan-Islamic state across Southeast Asia.[6]

[6] The concept of Nusantara Raya is tied to both the notion of an Islamic caliphate that would unite all Muslims, as well as to postcolonial sentiments of uniting the Malay race.

To date, more than 225 JI members across the region have been arrested, over 100 in Indonesia alone, and since the Bali investigations began the number of bombings has dropped from 25 in 2002 to just two in 2004.[7] Although these arrests have hurt JI's capabilities, it is actively regrouping and recruiting, and the organization maintains the capability to cause significant economic damage. Indonesia, moreover, continues to be named by Al Qaeda leaders as a moderate Muslim state that is collaborating with the United States, and therefore is a legitimate target.

Although terrorism remains a security concern, it is more likely that Indonesia will be confronted with an upsurge in lateral violence. Sectarian violence has resurged in both Ambon and Central Sulawesi in the first half of 2004. Although some of this activity can be explained by the nationwide prevalence of electoral violence, disturbances in Central Sulawesi, underway since August 2003, predate the election. Both the government's capacity and will to contain the violence is uncertain in an election year. The long political season (three rounds of elections from April to September 2004) raises the specter of continued or increased political and sectarian conflict.

The possibility that Islamist parties will gain in political strength and clout remains a concern. In the 1955 election, all Islamic parties, comprising 40 percent of the total vote, supported *sharia* in the constitution. The two largest Islamist parties at the time, Masyumi and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), have since evolved and now oppose the inclusion of *sharia* in the constitution. Since the 1955 election, Islamist parties have consistently polled in the 14 percent range. In the April 2004 parliamentary elections, Islamists won 21.3 percent of the vote. One Islamist party, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), did exceptionally well, winning 7.3 percent of the popular vote (up from 1.4 percent in 1999), by downplaying its Islamist agenda. The other Islamist parties, the Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB) and the United Development Party (PPP), saw their shares of the vote either remain constant or fall slightly. While it is clear that the majority of the Indonesian electorate remains committed to secular political parties, Islamist parties are slowly growing in strength. The courting of the Muslim vote forces political leaders to maintain a neutral position on cracking down on Islamic radicals.

President Megawati Sukarnoputri, the first foreign leader to visit the United States after September 11, told President George W. Bush, "We mourn with America …We share your grief and outrage, and … we strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations." She reiterated that "Indonesia is ready to cooperate with the U.S. and other civilized countries

[7] Maj. Gen. Sudradjat, Director General of Strategy and Defense, Ministry of Defense, "Defense Reform and Civil Security," presented to U.S.-Indonesia Society, Washington, DC, April 26, 2004.

on counter-terrorism."[8] Once at home, however, Megawati changed her tune and condemned the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Despite its pledge, Indonesia has proven a reluctant partner at times, especially before the October 2002 Bali attacks, but surprisingly even afterwards. One must understand the changing political context to make sense of this. This paper seeks to address five key and somewhat overlapping questions:

- What is the potential for terrorism in Indonesia, especially by JI? How has JI adapted to counter-terrorist strategies, and what are its new tactics? What can be learned from the arrest of some 250 JI suspects?

- What is the potential for continued lateral, or communal, violence? Is the resurgence due to local factors, or is it part of a larger strategy by JI and Islamists?

- What is the role, and what are the goals, of national militant Islamist groups? What links do they have both to terrorist groups and mainstream politicians and organizations?

- What is the link between jihadists and Islamists? Is the link growing, and is their appeal to mainstream Indonesians growing, and if so, why?

- What is the potential for Islamists to make gains within the national body politic, and what strategies are they employing? Importantly, which policies of theirs have not to date been clearly defined? Are they downplaying their Islamist nature to broaden their appeal? If so, can they be brought into the political center? If not, will they operate outside the democratic political process?

Democratization and the Rise of Political Islam

Indonesia's Fragile Transition

During Indonesia's rocky transition to democracy, the country has had three presidents since the fall of Suharto and an election for the fourth is currently underway. This September, for the first time, Indonesians will elect their president directly, in a contest between Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (who won 33.6 percent of votes in the July primary), and incumbent

[8] *Jakarta Post*, September 21, 2001.

Megawati Sukarnoputri (26.2 percent).[9] The political reforms that allowed the direct election of the president have been wildly popular, and have transformed the political system. For the first time, an independent candidate like Yudhoyono, who has a weak party base, is leading the polls against politicians with entrenched party systems. Founded hastily in September 2003, the Democratic Party (PD) was only able to win 8 percent of the parliamentary vote in April 2004, a fraction of the votes Yudhoyono received. Indeed, one of the two largest political parties, Megawati Sukarnoputri's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) suffered a significant loss of support between the 1999 and 2004 elections, with its percentage share of votes falling from 34 to 18.5 percent. Political reform has been rapid, at least on the surface, but the extent to which democratization is taking place is less clear, and the roles of many other political institutions are still in flux.

Since 1998, and despite new administrations and cabinet changes, the executive branch has suffered from infighting and allegations of ineptitude and collusion, and so far has been unable to exert effective leadership. All three presidents, B.J. Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri, have proven to be weak, indecisive, and ineffective leaders. As a result, polls have consistently shown a preference for strong leadership.[10]

While the legislature has quickly shed its image as a rubber-stamp institution and wielded its power, creating a strong check on executive power, this has resulted in new problems as well. Too often it has blocked initiatives for economic reform, most notably privatization. This has raised doubts about its ability to facilitate rather than impede improved governance and economic recovery. The laws that have emerged from the DPR are often poorly written and contradictory in both letter and spirit.

The judicial system is in a state of disorder. Corruption is rife, making it one of the weakest of the political institutions in Indonesia today; it failed to address even the most serious cases of nepotism involving Suharto's close associates. The courts remain woefully underfunded and lack adequate numbers of trained professionals.[11]

The influence of the armed forces over politics, while reduced, is still evident. In 2000 the Wahid administration abolished *dwi fungsi*, the civil-administrative role of the TNI. Active

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[9] An outright election winner was unlikely in a field of five candidates, especially as the successful candidate must also have nationwide support. The current election law states that the successful candidate must also get 20 percent of the vote in half the provinces.

[10] The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (PRCPP), Global Attitudes Survey, *Views of a Changing World*, June 2003.

[11] In January 2004 the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) announced a $19 million, six-year program in part to address judicial reform and assist in training of legal and judicial personnel.

duty military officers can no longer serve in civil-administrative functions, and parliamentary positions are popularly contested.[12] In the Suharto era, the military held 8 percent of the DPR's seats; it now has no representation in the lower house.[13] Its withdrawal of support for President Wahid was critical to his downfall in 2000, while its support for Megawati ensured a peaceful ascension to power. As the International Crisis Group observed in 2001, "[The TNI] still exercises political influence at national and regional levels and has the capacity, although currently not the intent, to recapture political heights."[14]

Development of Political Islam

Parallel to the process of democratization has been the development of political Islam, or the Islamicization of politics. The political landscape of Indonesia has been transformed since 1998, not just by the downfall of the authoritarian New Order regime, but by the proliferation of Islamic political parties and institutions. Before 1998 the state was seen by the people as a provider, whereas after 1998, the state became the problem. With this shift, Islam has emerged as the counter-weight to the state.

The history of political Islam in Indonesia reaches back a century or more. Dutch colonial policies strove to prevent Islam from becoming a focus of nationalism by trying to emasculate religious leaders by co-opting the *priyayi*, or Muslim teachers, and turning them into colonial administrators. Mosque officials, or *penghulu*, were kept subordinate to the comprador *priyayi* who benefited from colonial rule. Two Islamic organizations were founded in 1912, the Muhammadiyah and the Sarekat Islam (the Islamic League). The Nahdlatul Ulama (the Revival of Religious Scholars, written here as NU) was founded in 1926. For the most part, these organizations concentrated on welfare, social work, education, and business and health issues, and avoided explicit participation in politics.

The Japanese, who occupied Indonesia from 1942 to 1945, began to use Islam to build up anti-Western sentiments and established the Office of Religious Affairs, which was given authority over Islamic issues at the local level. In 1943 the Japanese required that all Muslim organizations be folded into a single organization, the Masyumi, the Indonesian Muslim's Con-

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[12] Angel Rabasa, et al., *The Military and Democracy in Indonesia: Challenges, Politics, and Power*, Arlington: RAND Corporation, 2003, pp. 47–52.

[13] Sian Powell, "Indonesia's Military Moves Back to Centre Stage," *The Australian*, August 16, 2004.

[14] International Crisis Group, *Indonesia's Presidential Crisis: The Second Round*, Indonesia Briefing, May 21, 2001.

sultative Council, which was committed to making Islam the official state religion. The Masyumi became the leading Indonesian political party in the war of independence against the Dutch, building a base of support on its Islamic credentials. In the 1940s and 1950s, after Indonesia gained independence from the Dutch, the idea of Islamic statehood spread rapidly throughout the archipelago. Many were upset at General Sukarno's ideology of *Pancasila* (the five principles of the independent Indonesian state),[15] which fell short of either making Islam the state religion (acknowledging merely "one God" rather than Islam by name), or implanting *sharia* into the Indonesia constitution. Sukarno wanted to establish a secular state and assuage the ethnic minorities who dominated the outer islands. He therefore dropped the demands enshrined in the draft constitution, known as the Jakarta Charter, that called for the application of *sharia* law to all Indonesian Muslims.[16]

Muslim guerillas were important in fighting the Dutch. A group called the Darul Islam, led by Sekar Marijan Kartosuwiryo[17] and committed to establishing Indonesia as an Islamic state, founded the Indonesian Islamic Army in 1947. In August 1949 the Darul Islam attempted to establish a secessionist Islamic state in West Java: "By rejecting Islam as the sole foundation of the state, [the government] had made itself as evil an enemy as the Dutch."[18] This period became known as the "triangular war" among the Darul Islam secessionists, Sukarno's nationalist forces, and the Dutch. On August 7, 1949, Kartosuwiryo founded Negara Islam Indonesia, an Islamic state in West Java. When Kartosuwiryo refused to submit his rebel army to the command of Sukarno's republican army and rejected both *Pancasila* and the constitution, his forces were attacked on Sukarno's orders. Support spread to central Java, Aceh, and south Sulawesi. In 1953 the Acehnese revolted, loosely aligning with the Darul Islam rebellion, which was driven underground in 1962.[19]

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[15] The five principles of Pancasila are belief in one supreme God; humanitarianism; nationalism expressed in the unity of Indonesia; consultative democracy; and social justice.

[16] In the draft preamble to the 1945 constitution, there is a statement that, while not turning Indonesia into an Islamic state, states that there is the legal "obligation to follow Islamic *Sharia* for its adherents." This phrase, known as the Jakarta Charter, was omitted from the final draft of constitution that was passed on August 18, 1945.

[17] Kartosuwiryo was an excellent organizer and very charismatic, with some experience in national politics. He was a leader of an anti-colonial paramilitary force. He enhanced his credentials by withdrawing from politics during the Japanese occupation and did not participate in the Masyumi.

[18] Cited in Adam Schwartz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, p. 169.

[19] The Darul Islam organization exists to this day, and in many ways it operates much the way the Muslim Brotherhood operated in Anwar Sadat's Egypt. While it is still an illegal organization, it is more or less tolerated, and members run for political office on the tickets of other parties. There are some 14 factions of the DI movement, each one claiming to be the true heirs of Kartosuwiryo.

Islam in the New Order

Sukarno's secular government, with *Pancasila* as its official ideology, denied Muslim radicals the place in government they demanded and failed to establish *sharia* as the foundation of the legal order. Sukarno believed that Indonesia could never be a "unitary" state if Islam served as its basis. Islamic groups suffered several setbacks, including the 1955 elections, when the majority of the people voted for secular parties or parties not principally defined as Islamic. In a country where 87 percent of the population was Muslim, the two Muslim parties never garnered more than 40 percent of the vote. The two largest secular parties, the Indonesian National Party (PNI) and the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) were able to match their share of the vote.

In 1965 the Muslim parties and social organizations supported the military coup led by Major General Suharto. Once Suharto consolidated power, he denied Muslims a seat at the political table. He rejected the Jakarta Charter, continued to pursue a secular course, and outlawed the pursuit of an Islamic state, thereby attempting to steer a middle course between the communist far left and the Islamist far right.

The NU and the Muhammadiyah were allowed to remain operational but their political activities were often circumscribed. The two organizations took different approaches to survival in the New Order regime. The NU struggled to find a political role, remaining a separate political party, at times accepting the status quo and at other times serving as a nascent opposition to Suharto. The Muhammadiyah adopted a "policy of non-cooperation with the government."[20] Its senior members never abandoned their pro-*sharia* stance but either retreated to academe or focused on *dakwah* (appeal). In 1967 some of its leaders founded the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII), whose goal was "to create a conservative Islamic constituency capable of challenging the [Suharto] regime."[21] Over time, political repression hardened groups such as the DDII and created a cadre of hardcore Islamists who railed against secularism and the role of Christians and Chinese.

In 1973 the government forced all political parties except the ruling Golkar to merge into two parties. The secular parties became the Democratic Party of Indonesia (PDI), while the four Islamic parties formed the United Development Party (PPP) with the NU as its largest component. Under this corporatist political system, the Muslim elite was given a seat at the

[20] Robert W. Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 104, no. 3 (September 2002), p. 756.

[21] Ibid., pp. 756–57.

table and, to ensure loyalty and compliance, all funding came from the state.[22] Any challenge to the regime resulted in its economic ruin, thereby ensuring the continuation of Suharto's rule. However, as Adam Schwarz notes, Suharto thereafter set out to politically emasculate the Islamic community. He ruthlessly manipulated this community to serve his own political purposes.[23] He cracked down on Muslim political activities and forced all religious organizations to support *Pancasila*—which did not favor Islam but guaranteed religious freedom in general.

While Suharto was successful in weakening Islam politically, as a social force it grew tremendously.

In the early 1980s the NU came under the leadership of a charismatic cleric Abdurrahman Wahid. Wahid led the group to adopt "*Kembali Ke Khittah* 1926" ("the Spirit of 1926"). This doctrine rejected overt political involvement, arguing that it was better able to advocate social change outside of politics. Wahid argued that participating in the charade of politics was actually destructive and distracting. The group departed from the PPP in 1984 in order to refocus itself on its mandate of establishing religious, cultural, and social activities.[24]

> "While Suharto was successful in weakening Islam politically, as a social force it grew tremendously. Islamic schools, mosques, and Muslim publications were the only forums for public policy debate; all the more so because the state was increasingly unwilling to crackdown on them. Islam came to be seen as a safe alternative to the heavily circumscribed political structure."[25]

By the mid-1980s, as the economy was slowing and the regime was mired in corruption, Suharto began to reach out to Islamic movements to help legitimize the regime. He himself increased his public displays of piousness, speaking Arabic, going on *Haj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca), and promoting Islamist generals. Between 1988 and 1993, he also tried to appeal to hard-line Islamists as they too opposed democratization processes that were being demanded by a growing portion of the population. Suharto made concessions to the Muslim community and created a new state-controlled Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), in order to co-opt Muslim intellectuals and to discredit the NU and Wahid—whom Suharto had been unable to oust from the organization's leadership.[26]

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[22] M. Djadijono, "Economic Growth and the Performance of Political Parties," in Baker, et al., *Indonesia: The Challenge of Change*, pp. 126–28.

[23] Schwartz, *A Nation in Waiting*, pp. 173–75.

[24] Douglas E. Ramage, "Social Organizations: Nahdlatul Ulama and Pembangunan," in Richard W. Baker, et al., eds., *Indonesia: The Challenge of Change*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, p. 205.

[25] Schwartz, *A Nation in Waiting*, p. 164.

[26] Suharto's concessions included: 1) the founding of an Islamic bank; 2) enhancing the authority

An Islamic or "green" faction in the military also sought to manipulate religious tensions so as to weaken democratic opposition to the New Order regime. It targeted and discredited moderate Muslims. The green faction became closely aligned with a conservative Islamic leader Ahmad Sumargono, head of the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World (KISDI). This political entity was established in 1987 by members of the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia. It was rabidly anti-Western and called for a greater relationship with the Islamic world.[27] Sumargono was the first outspoken Islamic leader at the tail end of the New Order regime and has, in many ways, dominated the debate in the post-Suharto era. A military think-tank, the Center for Policy and Development Studies, became the green faction's "headquarters" and was closely aligned with Golkar's Research and Development Bureau that was under the leadership of Din Syamsuddin.

Despite the growing strength of conservative Islamists and their growing ties to the New Order regime, members of the mainstream Muhammadiyah and NU were disgusted with the rampant corruption of the Suharto family and its cronies. The newspaper *Republika* became an outspoken critic of the New Order regime and many members joined the pro-democracy forces. In the end, Islamic leaders, including those in ICMI, turned on Suharto because they believed he was using them for his own political ends.

With the collapse of the New Order in May 1998, political constraints were lifted for the first time in decades and Islamic organizations were quick to capitalize on the liberal political conditions and newfound freedoms of press and organization. Indeed Islamic organizations played a major role in bringing Suharto down. As Hefner argues, Islam, rather than being a conservative anti-democratic force, was the single most important force for political change:

> Since the late-1980s, the largest audience for democratic and pluralist ideas in Indonesia has been, not secular nationalist, but reform minded Muslim democrats. Nowhere in the Muslim world have Muslim intellectuals engaged the ideas of democracy, civil society, pluralism, and the rule of law with a vigor and confidence equal to that of Indonesian Muslims.[28]

The active role of Muslims in politics was also encouraged by Suharto's successor, B.J. Habibie, who appointed Din Syamsuddin as head of the Indonesian Ulamas Council to marshal support among conservative Muslims.

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of Islamic courts; 3) lifting the ban on some aspects of Muslim women's customary dress in schools; 4) the founding of an Islamic newspaper, *Republika*, in 1992; 5) increased Islamic TV programming, including educational TV programs to teach Arabic; 6) Increased funding for Islamic schools and Muslim schools; 7) abolishing the sports lottery; and 8) promoting more Islamic generals.

[27] Robert W. Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," pp. 756–57.

[28] Hefner, "Islam and the Nation in the Post-Suharto Era," p. 49.

Corruption was so endemic that Islamic leaders were able to present themselves as the only clean politicians in the country. The number of Islamic-based parties proliferated. By 1998, 20 out of 80 parties were "Islamic-oriented," though most were small and had little chance of electoral success. Today, three large Islamic parties have nationwide followings but do not yet form a monolithic bloc that could successfully impose its agenda.

While the three main Islamist parties—the United Development Party (PPP), the Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB) and the Justice Party (PK, now renamed Prosperous Justice Party [PKS])—were able to capitalize on the perception that they were less corrupt, together they won only 14 percent of the popular vote in the 1999 election and held only 16 percent of parliamentary seats. All three parties' platforms centered on the comprehensive implementation of Islamic law for Muslims. Yet there were still profound differences among them (in addition to personal rivalries). Of all the Islamist parties, the PPP, led by Hamzah Haz, was an umbrella party that included both traditionalist and modernist Muslims. The PPP was the only Islamist Party with a nationwide network, even though it was rife with factionalism. [29]

The Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB), headed by Yusril Ihza Mahendra, the Minister of Human Rights, emerged from modernist leadership of the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia. Like the PK, it was small and focused geographically on Java. The PBB continues to have weak organizational structure and is internally fractured. By 2003, it had split into two discernable camps.

The Justice Party, founded in 1998, emerged from a network of Islamic study groups on campuses that modeled themselves on the cellular network of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.[30] In its stance against corruption, ministerships were turned down in efforts to maintain party integrity. It is by far the cleanest party in Indonesia and its parliamentary ministers have good personal reputations, live modestly, and do not aspire to become typical Jakarta elites. The PK also has the best grass-roots organizational infrastructure, with a core of dedicated cadres. The party, which began with only 200,000 members, was able to win 1.4 million votes in the 1999 election. It derived the vast majority of its support derived from urban areas on Java, and polled especially well in precincts that included major state univer-

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[29] The traditionalist school of thought in Indonesian Islam are those who adhere to the Syafii School of Islamic jurisprudence, which instructs its adherents on nuanced legal interpretations of Islam through a network of mainly rural-based *madrassas*. "Modernists abjure classical schools of jurisprudence in favor of direct readings of the Koran and the Hadith." As a group, modernists tend to be urban and better educated. The two schools of thought are each represented by an organization—modernism by Muhammadiyah and traditionalism by Nahdlatul Ulama. Saiful Mujani and R. William Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 15, no. 1 (January 2004), p. 11.

[30] Mujani and Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," p. 117.

sities, indicating that the party remains popular with idealistic students. Perhaps the most important factor in the PK's relative success was that unlike all the other political parties, there were no discernable internal factions.

Although these parties were small, and only represented a small percentage of the popular vote, from 1999 to 2004 coalition politics gave the Islamist parties a disproportionate voice. While they only garnered 14 percent of the popular vote in the 1999 election, and together held only 16 percent of parliamentary seats, they joined forces with the two moderate political parties, the National Awakening Party (PKB) or Amien Rais' National Mandate Party (PAN). This alliance, known as the Central Axis (*Poros Tengah*), collectively had won 34 percent of the 1999 popular vote and 33 percent of the seats in the DPR.

Wahid had considerable popular support at the start of his administration. A long-time critic of Suharto and the New Order regime, he also preached a moderate brand of Islam that appealed to the majority of the population and that embraced political, ethnic, and religious pluralism. However, Wahid squandered his support through incompetence, poor administration, and the mishandling of the economy, as well as failure to gain the support of the military in accepting the independence of East Timor. The parliament felt it had no choice but to impeach him, especially after the military withdrew their support. In the end, the majority of Indonesians greeted his replacement by his Vice President and former rival Megawati Sukarnoputri with a palpable sense of relief.

The ambivalence of government officials and moderate Muslim political and social organizations following the September 11 terrorist attacks and during the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan, indicated the degree of hedging that Indonesian politicians felt was required. Vice President Hamzah Haz used inflammatory rhetoric to blame the attacks on the United States and stated that they might "cleanse U.S. sins," a view that enjoyed wide public support. On September 25, 2001, Indonesia's top Islamic authority, the Council of Indonesian Ulamas, under the leadership of Din Syamsuddin, called for "all the Muslims of the world to unite … in the name of Allah in a *jihad* if an aggression by America and its allies occurs against Afghanistan and the Islamic world." Immediately following the attacks on the United States, five straight days of mass demonstrations protested the U.S. use of force in Afghanistan. Even moderate Muslim politicians hedged their bets and no leaders overtly criticized Al Qaeda.

After the Bali bombings of 2002, moderate Muslim groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah began to take a firmer stance against the radicals. Nevertheless, a degree of hedging continues and is likely to intensify in wake of the war in Iraq. Growing anti-Western sentiment, combined with widespread unemployment and poverty, could easily push the disenchanted toward Islam-

ist groups, increasing the risk of popular demonstrations against, or attacks on, Western interests. The war on terrorism remains a sensitive issue as the vast majority of Indonesians believe that it is patently anti-Muslim. Throughout the 2003–04 electoral campaign, presidential candidates have been reticent about the war on terrorism and the degree to which they will cooperate with the United States by cracking down on Islamic militants. The Islamist parties remain a minority, polling consistently at around 14 percent. Today they hold 20 percent of parliamentary seats, up from 16 percent in 1999. Their gains have been gradual but steady.

Under Suharto, Islam was unable to become an independent political force. Now it is not only a political force but is moving to the center of politics. The Islamists have effectively linked Islam to nationalism, so as to broaden their appeal, and they have been at the forefront of secessionist violence in other parts of the archipelago (especially the Malukus and Sulawesi). The Islamists have forged a durable relationship with the green faction in the TNI and have a shared interest in maintaining Indonesia's territorial integrity.

The Potential for Lateral-Communal Violence

In the midst of the fall of Suharto, the chaotic transition to democracy, and a national political crisis an altogether new crisis emerged: sectarian violence in the Malukus, which have a large Christian community.[31] There had been sporadic outbreaks of such violence in the 1980s, when ethnic balances were upset by transmigration policies that forced large numbers of Javanese and Madurese to move to the outer islands. In 1998 widespread violence began in Kalimantan. Following the breakaway of East Timor in 1999, it took on a more sectarian character in the Malukus and then Central Sulawesi. The causes of this violence were multifold, and have many divergent explanations. All of them, however, acknowledge the important role of outside groups and are negative results of the post-Suharto political liberalization.

In January 1999 a small fight in Ambon in the Malukus exploded into large-scale communal warfare. Despite the presence of a large contingent of military and police forces, the province was effectively segregated along religious lines with neighborhoods and villages having become barricaded, armed camps. Fighting intensified in the second half of 1999, culminating in Bloody Christmas, in which Christian paramilitaries killed over 500 Muslims in one massacre, thereby sparking widespread retaliation. Beginning in January 2000, mass demon-

[31] The foremost study of the causes of violence in the Malukus is Jacques Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Molouccan Islands," *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 2002, pp. 57–85; see also International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos in Maluku*, Asia Report No. 10, December 2000.

strations occurred in Jakarta and called for a jihad in the Malukus in order to save the Muslims. Din Syamsuddin, the head of the MUI, "quickly turned his attention to mobilizing public sentiment against the new president," and in favor of Laskar Jihad (LJ) "and the battle against Christians in the troubled province."[32] The introduction of external forces, including members of the LJ, JI, and approximately seven Al Qaeda operatives, escalated the conflict to a new level. The government response was haphazard and lame and the violence continued. In June 2000, President Wahid finally imposed a state of civil emergency. By July 2000, although there were approximately 14,000 troops in Maluku, Muslim leaders were infuriated that the government was not doing enough to prevent the secessionist struggle and to protect the interests and physical safety of Muslims. In total, up to 9,000 people were killed in the fighting.

Jacques Bertrand finds the roots of the violence in Suharto's transmigration policies, which fundamentally altered both the ethno-religious and political balance, and with that, the relative economic position of the communities: "As Christians were eased out of the positions they had traditionally held in the local government, teaching profession, and police, they turned to the private sector, only to find that migrant groups from Sulawesi, among others, had sewn up the market. Christians began to feel that their political, economic, and cultural existence in Ambon was threatened."[33] While the religious make-up of the province is 57 percent Muslim and 43 percent Christian, the population of Ambon (20 percent of the provincial population) is evenly divided between Christians and Muslims. Angered at their perceived loss of power and privilege, a small group of Christian militants sought to become an independent state. Jusuf Kalla, the Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare who brokered the peace accords, similarly contends that inequality and poverty, exacerbated by the Asian financial crisis, encouraged migration of more aggressive ethnic groups into previously stable areas. In parts of the Malukus, Muslim migrants gained a political majority and displaced the previously-dominant Christian majority.[34]

There is concern that the state security forces played an active role, if not in the violence itself, then at least in supporting the violence.[35] Hefner has argued that the military and members of the New Order were the driving force behind sectarianism. These elements viewed sectarian violence and general anarchy as a way to discredit the democratic regime and to "ensure the Wahid government's failure."[36] To that end, when in April 2000 Laskar Jihad

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[32] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," p. 760.

[33] Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: The Violence in Ambon," 1999, <www.reliefweb.int>.

[34] H.E. Jusuf Kalla, Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare, USINDO Open Forum, July 22, 2003, Washington, DC.

[35] Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Breakdown: Four Years of Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi*, vol. 14, no. 9 (December 2002).

[36] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," p. 760.

began to dispatch some 2,000 militants from Java to the Malukus, no one in the military or police stopped them.[37]

Others have contended that, rather than a sin of commission, the sectarian violence in the Malukus was a sin of omission. While the military did nothing to assist LJ, neither did it do anything to stop it. This passive support was born of a shared goal of preventing another part of the country from seceding. Following the international opprobrium that the TNI received for the killings and egregious human rights abuses in East Timor, they were happy to have the militants do the fighting for them. Sins of omission escalated the violence in other ways. Both Muslim and Christian police and security forces were accused of showing either support for their co-religionists, or lashing out at militants from the other.

In the Malukus, both Muslim and Christian police and security forces were accused of showing support for their co-religionists.

The Islamic militants themselves contend that the state had abrogated their responsibility to defend fellow Muslims. In violent "jihadi videos" produced by JI or Al Qaeda,[38] shockingly graphic footage of Muslims being attacked by Christians, as Indonesian Brimob (police mobile brigade) and TNI forces stood by, reinforce the notion that the state does not actively defend the rights of Muslims. As Laskar Jihad's founder, Jafar Umar Thalib said:

> We founded this movement in order to support Muslims in eastern Indonesia. They were slaughtered by the thousands in Molucca. The government did nothing to defend the Muslims. Subsequent governments did not defend them from Christian attacks. In light of this situation, we had no choice but to found the Laskar Jihad organization, to protect our Muslim brothers in eastern Indonesia.[39]

A final explanation to the violence, unknown at the time, was that JI was actively involved in perpetrating and escalating the conflict. Two small but well-organized paramilitary groups, Laskar Mujahidin and Laskar Jundullah, headed by JI *shura* members, Abu Jibril and Agus

[37] Press reports at the time also recount how Laskar Jihad fighters were seen driving in military trucks and were suddenly armed with automatic rifles. Others report that Laskar Jihad recruits were trained not in Yogyakarta where its founder Jafar Umar Thalib was based, but beside a military academy in Bandung. The seed money for the organization came from the TNI. Human Rights Watch noted that "as recently as October 2002, a man identified as a Jakartan Muslim was arrested in the port of Poso unloading 2,800 rounds of ammunition still wrapped in their packaging from PT Pindad, the state-owned weapons producer in Bandung." HRW, *Breakdown: Four Years of Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi*.

[38] Zachary, Abuza, "Funding Terrorism in Southeast Asia: The Financial Network of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiya," *NBR Analysis*, vol. 14, no. 5 (December 2003).

[39] Islamic News and Information Network, "Interview: Amir of Lashkar Jihad of Indonesia," March 25, 2002.

Dwikarna respectively, trained and sent forces to fight in the Malukus and later central Sulawesi. While these two organizations were relatively small, with approximately 500 members, they were far better organized and violent than the larger and more amateurish Laskar Jihad, which fielded some 3,000 poorly armed and radical students. JI used these small organizations as recruitment pathways and to psychologically condition the young men into "jihad." These holy wars provided the JI the network they needed, and served as a catalyst for radicalizing JI's behavior. The government's failure to curtail their activities only further emboldened them.

Much of the violence continued because Jakarta largely ignored the conflict. The government brokered the Malino Accord of 2001 under the leadership of Jusuf Kalla, the running-mate to presidential candidate Yudhoyono.[40] However, the peace in both Sulawesi and the Malukus is tenuous, threatened by frequent attempts by militants to stir unrest; assassinations, bombings, and brutal intimidation remain regular events. In August 2002 an Indonesian NGO reported that there had been 25 violations of the Malino Declaration in Poso with no effective response by police. When the police did take action, they labeled the actors as criminals and downplayed any renewed sectarianism. On December 31, 2002 four churches in Palu were bombed.

Sectarian violence escalated in 2003, with attacks in May and June in Poso city that left several people dead. Similar attacks against Christians were carried out in early 2004. These attacks occurred at a time when the central government had dispatched an additional 800 police to Poso and Morowali in Central Sulawesi and 1,002 more police to Ambon in the run-up to the parliamentary elections, which officials believed would serve to heighten communal tensions. Since the Malino Accord was signed in December 2001, there have been over 20 attacks on Christian villages, several hundred homes burned down and nearly 100 Christians killed; so far none of the recent attackers has been arrested.

Jusuf Kalla blamed unidentified Indonesians from outside the region in early August 2002, stating, "There is no more conflict among the people, but there are small terror groups .... They

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[40] Ibid. The Malino Accord was signed in December 2001, and laid out a ten-point declaration: 1) to cease all forms of conflict and dispute; 2) to obey efforts to enforce the law and support legal sanctions against lawbreakers; 3) to ask the state apparatus to act firmly and justly to maintain security; 4) to create a condition of peace and to reject the imposition of a state of emergency and any foreign party involvement; 5) to dismiss slander and dishonesty against all parties, to enforce an attitude of mutual respect, and to forgive for the sake of peaceful coexistence; 6) every citizen has the right to live, come and stay peacefully and respectfully of local customs; 7) all rights and belongings have to be returned to their lawful owners as they were before the conflict began; 8) to return all displaced people to their respective homes; 9) together with the government, to carry out complete rehabilitation of the economic infrastructure; 10) to carry out respective religious laws according to a principle of mutual respect and to abide by all the agreed upon rules, in the form of laws, government regulations, or other regulations.

explode bombs one day and fire shots on another."[41] At the same time, an Indonesian court jailed five JI members for their role in provoking violence in the regency. Ansyaad Mbai, the National Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, asserted that a leading JI member who was a key participant in the Bali bombing "played an important role" in the October 2003 attacks in Poso that killed 10 people and coincided with the anniversary of the Bali bombing.

At the end of April 2004, fighting again broke out in the Malukus, and more than 22 people were killed in one day's fighting. On April 25, the anniversary of the 54-year old Christian secessionist uprising known as the Republic of the South Malukus. Some 38 people were killed and 230 injured in the worst fighting since 2002.[42] An additional 400 Brimob and two army battalions (about 450 troops) were flown in to supplement the 1,200 security personnel already based there.[43] The police arrested 34 suspects in the violence, including family members of the Christian separatist leader Alex Manuputty, who is currently living in the United States. On July 18, 2004, gunmen burst into a church, spraying it with bullets and killing the pastor. It was the fifth attack on Christians in Poso in 2004. In a hopeful sign that the government was not going to let the conflict escalate, the head of the Indonesian National Police, D'ai Bachtiar, flew to Palu the following day to oversee the investigation.[44] The Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Hari Subarno, said the incident had been designed "to create lateral conflict."

It is clear that the radicals want to stir up sectarian conflict in order to motivate their constituencies to once again take up arms.

It is clear that the radicals want to stir up sectarian conflict in order to motivate their constituencies to once again take up arms and defend their religion. To the extent that JI is a much-weakened organization, sectarian conflict is essential to their regeneration. They are subsequently expected to concentrate their efforts in that direction.

Sidney Jones of the International Crisis Group provides a slightly different hypothesis, but agrees that sectarian conflict will be the modus operendi of JI in the coming years. She believes that JI is divided into two or three distinct factions, based on the precept that the perpetrators of the Bali and Marriott attacks were in the Hambali faction.[45] She further argues that the larger

[41] Reuters, "Interview: Jakarta peacemaker says worst of violence is over," August 6, 2002.

[42] Sidney Jones, International Crisis Group, *Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi*, February 3, 2004.

[43] Agence France-Presse, "Police, troops regain control after Muslim-Christian violence kills 23," April 26, 2004; "Hundreds of Police Rush to Maluku," *The Age*, April 26, 2004.

[44] BBC, "Gunmen attack Indonesian church," July 29, 2004.

[45] Jones, ICG, *Indonesia Backgrounder*.

faction of JI sees those high profile attacks as symbolic but counter-productive. This faction, more heavily steeped in the Darul Islam tradition, advocates greater emphasis on sectarian conflict and a more domestic focus in its attempt to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state.

The ICG report is meticulous in its detail and analysis. While Jones views discernable ideological factions, she might overstate the depth of the ideological difference between them. Instead, the factions are a likely natural result of compartmentalized cells across vast regions that are having more trouble communicating with one another—especially as JI's command and control has been weakened. Regardless, all JI members have the same ultimate goal and view greater sectarian violence as the best means of achieving it.

It remains to be seen whether the government is going to take the threat of sectarian violence seriously. On the one hand, it finally did intervene and broker the Malino Accords in December 2001, but on the other hand, the government and military presence has not stopped murders, bombings, and intimidation. Tension in the Malukus and Poso remains high and it would take little for a new, large-scale conflict to begin. The government's will to intervene has repeatedly been called into question, especially by the Christian communities. In this election year, however, few politicians will be willing to risk provoking a backlash from the Muslim constituency by appearing to take the side of Christians and Hindus.

Jemaah Islamiyah and Terrorism in Indonesia

The conflicts in the Malukus and Poso were, in many ways, the turning point for Jemaah Islamiyah's development. Although there were local causes, the influx of jihadists (including a number of Arabs and Afghans) escalated the conflict to a new level. More important, the jihads in the Malukus and Poso were a formative experience for the participants and every bit as important as the jihad against the Soviets in the 1980s. Having fought in defense of their religion, thousands have now returned home, much the way the members of the "Group of 272" (group of Afghan *mujahidin* veterans) returned to Indonesia from Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s, ready to lead their own jihads and to implement *sharia*. These holy wars gave the JI the motivation to train and fund a network of radical militants. Yet, since the Bali bombing in October 2002, JI has suffered significant setbacks. More than 250 people have been arrested, with more than half of these in Indonesia. That has forced Poso and the Malukus back to the forefront: JI is now returning to the Malukus as part of its regrouping strategy.

Background on Jemaah Islamiyah

Jemaah Islamiyah is an organization linked to Al Qaeda whose stated goals are to turn Indonesia into an Islamic state, which would then attempt to create a pan-Islamic state that would also include Malaysia, Southern Thailand, Brunei, and the Philippines.[46] It was founded in 1992 and 1993 by two Indonesian clerics living in exile in Malaysia, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Sungkar met with Osama bin Laden around that time and secured support for the organization's establishment. The organization itself was formed and administered by Riduan Isamudin, better known as Hambali, who spent the remainder of the decade patiently building up a network of cells, establishing *madrassas* that would serve as centers to recruit, train, and dispatch new members to Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, and later to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps in the southern Philippines. It was divided into four different *mantiqis* (regions), each of which seemed to focus on a specific task or function.

Throughout this period, JI was at Al Qaeda's disposal and served as an important back office for this terrorist organization, including establishing front companies, opening bank accounts, forging documents, procuring weapons, running meetings, and laundering money. In 1999 Al Qaeda member and Afghan veteran Hambali threw his efforts into waging jihad in the Malukus and later Central Sulawesi.[47]

In 2000 JI cells began their first actual terrorist operations, including the May 2002 attacks on Medan churches, the August 2000 combined bombing and assassination attempt of the Philippine ambassador to Indonesia, the Christmas 2000 church bombings across Indonesia, the 2000 Light Rail Transit bombing in Manila, and the bombing of the train station and hotels in Southern Thailand. At that time, investigators were unaware of JI's existence. JI operatives also assisted Al Qaeda in planning several terrorist attacks against the United States between 1995 and 2000. Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and the assault on Al

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[46] For more on Jemaah Islamiyah, see Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia*, Boulder: Lynne Reiner, 2003, and "Terrorism: The War on Terror in Southeast Asia," in Richard J. Ellings, Aaron L. Freidberg and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2003–04: Fragility and Crisis*, Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2003, pp. 321–64; and studies by Sidney Jones of the International Crisis Group: *How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates*, Asia Report, no. 43, December 11, 2002; *Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia: Damaged But Still Dangerous*, August 26, 2003; ICG, *Indonesia Backgrounder*.

[47] Jemaah Islamiyah established two paramilitary organizations, the Laskar Mujahidin and the Laskar Jundullah, financed by money diverted from Saudi charities, to wage jihad. The conflict in the Malukus also integrated JI into the broader global jihadist network, as radical Islamists from around the Muslim world came to fight alongside their Indonesian counterparts. At that time, an Al Qaeda propagandist, Reda Seyam, traveled there to make "documentaries" about the conflict that was used to recruit and raise funds. Baden Intellijen Negara, *Al Qaeda's Infrastructure in Indonesia*, Jakarta, February 2002.

Qaeda's leadership, Hambali was given money and ordered to execute a major attack in Southeast Asia. This resulted in the October 12, 2002 attack on the Bali nightclubs. The Al Qaeda leadership was so pleased with the results of the attack that they transferred another $100,000 to Hambali for further attacks—the first of which was the August 5, 2003 attack on the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta.

The State of Jemaah Islamiyah

Jemaah Islamiyah has been severely degraded in more than two-and-a-half years of counter-terrorist operations. The Bali investigations, in particular, led to a greater understanding of how the network operates and of their command and control structure. This led to subsequent arrests. Across Southeast Asia, more than 250 people have been arrested, including much of the organization's leadership. Hambali was arrested in Thailand in August 2003. While estimates on the size of JI vary from around 500 to several thousand, it is not a large organization, and the rate of arrests places JI's survival in doubt. Although there are a number of leading operatives still at large, including those with operational experience and bomb-making know-how, many of their *madrassas* are being monitored and they are less able to send their recruits abroad for advanced training. Moreover, there is more inter-state cooperation in terms of police and intelligence sharing. In short, JI is less able to plan and execute terrorist attacks than they were a year ago, especially against hardened targets, such as U.S. embassies. It does, however, still maintain the capacity to attack soft targets.

What is the future of Jemaah Islamiyah? There remain a number of reasons to be concerned about JI. First, JI takes a very long-term strategic view. Hambali has revealed that there was a debate within the organization, whether to continue the pace of attacks or to lie low and rebuild in the wake of the post-Bali arrests.[48] In the philosophical underpinnings of Al Qaeda, there is no shame to strategic retreats. The PUPJI, a 1996 document that codified the authority structure and ordering principles and philosophy of JI, has a 30 year timeframe for jihad. It outlines a schema for guerilla war as to "view, analyze and explore all aspects of life in the enemy's body and in the environment, view carefully and honestly all our potential strengths and effective powers we possess," and "determine points of target at the enemy and the environment to be handled in relation with our goals." At the rate that cells have been uncovered following large-scale attacks, JI will most likely only carry out one or two bombings in the short term. Intelligence officials concur in interviews that the

[48]Interview with a senior Indonesian National Police intelligence official, Jakarta, March 10, 2004.

arrest of some 10 individuals, including Zulkarnaen, Azahari Hussin, and Noordin Mohammed Top, would cripple the faction of JI linked to Al Qaeda. Many others were focused on rebuilding through renewed training in MILF camps in Mindanao, Philippines.

Second, anti-American sentiment is at record levels due to the U.S.-led war on terrorism, the invasion of Iraq, U.S. support for Israel, and a visa policy that most Indonesians consider to be racist. On top of this is latent suspicion of the United States for its covert involvement in separatism in Sulawesi and Sumatra in the 1950s, its support for Suharto and its alleged complicity in the 1965–66 coup, and subsequent purges of the PKI. Across the political spectrum, various groups feel aggrieved toward the United States and distrust its intentions. This suspicion tends to be compounded by the Indonesian media. For example, *Sabili*, the bestselling monthly magazine in the country, reflects the deep-rooted suspicion among many Indonesians that the Bali bombings were actually perpetrated by Western intelligence services in order to force the Indonesian government, which hitherto had been a reluctant partner, into the war on terrorism.

Third, JI itself is driven by a fervent anti-Americanism that is appealing to a broader segment of Indonesian society. Imam Samudra, the Bali bomber, declared during his interrogation, "I hate America because it is the real center of international terrorism, which has already repeatedly tyrannized Islam."[49] "I carry out jihad," he declared, "because it's the duty of a Muslim to avenge, so [that] the American terrorists and their allies understand that the blood of the Muslim community is not shed for nothing." He intends jihad to serve "as a 'harsh reprimand' to Jews and Christians led by American heathens in oppressing and tainting the Islamic holy land."[50] Indeed, in his 13 responses to why he perpetrated the Bali Bombing, seven directly mention the United States, and several others mention Christians and the West more generally.

Fourth, JI maintains a potentially large pool of recruits, even though this recruitment is somewhat constrained by security considerations and the difficulties in providing training. Police are confident that with more than two-thirds of the G272 arrested, the most experienced and charismatic recruiters are no longer in play.[51] Regional security services are actively trying to penetrate JI cells. Yet, the motivation for joining JI is as strong as it has ever been.

JI's most outspoken anti-American critic is its alleged spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Ba'asyir's saga has gone on since October 2002, when he was arrested following the Bali blast. His prosecution was woefully mishandled. Despite damning testimony from a Malaysian

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[49] *Kompas*, November 28, 2002.

[50] Republic of Indonesia Police Headquarters, "Examination Report of Abdul Aziz, aka Imam Samudra," October 21, 2002.

[51] *Time* (Asia), January 27, 2003, p. 16.

JI member Faiz bin Abu Bakar Bafana in September 2003, that linked Ba'asyir directly to Al Qaeda, the court only found Ba'asyir guilty for involvement in a JI plot to overthrow the government and said there was no proof he led the JI network. An appeal court overturned the treason conviction, but ruled that Ba'asyir must only serve three years for immigration-related offences. In March 2004 the Supreme Court announced that his sentence would be reduced to 18 months. On April 30, as he was released from prison, Ba'asyir was re-arrested on retroactive terrorism charges. In addition to added U.S. intelligence, the police are hopeful that the rendering by Malaysia of another key JI leader, Abu Jibril, will provide additional testimony in the case against Ba'asyir. Former JI leader Mohammad Nasir bin Abbas cooperated with the Indonesian police and provided much needed insight into the organization. He is likely to provide in depth testimony against Ba'asyir.[52] Ba'asyir's re-arrest will likely be of minimal impact on JI, except as propaganda fodder for the remaining militants.

On July 23, 2004 Indonesia's new Constitutional Court ruled that the retroactive use of the 2003 anti-terror law No. 16 to cover the Bali bombings was unconstitutional, yet it made an exception for the Bali attacks.[53] The Constitional Court's clerk, Muhammad Asrun, announced that, "This decision does not annul the convictions against Amrozi and his friends, but in the future, the anti-terrorism law will no longer be [retroactively] enforceable after this decision."[54] Lawyers for those already sentenced in connection with the Bali blasts have said that the exception is outrageous and argued that their clients' convictions should be overturned. Indonesia's justice minister insisted that the ruling would not annul the convictions of the 32 people who had already been tried and convicted under this law, even though this did open another avenue for appeals to the Supreme Court.[55] The anti-terrorism law No. 16, itself, remains in force, as does a broader related law No. 15. However, both can now only be applied to crimes committed after their passage.

As a result of this ruling, and the mixed signals about its implementation, the Indonesian National Police announced that they were dropping all charges against Ba'asyir that linked him to the Bali bombing. However, he will still be charged with heading Jemaah Islamiyah and for

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[52] Martin Chulov, "Secrets of a Terror Turncoat," *The Australian*, July 17, 2004.

[53] In a five to four decision the Constitutional Court upheld an appeal by Masyukur Abdul Kadir, who was sentenced to 15 years for assisting Bali mastermind Imam Samudra, who argued that law No. 16 was retroactive and, therefore, unconstitutional. "Law No. 16 (2003) is against the 1945 Constitution; that the law, Number 16 (2003) has no binding power." Three of the 32 incarcerated JI members were handed down death sentences for their role in the bombing; the remaining 29 have received sentences between 3 years and life imprisonment.

[54] BBC, "Ruling Muddies Bali Bomb Verdicts," July 23, 2004.

[55] Achmad Sukarsono, "Trust in Indonesia Anti-Terror Push Intact—Minister," Reuters, July 28, 2004.

instigating other attacks. The BBC reported Detective Chief Suyitno Landung as stating that, " … even though we have put aside the Bali case, we will not stop investigating. We are only revising his file."[56] A Reuters report quoted Landung asserting: "Abu Bakar Ba'asyir is the leader of that secretive organization. What the Constitutional Court did was delete the law for the Bali bombing, so we need to tweak the dossier. The article used against Abu Bakar Ba'asyir will still be the anti-terrorism laws."[57] This however, will be problematic in its own right. The Indonesians have no conspiracy law, and as Ba'asyir was incarcerated at the time of the attack on the JW Marriott hotel on August 5, 2004, there is very limited evidence linking him to the case.

Moreover, in Indonesia JI is still not an illegal organization. Why has JI not been outlawed? This is due to parliamentary opposition. While many in the parliament would like to outlaw the group, some proponents also want to ban the Mujahidin Council on Indonesia (MMI)—Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's overt civil society organization.[58] Other members of parliament have resisted this, as they either do not believe JI exists or see the effort as a throwback to the Suharto era's crackdown on NGOs.

There is considerable concern in the diplomatic community and among foreign analysts that Indonesia seems no longer to be as committed to continuing the war on terrorism.

There is considerable concern in the diplomatic community and among foreign analysts that Indonesia seems no longer to be as committed to continuing the war on terrorism. While Ba'asyir was re-arrested, there seems to be little political will to put him on trial again. Many other senior JI members, such as Mohammed Nasir bin Abbas, received alarmingly light sentences. Indonesian authorities seem far too willing to give lenient treatment to JI members who renounce their militancy. In some cases security services simply do not have the resources to maintain the current pace in the fight against militants. In other instances, they are hampered by intense bureaucratic competition. The United States, Australia, and others have provided significant counter-terrorism aid to their Indonesian counterparts, yet there is

[56] BBC, "Bali Case Against Cleric Dropped," July 28, 2003.

[57] Reuters, "Indonesia Police Say Won't Link Ba'asyir to Bali," July 28, 2004.

[58] "The MMI is an institution where a lot of people from a lot of Muslim groups . . . discuss how to get our vision of *sharia* implemented into national laws … The long-term strategy is to get Indonesia 100 percent based on *sharia*. As long as Muslims are the majority, the country should be ruled by *sharia*." Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Ngruki, Solo, June 11, 2002. Yet there is substantial evidence that the MMI is also a front for Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's militant and terrorist activities as many MMI leaders are also JI members. For example, the MMI's board included Mohammad Iqbal Rahman (Abu Jibril) and Agus Dwikarna. Both men headed JI's two paramilitary arms and were members of the JI *shura*. The MMI's director of daily operations Irfan Suryahardy Awwas, the younger brother of a senior JI leader Abu Jibril, is now detained. For more see Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia*, pp. 141–44.

concern that intra-ASEAN police cooperation and intelligence sharing has once again slowed to pre-Bali levels.

In sum, JI has been badly damaged. With more than 250 arrests, including much of its leadership, the group must refocus its energies on recruitment and training. Adopting a long-term strategy, members have little faith that their goals of creating an Islamic state will happen in their lifetime; instead, they are content with slowly and methodically fulfilling their religious obligation.

What Are We Learning?

What else have we learned about JI from the interrogation of members? The analysis so far has been somewhat disappointing. While Singaporean security services have sought to understand the JI captives behaviour, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia have simply focused their efforts on using the interrogation for tactical operations. There is so little Malaysian transparency, for instance, that what they are actively doing is uncertain. In Indonesia there is an alarming lack of analysis.[59] What little analysis has been completed has only given us greater insight into JI's recruitment and world view.

Four factors play the greatest role in recruitment: kinship, mosque, *madrassa* and friendship. What has taken most investigators by surprise is that the JI network has been built upon the Darul Islam network. International Crisis Group's analysis has concluded that these kinship ties, including marital ties, are the single most important determinant of JI membership.[60]

While there are no central mosques that have been epicenters of JI recruitment, the mosque still remains key. JI "talent scouts" look for pious Muslims of a certain age, who come not just to Friday prayers, but to prayers five times a day, seven days a week. These individuals are then invited to private "study sessions," in which they are slowly indoctrinated. Piety is the paramount trait that the JI leaders look for in their recruits.

The fact that JI has established several *madrassas* as centers of recruitment and indoctrination is well known. Several of these have been shut down, though none in Indonesia.[61]

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[59] Interview with a senior Indonesian National Police intelligence official, Jakarta, March 10, 2003; interviews with two Australian Federal Police officials, Jakarta, March 11, 2004.

[60] ICG, *Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia*; Jones, ICG, *Indonesia Backgrounder*.

[61] The Malaysians have shut down the Tarbiyah Luqmanul Hakiem school, Johor, and Sekolah Menengah Arab Darul Anuar, Kota Baru. The Cambodians have shut down the Om Al Qura foundation school.

However, Indonesian intelligence and police officials are studying the entire network of graduates of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's Al Mukmin (also known as Ngruki) *madrassa*. In all, there is a network of some 60–100 *pesantren* (Muslim boarding schools) that Indonesian security forces believe are centers of JI recruitment, most of which are run or staffed by Ngruki alums.[62]

Finally, friendship seems to be an important variable in understanding the recruitment into JI's two paramilitary arms, Laskar Jundullah and Laskar Mujahidin. Membership in those organizations, and participation in the jihad in the Malukus and Sulawesi, was not the same as membership in JI, but it was important recruitment pool that JI drew from. In general, there seems to be a greater desire to conform with the "in group"—a common phenomenon in terrorist organizations. Existing academic literature is rich with analysis on the small group dynamics of terrorist organizations. These forces include pressures for conformity and consensus that tend to result in "groupthink" and a Manichean worldview, as well as a socialization process that forges a sense of belonging to a community or surrogate family.[63]

Why do some Muslims cross the line from Islamic dissent to jihadist violence? The most important factor is their unwavering religious faith and interpretation of their religion. Firstly, religious violence can be seen as an act of absolution, or a cleansing of sins. JI suspects all speak of "purity" in the goal to create an Islamic state. This is important as many JI members were criminals beforehand, who were trying to repent. Like *Fi'a* (committing a crime in the name of Islam), violence can be justified if it is for a higher purpose. Others have a strong desire for martyrdom. Imam Samudra, the Bali mastermind, for example, told a journalist: "Be certain that I am on the road of *istiqomah* [sincerity], the road of *jihad*. Even if I die, I'll die a martyr."[64] Secondly, there is a strong desire on the part of the militants to identify the Southeast Asian jihad with the global Islamist jihad. Further interrogation of Samudra is telling. He spoke of the *Fardlu'ain* (religious obligation) for global jihad against Jews and Christians in Muslim countries all over the world and of a "*Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (the brotherhood of Muslims), regardless of geographical boundaries."[65] The Bali bomber website like-

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[62] Interview with a senior Indonesian National Police intelligence official, Jakarta, March 10, 2003. Centers of JI recruitment include Mutaqin Jabarah in Central Java, Darul Syahadin and the Madrasah Luqmanul Hakiem in Kelantan, and the Hidyatullah network throughout East Kalimantan and South Sulawesi, which is where many of the Bali bombers were hiding when they were arrested. JI has also been able to recruit further afield in schools in Pakistan, Yemen, Egypt, and, in particular, at one *madrassa* in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

[63] For more on this phenomenon, see Rex Hudson, *The Psychology and Sociology of Terrorism*, Library of Congress Federal Research Division, 2000, pp. 20–55; Scott Atran, "Mishandling Suicide Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 3 (Summer 2004), pp. 67–90.

[64] *Kompas*, December 5, 2002.

[65] Republic of Indonesia Police Headquarters, "Examination Report of Abdul Aziz, aka Imam Samudra," October 21, 2002.

wise tried to put the Indonesian jihad into a more global context by referencing other places where Islam was under attack. He declared that, "every single drop of Muslim blood, be it from any nationality and from any place, will be remembered and accounted for."[66] The website continued that, "this has resulted in Muslim cleansing in Moro [southern Philippines], Ambon, Poso and surrounding areas … Blood will be redeemed by blood. A life for a life. One Muslim to another is like a single body. If one part is in pain, the other part will also feel it."[67] JI members feel that Islam in Southeast Asia is as much under attack as it is in Bosnia, or Pakistan. The jihadists are clearly seeking to inculcate Southeast Asians in Islamic values and are tapping into the rapid growth of Islamic consciousness across the region.[68]

The jihadists are clearly seeking to inculcate Southeast Asians in Islamic values and are tapping into the rapid growth of Islamic consciousness across the region.

Last is the psychological and sociological explanation that many members are young men with little formal schooling other than a limited Koranic education. Membership provides food and a sense of belonging to a community, giving its members a mission and sense of purpose.[69]

A negative economic climate contributes to a ripe environment for terrorist recruitment. Indonesia's economic recovery remains mixed. In absolute size, Indonesia's economy remains smaller than its 1996 level ($227 billion). The rupiah has lost 7 percent of its value in the first half of 2004, a slump that led the government to downgrade its growth forecasts for 2004 to 4.8 percent. Foreign investment in the first quarter of 2004 fell by 30 percent to $2.3 billion amidst concerns over political instability and violence.[70] Yet Indonesia's real economic crisis is its surging unemployment rate. Twenty-seven percent of Indonesia's population lives below the poverty line. While the government's official statistics put the unemployment rate at 10.5 percent of the 100 million labor force, estimates of unemployed and under-employed are as high as 40 million.[71] The economy has made a substantial recovery since 1998 at the macro-level, but that recovery has not translated into significant and sustained job creation. The World Bank recently reported that, unless foreign investment picked up solidly, Indonesia could not expect to achieve more than 4 percent growth. This percentage of growth is inad-

[66] <www.istimata.com>

[67] IIAS Newsletter, "Hating Americans: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Bali Bombings," G. Fealy trans., 2003.

[68] PRCPP, *Views of a Changing World*.

[69] Hudson, *The Psychology and Sociology of Terrorism*.

[70] Agence France-Presse, "Indonesia's foreign investment approvals fall in January-April," May 19, 2004.

[71] Laksamana.Net, "Review—Economy: Higher Growth Predicted," April 25, 2004.

equate to absorb any significant amount of the surplus labor.[72] Poverty has increased while the distribution of wealth and income has become more unequal. Moreover, the burden of servicing the country's $133 billion in foreign debt limits the amount of money the government has to invest in critical infrastructure.[73]

While there is no direct link established between poverty and terrorism, poverty, unemployment, and disenfranchisement all create conditions in which terrorism can flourish. In addition to frustration and aggression, economic difficulties often lead the impoverished to use the West as a scapegoat for their economic plight.

Bringing Religion Back In

In the fall of 2003, Pakistani officials arrested a 13 member JI cell, known as Al Ghuraba. This cell was studying in a Lashkar-e-Toiba *madrassa*.[74] Of the 13 members, 11 are currently in jail in their home countries of Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and two have been released from Malaysian custody. Almost all of the 13 have family ties to JI. The two Singaporean residents are the sons of members of JI and the MILF; in Malaysia, fathers of three of the five detained students are JI members.[75]

They were to be the core of the next generation of JI's leadership and were sent to Pakistan for advanced religious training. While there is evidence that Hambali called on them to provide operational assistance to JI and Al Qaeda, it was primarily a religious study group.[76] Abdul Rahim, in a recent interview, said "al Ghuraba was formed purely for religious study and discussion. [Other] senior Jemaah Islamiyah members 'saw the urgency of regeneration in the movement' and sent their sons and their students to Pakistan to study to become ulamas."[77] They used *religion* to rebuild their depleted ranks. The most respected people within JI, as in Al Qaeda, are not the Afghan *mujahidin* or operatives with "street credibil-

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[72] Laksamana.Net, "Review—Economy: Higher Growth Predicted," April 25, 2004.

[73] Laksamana.Net, "Review—Economy: Concern Grows," May 31, 2004.

[74] Contacts between JI and the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET) keep appearing in the course of research on JI. The LET has transformed from an ethno-nationalist group to a group much more committed to the cause of international Islamic terrorism. In many ways, security experts warn that the LET is poised to replace Al Qaeda as a truly global organization. Not only were members of the Al Ghuraba cell studying in LET *madrassas*, but several fought with the Kashmiri militant group, and were trained in their camps, or in Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan with other LET cadres.

[75] Ellen Nakashima, "Indonesian Militants 'Keep Regenerating'," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2004.

[76] Ministry of Home Affairs, "Singapore Government Press Statement on the Detention of 2 Singaporean Members of the Jemaah Islamiyah Karachi Cell," December 18, 2003.

[77] Nakashima, "Indonesian Militants 'Keep Regenerating'," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2004.

ity," but are instead highly esteemed religious leaders. This is not surprising, as members of terrorist groups tend to subordinate their own judgment to an omnipotent leader who is lionized as a hero within a group.[78]

Rather than make the mistake of discounting the "religious" nature of terrorists' struggle, the religious dimension needs to be brought back into the discussion. This will be all the more difficult because political and security analysts have little religious understanding or training and have trouble disaggregating religion from other factors. However, groups like JI base their membership on religious conviction. They want their leaders not simply to have technical or operational know-how, but to be people steeped in religious understanding.

Groups like Jemaah Islamiyah base their membership on religious conviction. They want their leaders not simply to have technical or operational know-how, but to be steeped in religious understanding.

The PUPJI is exceptionally religious in nature. It is no surprise that it was written by two of the organization's most militant clerics, Ali Ghufron (Mukhlas) and Abu Rusdan, who succeeded Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as the organization's *amir* (or spiritual leader).[79] While it also includes the *General Manual for Operations*, the PUPJI is based far more on Koranic texts than the Al Qaeda training manual that was discovered in Manchester.[80] It is not necessarily a practical guide on conducting terrorist operations, but a document steeped in Islamic principles and teachings.[81] It makes clear that the cornerstone of JI is a deepened understanding and practice of Islam, containing almost nothing about violent jihad.[82]

Similarly, the writings of JI members, including the three volumes written by Mukhlas while in jail, were not simplistic interpretations of Islam, but rather well-argued statements that

[78] Hudson, *The Psychology and Sociology of Terrorism*.

[79] *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah* [*The General Guidebook for the Struggle of Jema'ah Islamiyyah*] was issued by The Council of Qiyadah Markaziyah Jemaah Islamiyah in 1996.

[80] The Al Qaeda training manual can be found at <www.fbi.gov>.

[81] The PUPJI does talk about how operations should be conducted in the *General Manual for Operations*. It emphasizes, planning, and that "the operation should be planned and carried out according to plan." It also outlines a schema for guerilla war, calling for four-stages of operations: 1) planning; 2) execution; 3) reporting; and 4) evaluation. Emphasis is placed on education, meticulous planning, and learning from past acts (including mistakes). Later the document discusses how members should focus on Intelligence Operations, Strength Building Operations, Strength Utilization Operations, and Fighting Operations. Almost all emphasis is placed on Strength Building Operations, which is defined as a lengthy process that includes spiritual and physical strengthening. The goals of this educational period include enlightenment, discipline, instilling a sense of loyalty, physical readiness, skills to use weapons, tactical and strategic thinking, and leadership development.

[82] JI requires its membership to be steeped in religious training and to be highly devout individu-

displayed a nuanced understanding of the Koran. Indeed, one U.S.-based expert on Indonesian Islam, Mark Woodward, reviewed the manuscripts in detail and found the writings to be "surprisingly sophisticated." Moreover, the writings put the movement ideologically in the historical trajectory linking Darul Islam to Al Qaeda.

JI has been significantly degraded. However, it is also patient. The PUPJI outlines a 30-year program for struggle and the establishment of an Islamic state. They are actively recruiting and they are thoroughly committed to their cause. What is next for JI? While they have the technical capability and the will to conduct more bombings, they are less likely to engage in this over the medium term. JI must rebuild their ranks; to do so, they will focus on religious training and resort to the activities that they were so engaged in during the period of sectarian violence in 1999–2000.

Other Militant Islamist Groups

JI has received the greatest media and policy attention because of their terrorist attacks and their connections to Al Qaeda, yet of almost equal concern are the large number of home grown militant organizations committed to implementing *sharia* and imposing hardline Islamic values on society. These groups have shown a willingness to find political patrons and supporters within the body politic, but they will use force if they believe their religion is under threat. Vehemently anti-American, they have significant presences on Indonesian campuses. They tend to be written of as "amateurish" or "thuggish." Yet, this is a common mistake. They are in fact a pool of recruitment from which JI can easily draw. These organizations operate more openly than JI.

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als. The PUPJI is broken down into four main sections: 1) Preamble; 2) the General Manual for Operations; 3) the *Nidhom Asasi* which outlines the organization's hierarchy, rules and procedures; and 4) a section on explanations and clarifications. The document begins by outlining the ten core principles of the organization: "1) Our aim is only to seek Allah's blessings by means which had been determined by Allah and his apostle; 2) our belief is the belief of a *Sunnah Wal Jama'ah 'Ala Minjis Salsfish Shalih* Specialist; 3) our understanding about Islam is *Sumul* following the under-standing of *As-Salifish Shalih*; 4) the goal of our struggle is for men to serve only God by re-erecting *Khalifah* on earth; 5) our road is creed, *Hijrah* and *Jihad Fie Sabilillah*; 6) our provisions are knowledge and piety, conviction and trust in Allah, gratitude and patience, simple life and preference for a life hereafter, love for *Jihad Fie Sabilillah* and a *Syahid* [martyr's] death; 7) our *Wala* to Allah and his Apostle and faithful people; 8) our enemy is the Devil's evil spirit and human devils; 9) the ties of our *jama'ah* based upon the similarity of goals, faith and understanding of *Ad-Dien*; 10) our Islam charity is in a pure way and *Kaffah* with the *Jama'ah* system then the *Daulah* and then the *Khalifah*."

Laskar Jihad

The largest and most infamous of the groups was Laskar Jihad (LJ), which was "disbanded" immediately following the Bali attacks on October 12, 2002. It was founded by Jafar Umar Thalib in January 2000 in response to the sectarian violence in the Malukus. He studied at the Saudi-funded Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies, before receiving a scholarship from the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia to study at the Al-Maududi Institute in Lahore, Pakistan. In 1987 Thalib met bin Laden in Peshawar and dismissed him as a "spiritually empty man" who has "no religious knowledge." In 1989 he returned to Java as a member of the influential G272, and became a critic of the New Order regime, chafing under secular rule: "We don't like *Pancasila* because it means that Islam is the same as other religions. This is not so. We believe that Islam is the highest religion and the best."[83] He advocated revolution and the establishment of an Islamic state. "There is no way for Muslims to get respect from non-Muslims except through jihad," he asserted.[84]

Thalib painted the Abdurrahman Wahid government as anti-Islamic: "It is positioned to oppress Muslim interests and protect those of the infidels." This has to be seen in the context of what was happening of East Timor. Thalib spoke of a Christian conspiracy for Christian-majority regions of Indonesia to secede, thereby weakening Muslim Indonesia. To that end, he found considerable support from politicians and military leaders who were angered by East Timor's independence and afraid of further Indonesian secessionism.

The influx of the LJ paramilitary tipped the balance in favor of the Muslims,[85] despite government pledges that they would not be allowed to leave Java. Christians were ethnically cleansed from Ternate, the North Maluku capital. At the height of the conflict up to 6,000 Laskar Jihad troops were stationed in the Maluku region. In June 2000 they overran a Brimob station and seized firearms, ammunition, police trucks, and other equipment. In March 2001 Thalib declared the establishment of Islamic law in the Malukus.

Ties between Al Qaeda and Laskar Jihad have long been suspected, but Thalib flatly denies this connection. He admitted that Al Qaeda representatives had visited him, but asserted that he had turned them away. Thalib and has gone to great pains to distance himself from the Al Qaeda network, directly stating that, "Laskar Jihad does not have ties with Al

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[83] Sadanand Dhume, "Islam's Holy Warriors," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 26, 2001.
[84] Dhume, "Islam's Holy Warriors."
[85] International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos ....*

Qaeda or any other organizations that are associated with Osama bin Laden or any form or part of his network."[86] Hefner asserts that while Thalib supports bin Laden's jihad against the West, and never condemned the September 11 attacks on the United States, he disagrees with bin Laden's opposition to Saudi Arabia.[87]

Many mainstream Indonesian politicians not only failed to stop Thalib's forces, but rather endorsed them; it was not only the military that appeared indifferent or complicit.[88] Due to their deep anti-secessionist and nationalist sentiments, both co-religionists and nationalists alike viewed Thalib as a hero. Clearly there were former members of the New Order regime, such as the head of the MUI, Din Syamsuddin, who encouraged LJ to fight on behalf of the Muslims in the Malukus.[89] Thalib has enjoyed considerable protection and impunity—although briefly detained for ordering the stoning of an adulterer in mid-2001.

Laskar Jihad expanded its operations into Sulawesi, West Papua, and briefly (and unsuccessfully) into Aceh in February 2002.[90] Following a March 2002 truce in Aceh, there were a number of attacks and bombings attributed to the Laskar Jihad who tried to sabotage the agreement. In April 2002 Thalib was again arrested, this time for his allegation that the Megawati regime was cooperating with the Republic of the South Maluku secessionist group. Even then, the country's Islamist Vice President, Hamzah Haz, visited him in jail in an apparent display of solidarity. In January 2003 Thalib was acquitted of all charges that he incited violence in the Malukus. If anything, LJ grew in popularity because of its jihad in the Malukus and claimed to have some 10,000 members.

On October 16, 2002, just days after the terrorist attack in Bali killed 202 people, LJ announced that it was disbanding and that Thalib would focus on his students and writing.[91] The reason for this breakup has never been effectively explained. Some postulate that the organization had grown too quickly, was ridden with factionalism, and faced a funding shortage. Thalib is known to have acute political antennae and might also have been told by patrons to lie low. Laskar Jihad remains politically important, even though Thalib opposes democracy (which he considers "incompatible with Islam") and does not publicly endorse any

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[86] See <www.laskarjihad.org>.

[87] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," pp. 762.

[88] Michael Davis, "Laskar Jihad and the Position of Conservative Islam in Indonesia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 24, no. 1 (April 2002), pp. 12–32.

[89] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," p. 762.

[90] GAM forces believed that the Laskar Jihad was controlled by the TNI and encouraged resistance to it.

[91] Interview with Jafar Umar Thalib, Jakarta, January 10, 2003.

political party.[92] Whether Lasker Jihad will ever be reconstituted is uncertain. Nevertheless, the former members have created a network that could be tapped by other terrorist groups.

Other Radical Groups

Laskar Jihad is only one of many radical Islamic groups whose goal is to establish an Islamic state governed by *sharia*. Other Islamic groups include the Islamic Youth Movement (GPI), the Defenders of Islam (FPI), the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity of the Islamic World (KISDI), the Anti-Zionist Movement (GAZA), the Indonesian Muslim Students Action Front (KAMMI), and the Muhammadiyah Students Association (MMI). These groups were active in leading demonstrations and mobilizing popular support during the debate over the Jakarta Charter in the fall of 2002. They have been active in leading anti-American demonstrations, and most troubling, they have become a pool of recruits for Jemaah Islamiyah.

All of these groups, as with Laskar Jihad, have two things in common: first, in many cases they have a clear tie to the military and police. In some cases the military has used them to do their dirty work. In other cases police use these groups to extort protection money from businessmen. While there is support and collusion, it is not correct to say that these groups are controlled by the security forces; rather, they use one another, but the militant groups have their own agendas that they will pursue even against the interests of the security forces.

Second, all of these groups in some way are the progeny of the *Tarbiyah* movement, which rose to prominence in Indonesia mainly among students at the major state universities during the late 1980s. The *Tarbiyah* movement is the oldest and most established Wahhabi Islam vehicle in Indonesia, and has always reflected the interests of the Arab minority.

The goal of the *Tarbiyah* movement is the creation of an Islamic state. In addition to its network of *pesantren*, the movement has been active on university campuses in Jakarta and Bandung. It has since extended its network throughout Java and on other islands. *Tarbiyah* established a strong following among students linked to the Association of Inter-Campus Muslim Student Action (HAMMAS) and the United Action Group of Indonesian Muslim Students

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[92] Thalib argues that any state should be governed by *sharia* rather than the law of individuals and that democracy should be replaced by a council of Islamic scholars (*ahlu halli wal aqdi*). This council would have the power to appoint the president and would have control over government policy. Interview with Jafar Umar Thalib, Jakarta, January 10, 2003.

(KAMMI).[93] Most of the movement's activists have joined the Justice Party (PKS) led by Hidayat Nur Wahid, though some are active with Hamzah Haz's PPP. An increasing number have studied in the Middle East.

Gerakan Pemuda Islam (GPI)

The Western media tends to discount the Islamic Youth Movement (GPI) as a group of marauding students. The group made headlines in the fall of 2001 when it recruited and dispatched 300 members to go to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban against the Americans. The GPI was also at the forefront of leading anti-American demonstrations in the run-up to the Iraq war in early 2003. Its leader, Syuaib Didu, has ties to both Vice President Hamzah Haz and the PKS' Hidayat Nur Wahid.

Indonesian intelligence and police suspect the GPI serves as a talent scout for JI. It has been active in recruiting for foreign jihads, including Afghanistan and Chechnya. The funding for these operations has come from the Saudi-based charity, World Assembly for Muslim Youth (WAMY), which has long been suspected of involvement in diverting funds for Al Qaeda.

Front Pembela Islam (FPI)

Like the GPI, the Defenders of Islam (FPI), are often discounted as marauding thugs who clash with local police. Without question FPI members have been responsible for high profile "sweeps" and the destruction of bars and restaurants that stay open during Ramadan. Formed in 1998, the FPI is now the largest overt radical Muslim group in the country. It was able to organize demonstrations of over 10,000 people in Jakarta in October 2001, and has led large demonstrations against the U.S. war in Iraq. The group's leader, Al-Habib Muhammad Rizieq bin Hussein Syihab, not only recruited individuals to go and fight U.S. troops, but was arrested by U.S. forces in Iraq. He was returned to Indonesia where he was charged, but has not yet stood trial.

While the FPI is more often than not involved in thuggery, its rank and file, comprised of poorly educated youth, has a substantial Islamist side. This is especially the case among its

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[93] KAMMI has been an active group in demonstrations against the United States, and was active in drumming up popular support for the jihad in the Malukus. Wicksono and Endri Kurniawati, "Following Up on Fuad," *Tempo*, 21 April, 2003, pp. 34–35.

leadership. FPI leaders are well-educated. Before returning to Indonesia and leading the FPI, Al-Habib Muhammad Rizieq bin Hussein Syihab studied Islamic teaching at a university in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Like many of the other *Tarbiyah* leaders, Rizieq is a Yemeni-Indonesian. Rizieq is arguably the best militant orator in Indonesia today. The biggest concern about the FPI is their ability to incite violence. It was quick to play up the sudden violence that erupted in April 2004 in the Malukus, and Rizieq announced that he, along with Husein Al-Habsyi, the head of the Muslim Brotherhood, would send 7,000 jihad fighters to Ambon.[94]

The FPI has a strong network on university campuses, and has played a liaison role with the PPP and the PBB especially in terms of mobilizing popular support and pressuring the Megawati government throughout 2002 over the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter, which would enshrine *sharia* into the constitution.[95]

Komite Indonesia Untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam (KISDI)

Ahmad Sumargono, a conservative Islamic leader of the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia, founded the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World (KISDI), in 1987. Ardently anti-Western, he called for a greater relationship with the larger Islamic world.[96] The first outspoken Islamist leader at the tail-end of the New Order regime, Sumargono was allowed political space in the New Order regime at a time when the economy had slowed and members of the elite began to criticize corruption in the Suharto family. Having tried unsuccessfully to co-opt NU head Abdurrahman Wahid, Suharto turned to its rival organization, the Muhammadiyah. Radicals within the Muhammadiyah, such as Sumargono, received official support, and were able to form alliances with the Islamist-based military think-tank, the Center for Policy and Development Studies (CPDS). Similarly active in the CPDS was Suharto's son-in-law, Prabowo Subianto.[97] KISDI was also able to forge ties to Golkar's Research and Development Bureau.

KISDI was also directed abroad and focused on injustices to Muslims in other parts of the world—especially Bosnia—that tended to be less threatening to the Suharto regime.

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[94] "Hundreds of Police Rush to Maluku," *The Age*, April 26, 2004.

[95] Rizal Sukma, "Indonesia and 9-11: Reaction and Implications," in Han Sung-Joo, ed., *Coping with 9-11: Asian Perspectives on Global and Regional Order*, Tokyo: Japan Centre for International Exchange, 2003, p. 64.

[96] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," pp. 756–57.

[97] Prabowo was implicated for the May 12–15, 1998 riots in Glodok (Chinatown) and the murder of several students at Trisakti University. It was thought that Prabowo wanted to instigate mass political unrest to justify martial law and prevent the ouster of Suharto.

Sumargono encouraged a greater identification by Indonesians with their co-religionists. KISDI came to the fore at a rally for solidarity with Bosnian Muslims in mid-February 1994. The group sent volunteers to wage a jihad in Bosnia-Herzegovina and tried to raise funds to build a mosque in Sarajevo.

Today, KISDI's influence appears to have been diminished somewhat. Sumargono was removed as chairman in 2002, and the group is less active now than in the past. There is lingering concern that the group continues to be used as a vehicle to channel Suharto-circle money to militant groups in order to discredit his successor regimes.

In conclusion, these small militant groups are of some concern. Though they are all quite small in membership overall, they have a disproportionate voice in Indonesian politics and society. Vociferous and thoroughly committed to their cause, they tend to have good recruitment networks on university campuses and are increasingly being used by parties themselves to mobilize support. These groups are viewed by Indonesian security forces as deep pools for recruitment to other more radical groups.

Making Inroads: The Jihadist-Islamist Nexus

Following the Madrid bombing in March 2004, there were mass demonstrations across Spain protesting terrorism. In Indonesia, however, victim of two major terrorist attacks, there were neither similar protests, nor any sense of public disgust with jihadist violence, whether from terrorism or organized sectarian conflict. What does this say about Indonesian society? Do they support the ends, if not the means, of the jihadists? Are they tacitly sympathetic? Do they feel that such violence does not threaten their own democracy? Or are they simply complacent, knowing that moderates are in the majority, with little chance of having their way of life undermined by radical Islamists? We know that jihadists have worked with radical groups in society, student organizations, overt civil-society groups, paramilitary groups, and elite political leaders. But have those jihadists been able to form broader ties to society as a whole? Is their appeal to mainstream segments of society growing, and if so, why?

Elite Responses

Among elites, there has been a small though discernable difference between reactions to terrorism and to sectarian violence. Almost no mainstream leaders praised bin Laden or sup-

ported the ends of Al Qaeda or JI. Yet, following the Bali blast—the most lethal terrorist attack since September 11—President Megawati Sukarnoputri "did not so much as issue a public statement" condemning terrorism.[98] Leaders such as Hamzah Haz contended that the United States had brought the September 11 attacks upon itself, but even he fell short of endorsing the act. Several mainstream politicians, such as Amien Rais, were outspoken in their condemnation of the terrorist attacks in Indonesia. Many other leaders, however, have come to Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's defense and continue to deny the existence of Jemaah Islamiyah. Haz paid several high-profile visits to Ba'asyir's Al Mukmin *pesantren*. He was also chosen to be the keynote speaker at the second general meeting of Ba'asyir's MMI, though he withdrew following the August 5, 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott in Jakarta.

Ironically, the militants who have engaged in sectarian violence and have been responsible for an incredible amount of death and destruction in Indonesia, all in the name of keeping the country together, have been actively supported by mainstream politicians. No mainstream political leaders ever came out and condemned LJ or other groups who were fighting in the Malukus and were responsible for the deaths of up to 9,000 people. Some have given active support, but others have simply encouraged militants through their own quiescence. For example, even though the moderate cleric Abdurrahman Wahid ordered the Laskar Jihad to not go to the Malukus, he was unwilling to expend the political capital to stop them. Other politicians, including Haz, went out their way to meet with radical leaders, such as Thalib, and later interceded in the criminal case against Thalib to get all charges dropped.[99]

It is also true that in December 2001 the leaders of the Muhammadiyah and NU put aside their differences to stand up to the Islamic hardliners.[100] This was an important step, but one has to ask why it took them so long to do so, given that sectarian conflict had been raging in certain areas since 1998.

With the restoration of democracy in 1998, there was agreement by all political parties that politics was going to be inclusive and that all political parties would be allowed—including the Islamists. Authoritarianism gave way to a political culture of consensus and inclusion. There is clearly considerable support for Islam's political role in Indonesia. In the Pew poll, 86 percent of respondents agree that currently Islam plays a large role in Indonesian politics, and 82 percent agreed that Islam should play a role in politics.[101] The accommodating na-

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[98] Anthony Smith, "Indonesia's April 2004 Parliamentary Elections: Implications for Presidential Elections and Politics," *Asia-Pacific Security Studies*, vol. 3, no. 6 (July 2004), p. 2.

[99] Laksamana.Net, "Muslim Brotherhood or Political Brotherhood?" May 8, 2002.

[100] Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics," p. 762.

[101] PRCPP, *Views of a Changing World*.

ture of politics, at one level, sought to co-opt the Islamists by giving them a seat at the table. Radicals were brought into the political mainstream in order to temper their radicalism, but this has yet to occur.

The Silent Majority and Fear of Globalization

Indonesian society's unwillingness to stand up and counter the radicals can also be explained in part by the nature of the "silent majority." Most Indonesians are moderate and secular and simply assume that their values and way of life will be protected because they are in the majority; they have little concern that a fringe minority will ever have the strength to threaten their way of life. Thus they abdicate the responsibility to be proactive. The vociferous minority of radical Islamists, sets the agenda. Moderates are constantly playing catch-up.

Moreover, the radical Islamists and jihadists are able to tap into the fervently anti-globalization, anti-Western, and anti-American sentiments of the mainstream. They are not anti-capitalist, but they oppose the excesses of capitalism and the inequitable distribution of wealth, which they believe, benefits the West and its apostates. The Indonesian economy's performance has improved markedly in the past few years, but this improvement has been at the macro-level and in the banking and investment sector. Economic growth has not translated into jobs nor improved the standard of living for the vast majority of the Indonesian population.

The Islamists are also able to capitalize on fears of societal globalization that are seen as threats to cultural morals and religion. For example, an upsurge in support for the Islamist parties in the past few years has come from women; arguably the people who would have their rights curtailed the most. Yet according to polling data, mothers believe that under Islamist party rule, there will be less drugs, fewer teen pregnancies, and less juvenile delinquency.[102]

Growing Religious Faith in Society

Islamists have also been able to take advantage of the growing religious consciousness within Indonesian society. By every measure, Indonesians are displaying more manifestations of their faith than they have in the past. Mosque attendance and *Haj* pilgrimages have in-

[102] Interview with Tempo's polling team, at INSIGHT Indonesia, Jakarta, June 24, 2003.

creased, the study of Arabic has become more popular, and there has been an upsurge of visible manifestations of Islam, such as *hijabs* and prayer caps.[103] As Gerald Houseman writes,

> The strong Islamic revival of the 1980's and 1990's is undeniable. It can be seen in the marked increase in the number of women who wear the *tudong* [Islamic head covering for women], or in the numbers, especially among young people, who visit Mecca in order to fulfill one of their important Islamic obligations. It can also be seen in the growth of religious schools, colleges, and universities, and—perhaps most striking—in the new and strong interest among members of the urban middle and upper classes in their religious life. The typical belief is the past was that religion was important in rural and village life, but not in the cities. Attendance at Mosques has also gone up dramatically over these past two decades.[104]

Islamic revival is not the same as religious fanaticism, but we tend to downplay the "religiosity" of militants and terrorists. They take their religion seriously, and seek recruits from the ranks of the highly pious. William Liddle and Saiful Mujani contend that while there is an upsurge in religiosity, for the majority of Muslims, fealty is returning to the traditional Islamic traditions.[105]

Islamists have not only been able to tap into this growing piousness, but have been able to forge a sense of Islamic victimhood. The common belief that the war on terrorism is patently anti-Muslim has made it very difficult for liberal Muslims to speak out against terrorism. Radicals have been emboldened because moderate leaders have not spoken out against them in a sustained way. While it is true that several leaders did denounce the terrorist attacks in Bali and Jakarta, the mainstream Muslim organizations, the NU and Muhammadiyah, were slow to actively challenge Islamic radicals after September 11. Since September 11, individual voices, such as Nurcholish Majid**,** Hasyim Muzadi, and Azyumardi Azra have spoken out, but there has not been a wholesale campaign to provide an ideological alternative. There are three primary explanations for this.

First, the moderates are atomized. The NU and Muhammadiyah are factionalized, and many important theologians, leaders, and NGOs are not working together. There are small

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[103] Robert W. Hefner, "Islamization and Democratization in Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvatich, eds., *Islam in the Era of Nation States*, Manoa: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, pp. 75–128; see also Andree Feillard, "Traditionalist Islam and the State in Indonesia: The Road to Legitimacy and Renewal," pp. 129–56; and, Martin Rossler, "Islamization and the Reshaping of Identities in Rural South Sulawesi," pp. 275–308.

[104] Gerald L. Houseman, "Facing Terrorism: Indonesia and Southeast Asia in an Era of New Dangers," a paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association, Portland, Oregon, March 11–13, 2004.

[105] R. William Liddle and Saiful Mujani, "Militant Islam is Losing Ground," *International Herald Tribune*, October 13, 2003.

NGOs and groups like ICIP and Ulil Abshar-Abdalla's Liberal Islam Network, which have been important ideological counterweights to the radicals, but they are elite organizations limited by size, resources, and the perception that they are too close to the Americans.

Second, there is a clear fear of being attacked, a fear of sticking one's neck out. Importantly, liberal or moderate Muslims have no faith that the state will protect them in the face of people who are predisposed to violence.

Third, individuals who do provide a viable alternative are attacked for being aligned with the West, if not outright agents of the United States. On a different level, the United States constantly undermines moderates whose support it needs, particularly through its policies in the Middle East and the war in Iraq. Unless the moderates speak out against the United States, their constituencies will abandon them.

In short, radicals have made considerable progress moving into the mainstream of Indonesian society. While most Indonesians find their means repugnant, society as a whole has been desensitized to violence in the past few years. Moreover, a growing number of Indonesians sympathize with the goals of the radicals, if not their means.

Two well-respected polls have tried to measure the growth of Islamism in Indonesian society in the last two years: the 2002 study by the Research Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) and the 2003 study by the Pew Research Center for People and the Press.[106] They results reveal three important trends. First, there has been a surprising rise in individual piety and growing Islamism, but also greater concern over the implementation of specific aspects of *sharia*. Second, the two polls had divergent results when it came to the state of democracy. While the majority (65 percent) believed Indonesia should be governed by a democratic regime, the Pew poll also found considerable frustration with democracy and questions over its efficacy in Indonesia. It found a sentimental yearning for strongman rule, as most people do not believe that democracy has led to any meaningful improvement in their lives or standard of living. Arguably this frustration stems from the country's incomplete recovery from the Asian financial crisis and the remaining massive unemployment and under-employment. Third, the Pew poll revealed that Southeast Asians, through greater media coverage and the so-called "Al Jazeera effect," are identifying more with the plights of their co-religionists around the Islamic world—especially the Iraqis and Palestinians.

In addition to the above results, the Pew Global Attitudes Project reported one of the most precipitous drops in support for the United States in the past three years among Indone-

[106] Saiful Mujani and R. William Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," pp. 109–123.

sians. Whereas 75 and 61 percent of Indonesians had positive images of the United States in 2000 and 2002 respectively, only 15 percent did in 2003.[107] This jihad is as much about anti-Westernism (especially anti-Americanism) as it is about Islam. While 31 percent of Indonesians supported the war of on terrorism in 2002, only 23 percent supported it in 2003, despite the deadly terrorist attacks in Indonesia in October 2002.[108]

Islamist Strategies

Islamist political parties recorded 14 percent and 21 percent in the 1999 and 2004 elections, respectively, thus showing little chance of gaining a majority. Islamists are committed to gradually winning over the majority that supports moderate Islamic or secular agendas. To that end, they employ a number of strategies: building up their parliamentary base, strengthening their parties and grass-roots bases, implementing their agenda through public policy, and effectively governing certain regions to build a track record.

Limited Parliamentary Power

In the 1999 parliamentary election, the Islamist parties, (i.e. those who were committed to implementing *sharia* or turning Indonesia into an Islamic state), only garnered 14 percent of the popular vote and held 16 percent of parliamentary seats. The United Development Party (PPP) won the most seats, with 11 percent, the Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB) had a mere 2 percent, the Partai Keadilan (Justice Party, PK) had 1 percent and other parties won an additional 1 percent. Based on this performance, commentators such as Greg Barton wrote that this result "strongly suggested that very few Indonesians are attracted to Islamism, much less radicalism."[109] This has more or less been the prevailing wisdom. Likewise, Mujani and Liddle predicted that Islamist parties would poll at roughly 14 percent, the same that they did in 1999, and the same number of Islamists they found in the PPIM survey.[110]

There are a number of reasons to question this notion. First, the Islamist parties have done significantly better than anticipated in this year's election. Together those three parties won 18 percent of the popular vote and will hold 21 percent of parliamentary seats. These are

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[107] PRCPP, *Views of a Changing World*, p. 19.

[108] Ibid., p. 28.

[109] Greg Barton, "Islamism and Indonesia: Islam and the Contest for Power after Suharto," *The Review*, September 2002, available at <www.aijac.org.au>.

[110] Mujani and Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," p. 115.

modest gains, but ones that most analysts had not predicted. The prevailing wisdom was that the Islamist parties, riddled with their own factionalism would fare no better or poll even worse than they did in 1999. Much of these gains were due to the surprising success of the Justice Party—he renamed Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)[111]—which won the largest number of votes in metro Jakarta, with 22.9 percent of the total. Anthony Smith contends that the PKS also "drew votes from more established Islamist parties who have all engaged in bitter infighting, and, in the eyes of some hardliners, compromised themselves in political arrangements with other parties and leaders."[112] The party won more than 7 percent of the total overall vote, surpassing established parties such as PAN that also had the backing of the Muhammadiyah. The PKS was the largest vote-taker in Jakarta, where it won support from students and others for addressing the issues that affect the poor. To be sure the PKS was successful in many ways by downplaying its Islamist credentials and focusing on an anti-corruption platform. They were able to effectively appeal to the idealism of the youth vote. Yet their core platform of establishing an Islamic state, governed by *sharia* remains unchanged.

The position of other Islamist parties remained relatively unchanged. The largest, the United Development Party (PPP), saw its shares fall, from 11 percent in 1999 to 8.2 in 2004, but it still controls 10 percent of DPR seats. The Crescent Moon and Star Party won 2.6 percent of the popular vote, a slight increase from the 2 percent it garnered in 1999, though its share of DPR seats fell from 3 to 2 percent. The only Islamist presidential candidate, however, Hamzah Haz, fared exceptionally poorly, garnering only 3 percent of the vote. Constituents of the PPP were "evenly distributed" among the five presidential candidates, with party candidate Haz receiving only 29 percent of the vote from his own base.[113] Overall the Islamist parties faired slightly better than expected on the heels of the unexpected surge in support for the PKS, which (like other Islamist parties) is perceived to be cleaner than the corrupt secular regimes.

Moreover, these parties themselves did not expect to do better than they polled in the 1999 election. Their sights were not set on the 2004 election but on the 2009 election, when they expected to make substantial gains, capitalizing on a decade of popular frustration with corrupt secular politics. "Islam is the answer" will be the cornerstone of their propaganda. By most measures, the Islamist parties are some of the best organized, and they have developed some

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[111] The Justice Party was renamed which allowed them to slip through a loophole in the electoral law that prevented parties who received less than 2 percent of the vote in 1999 from standing in the 2004 election.

[112] Smith, "Indonesia's April 2004 Parliamentary Elections," p. 3.

[113] The PPP voted for Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (28 percent), Amien Rais (15 percent), Megawati Sukarnoputri (14 percent) and Wiranto (14 percent).

of the best grass-roots institutional networks. The PKS will continue to develop its cellular-cadre system, whereby activist members are instructed to either recruit or at least persuade between five and ten people to vote for the PKS.[114] The party, which began with only 200,000 members, was able to win 1.4 million votes in the 1999 election. It now has 8 million voters.

There is considerable concern that the Islamist parties lack transparency regarding their ultimate goals. The PKS is a case in point. They downplayed their Islamic agenda and goal of implementing *sharia* and ran on an outspoken anti-corruption campaign. Few observers, however, believe that they have truly abandoned their Islamist social agenda, but rather, are being politically expedient. As two election observers reported, "PKS was well organized, cleaned up after its election rallies, publicly turned down bribes, and deemphasized its support for *sharia*. The big question in the future would be whether it would modify its Islamic agenda to rise above the 7% it had won."[115] Once in power, would the PKS move from the center back to their core agenda, one of implementing Islamic laws and legislating Islamic values? Islamists remain the PKS' core constituency, to whom it will remain loyal. Yet, like the PBB and PPP, the PKS has not clearly stated what *sharia* or an Islamic state would look like in practice.

Mujani and Liddle conclude that the Islamist parties will not have an easy time in the countryside as they will have to contend with a "dense and pervasive network of moderate Muslim civil society organization led by the NU and Muhammadiyah, which together have the sympathies of as much as three-quarters of all Indonesian Muslims."[116] The resilience of these two moderate organizations is not in doubt. They are unique pressure valves in the Muslim world, essential to maintaining Indonesia's liberal and politically moderate form of Islam, and they serve to effectively counter the ideology of the Islamists. That said, we need to raise two concerns about these organizations that we should monitor over the coming years.

First, there is concern about the schizophrenic nature of the Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest mass Muslim organization. While the organization, for the most part, remains moderate and presents a contemporary and pro-development interpretation of Islam, the organization still tends to produce a high number of Islamists. This is because modernists, unlike the NU traditionalists, emphasize direct readings of the Koran rather than legalistic interpretations. Groups like KISDI, the DDII, and LJ all emerged from the Muhammadiyah. Likewise, Sidney Jones has found a disturbing linkage among JI members and the Muhammadiyah.

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[114] Mujani and Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," p. 118.

[115] Blair King and Glenn Cowan, "Outcomes and Omens: Indonesia's April 2004 Legislative Elections," briefing in USINDO Election Series, Washington, DC, April 21, 2004.

[116] Ibid., p. 122.

While there have been no suspects with NU backgrounds, many do come from Muhammadiyah families. So there must be an active challenge to radicalism within the Muhammadiyah's own ranks. But this is unlikely to happen, especially as the vice chairman of the Muhammadiyah, Din Syamsuddin, is positioning himself to be the organization's next chairman in 2005. Syamsuddin actively supported militant groups such as Laskar Jihad and is extremely coy about his support for *sharia*. Depending on his audience, he delivers very different statements. To a western audience and to the diplomatic community he downplays any interest in adopting Islamist policies. To an Indonesian audience, he is outspoken in his support for *sharia*.

There is also concern about the growing relationship between the Muhammadiyah and Saudi charities and educational institutions. There has been a steady increase in Saudi funding and support for Indonesian Islamic institutions as well as provision of scholarships. NU officials express concerns that conditions for accepting those scholarships or receiving Saudi financial assistance include the renunciation of NU values and leadership.[117] Students and leaders of Muhammadiyah *madrassas* are willing and able to accept these conditions. This allows fundamentalist principles to make inroads into mainstream Islamic institutions.

There is little support evident at the national level for an Islamist president. Yet, at the parliamentary level, Islamist parties are steadily increasing their support. The three secular parties won over 72 percent of the total vote, among the more than 100 million Indonesians who voted.[118]

Unlike the 1999 election, the Islamist parties are not going to play the role of king-maker in the 2004 election. They are notoriously fractious. For example, once they were able to settle on Abdurrahman Wahid as president in 1999, the Central Axis fell apart. There was an attempt in the spring of 2004 to forge a coalition, known as the Salvation Front, but it collapsed. This vehicle was seen by many as merely a vehicle designed to get Amien Rais elected president. In the short-term, the Islamist parties will be divided as egos and personal rivalries

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[117] Interview with NU leader, July, 2004.

[118] The Democratic Party's Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono garnered 33.6 percent of the vote, while Megawati has collected 26.2 percent (significantly better than her own PDI-P's 18 percent showing in the April parliamentary election). The Golkar candidate, former military chief General Wiranto won 22.2 percent. The PAN vote was hard to characterize, as Amien Rais tends to flip-flop on the issue of Islamism. Rais received 14.8 percent of the vote. Significantly, he received an endorsement from PKS, which decided not to field its own candidate. However, only 57 percent of the PKS' 8 million voters chose Rais. Vice President Hamzah Haz of the Muslim-based PPP won only 3 percent of the vote and faired poorly within his own party. Constituents of the PPP were "evenly distributed" among the five presidential candidates, with party candidate Hamzah Haz getting only 29 percent of the vote. The others voted for Yudhoyono (28 percent), Rais (15 percent), Megawati (14 percent) and Wiranto (14 percent).

Table 1: Election Results

Party	Parliamentary Poll (April 2004)	Presidential Candidate	Presidential Poll (1st round—July 2004)
Democratic Party (PD)	7.5	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono*	33.6
Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P)	18.5	Megawati Sukarnoputri*	26.2
Golkar	21.6	Wiranto	22.2
National Mandate Party	6.4	Amien Rais	14.0
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	7.0	no candidate	
United Development Party (PPP)	8.2	Hamzah Haz	3.0
National Awakening Party (PKB)	10.6	no candidate	
The Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB)	2.6	no candidate	

*Will face each other in a presidential election run-off on September 20, 2004.

will keep the parties from effectively cooperating. Yet, they will be able to continue to exert far more influence within the parliament, where they can pursue their shared agenda.

The Islamist parties will likely continue to develop their grass-roots networks, resolve internal factional issues, and prepare for the 2009 election. Since 1999 there has been a general shakedown in the number of parties—Islamist parties have been particularly affected. This will likely continue in the form of a concurrent consolidation of parties in the next five years. Those that received less than 5 percent of the vote in this year's election will be unable to compete in the 2009 contest.

Public Policy

The founding ideology of the Indonesian state, *Pancasila*, explicitly rejected the creation of an Islamic state and imposes a broad notion of secular nationalism. President Sukarno wanted to establish a secular state and assuage the ethnic minorities who dominated the outer

islands. He therefore dropped the demands enshrined in the draft constitution, known as the Jakarta Charter, that called for the new state to be governed by *sharia*. In the fall of 2002 Vice President Haz led a coalition of Islamic parties to force a vote over a constitutional amendment to include those ten words (seven in Indonesian): "with obligation to follow Islamic *sharia* law for its adherents," arguing that "Muslims must be obliged by the *sharia*."[119] Haz's United Development Party (PPP) was at first joined by only Yusril Ihza Mahendra's Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB), but as momentum gathered a number of small parties jumped on the bandwagon to score political mileage with their Muslim constituencies.

The legislative vote was decidedly against the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter, unable to gather even a third of the necessary support. The vote in itself was significant, however, for the fact that it happened after debate had been stifled for 55 years.

Yet something more profound has happened since then. The Islamist parties were cognizant that secular parties would challenge any fundamental change to the nature of the Indonesian state. The Islamists were aware they could never muster the requisite votes to do more than simply make a political statement. Now the Islamist parties have shifted tactics. Instead of trying to fundamentally alter the nature of the Indonesian law with one single constitutional amendment, they have adopted a gradualist approach that is being waged through public policy. Since the failure of the Jakarta Charter vote in the fall of 2002, every major piece of social legislation considered in parliament has had an Islamic component to it. As one Indonesian commentator wrote: "Failing to have the *syaria* [*sharia*] re-inserted into the constitution, they may continue to imbue legislation with the spirit of the *syaria*, if without once making mention of the '*syaria*' itself."[120]

Four recent laws or bills are working to undermine the secular *Pancasila* ideology of the state: the marriage law, the education law, the medical law, and the pornography bill. In all cases, the Islamic component seems innocuous enough and few have actually considered the long-term repercussions of their inclusion. The marriage law makes secular marriages illegal and there is an obligation to profess religion. While it does not mention Islam, it is based on the Islamic principle that one cannot be an atheist or commit apostasy. The new education law makes the teaching of religion compulsory in public schools; in practice this is Islamic education. All schools must build Muslim prayer rooms. The medical law gives all Muslims the right to be treated by a Muslim doctor. The draft pornography bill, sponsored by the Crescent

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[119] Devi Asmarani, "Syaria Law? Jakarta Offers New Criminal Code Instead," *Straits Times*, October 19, 2001.

[120] J. Soedjati Djiwandono, "Ideological Rivalry Dogs national Politics," *Jakarta Post*, December 30, 2003.

Moon and Star Party's Yusril Ihza Mahendra, calls for the establishment of a national anti-pornography agency to study activities considered to be erotic. The draft criminal code has also tried to criminalize homosexuality, sodomy, and other "immoral acts."

Disturbingly, the same legislators who spoke out so forcefully and defeated the Jakarta Charter have shown no willingness to expend the political capital to challenge the Islamic components of these bills. The Islamist parties are effectively using public policy, while withdrawing overt references to Islam and *sharia*, to implement a new social agenda that gradually erodes secular institutions. While there has been some concern in the public press about this trend,[121] there has not been consistent and sustained pressure on members of parliament.

With an increase in their number of parliamentary seats, from 14 to 21 percent (a 50 percent increase), and an acknowledgement that they have little chance of affecting executive power, the Islamist parties can be expected to pursue their broad agenda slowly and in a piecemeal fashion by influencing the passage of new legislation, directives, and rules.

Islands of Islam

Whereas the Islamist parties tend do fairly poorly in national elections, we must consider their positive performance in certain locations, such as West Java. The surprise victory by the PKS in the Jakarta region during the April 2004 parliamentary election was an anomaly in many ways, but it shows that Islamist parties do have regional strongholds. The PKS has laid claim to the "governorship of Jakarta and five mayoralties with a view to making these positions pilot projects that prove PKS effectiveness."[122]

This must be seen in the context of a decentralization that has given local governments unprecedented power to influence public policy. As Goenawan Mohammed explained, "this is the first election following decentralization," and the emphasis in Indonesian politics has shifted to the sub-provincial level—"the place where public policy can be made."[123] Islamist parties have already focused themselves on implementing their social agenda through public policy. Now they will be able to do so in certain areas where they have a political plurality or where they are building their grass-roots base.

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[121] Ibid.

[122] King and Cowan, "Outcomes and Omens: Indonesia's April 2004 Legislative Elections."

[123] Goenawan Mohammed, talk at Columbia University Weatherhead Center for Asian Studies, May 12, 2004.

We have some limited experience of observing how Islamists would govern. Some local governments have banned women from appearing in public without customary religious dress or have required female civil servants to wear the veil. The regency of Temanggung, Central Java, stated that women's dress was a "cornerstone of good governance." Women who do not abide by these injunctions and decrees are increasingly harassed and some locations have already seen the emergence of "morals police."[124] Further study of the effects of autonomy on public policy and the implementation of Islamic law and principles is needed.

As mentioned above, the Islamist parties fare best in the urban areas, where they can better tailor their message of anti-corruption, anti-poverty, and social justice, as well as appeal to the idealism of the youth and the growing piety of the middle class. Some political analysts are predicting that as parties such as the PKS set their sights on building a less localized political machine, they will begin to adopt a rural message in order to tap into the religious conservatism of the villages.[125]

Conclusion

Where is Islam heading in Indonesia? Before Suharto's fall, Islam was merely a politically emasculated social phenomenon; now it is a counter to the state, which in many people's eyes has failed to successfully implement economic and political reform. Political Islam is here to stay. The question then is what manifestation will it take? What do the Islamist parties really want? What do they mean by the implementation of *sharia*? What will it look like? Or are Islamist parties moving toward the center to win votes? Is Muslim fealty being directed back into traditional norms, or is there indeed an "Arabization" of Islam in Indonesia? If so, what are the implications?

Islamists remain in the minority. Liddle and Mujani argue that they comprise no more than 14 percent of the population, although recent electoral data suggests that this has increased steadily since 1999. How will they use their parliamentary power? There are clearly limits to the growth and appeal of the Islamist parties. To date, they remain localized in urban areas. But this is sure to change as they will seek out ways to draw support from the vast majority of the electorate. They are also fractious. Will they be able to coalesce? The Islamists are growing steadily in their political power, with their sights clearly set on the 2009 election. Until then,

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[124] Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin, "Islamic Identity: A Women's Perspective," presented to the Conference on Islam and Universal Values, Jakarta, March 18, 2004, p. 5.

[125] Mohammed, talk at Columbia University, May 12, 2004.

they will focus on grassroots party development and broadening their appeal. Moreover, they will for the first time be in positions to administer and directly establish public policy. How they govern will be an important indicator of their future electoral success, as well as their objectives and intentions.

Does the steady inculcation of Islamic values in society and the increased strength of the Islamists' parties matter? What are the implications for political violence in Indonesia? Here we need to be more concerned. Many in the Islamist community supported or at least condoned the sectarian violence between 1998 and 2001. None have decried the continued attempts to instigate violence more recently. Islamists will continue to sound the alarm that Muslims are under attack and that their interest must be defended. Therefore while small-scale conflicts, such as those in the Malukus and Poso, have indigenous roots, we cannot dismiss the impact of external manipulation. The government must continue to crackdown on those people and entities that threaten the peace.

Moreover, these lateral conflicts serve the interests of both Islamist militants and jihadists; it is yet another nexus where their interests coincide. As JI seeks to regroup and train a new generation of recruits, it will likely refocus its energies into fermenting sectarian violence as it did in the late 1990s. JI will also focus on rebuilding its depleted ranks through religious training, which will fall below most security service radar screens. JI is down, but it is not out, and it has a patient and long-term agenda. Indonesia remains high on Al Qaeda's agenda as the world's largest Muslim state. Moreover, there are a myriad of smaller, more disparate, but no less radical groups that JI can draw from. JI membership will be drawn from believers. Religious purity and understanding is the core of their program and appeal. We must "bring religion back in" to the study of terrorist groups.

Ultimately, we need to be concerned that the Indonesian "pond" is both "wider and deeper" for the jihadists. The majority of Indonesians will remain moderates, essentially secular and tolerant of minorities. As Mujani and Liddle suggest, 75 percent of Indonesians identify with one of the two mass organizations, which remain committed to moderation, tolerance, inclusiveness, and the secular state.[126] But Indonesian Muslims are more pious, more devout, and more conservative than in the past, and this is changing the way in which society views militants. In many ways they are not opposed to the ultimate ends of the jihadists, simply the means. Moderates are increasingly afraid to speak out and provide an ideological counter. They are angry at U.S. policies, and are loathe to be associated with the United States. Few politicians are willing to expend the political capital to take on the Islamists and

[126] Mujani and Liddle, "Politics, Islam and Public Opinion," p. 122.

jihadists. Other leaders believe they can derive political capital from such relationships. When moderates do act, it is usually a reaction and not an actual proactive agenda; thus the jihadists tend to set the agenda.

In the short to medium term, we should expect Indonesia to be a model of what Islamic states should be: tolerant, secular, and pluralistic. Civil society and a tradition of moderate Islam remain robust. But Islamism is creeping into the country through various means. Islamists and Islamist organizations are not inherently the problem, as long as they remain tolerant to minority rights and do not espouse violence. This is a fine line and an even finer line for the government of a fragile democracy in the world's largest Muslim nation. But it is imperative that they do so. While surgically going after Islamists who cross the line and espouse violence as well as members of JI, the government must continue to reinforce notions of tolerance, pluralism, and secularism.

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