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Department of State

INFO : HONG KONG, MEDAN, SURABAJA

Amembassy DJAKARTA

May 4, 1966

Example of Anti-Chinese Propaganda

Hong Kong's 1940 to Department

Enclosed is the full text of an Angkatan Bersendjata article of April 25 linking the Chinese Communists with the September 30 Movement. The article is an interesting example of one important strand in the semi-official Indonesian propaganda stance regarding the September 30 Movement. The exact mixture of ingredients in the Indonesian description of the September 30 Movement tends to shift somewhat from time to time depending on the propaganda needs of the moment and the particular objective of a given article. As Consulate General Hong Kong observes in regard to the particular article in question, truth is often a minimal factor in adopting a given line.

In the first five months after September 30, the Indonesian Army and many associated civilian groups were motivated in their propaganda by a desire to (a) protect Sukarno, at least temporarily, from being identified publicly as the prime mover of the September 30 Movement or even to obscure insofar as possible any identification of Sukarno with the events of October 1 and (b) pin the blame on Sukarno's principal organizational support internally and on his closest ally externally. This led in the first instance to almost complete overt concentration on the PKI as the villain although there was already a secondary

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1. Newspaper article

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2

implicit theme that various pro-Communist groups and individuals around Sukarno such as the then PNI leadership and Subandrio were involved along with the Chinese. As time has passed, the charges by anti-Communist groups against internal and external enemies other than the PKI have become progressively more explicit and overt and have reflected both tactical needs and a belief that the whole pro-Communist movement with its external supports should be considered guilty "in principle" whatever the specific details of their involvement might be.

Furthermore, there has been a strongly felt need to divert attention from Sukarno/^{to}the forces around him for tactical reasons. This has caused a pronounced distortion of the evidence released publicly (although the truth of Sukarno's guilt is widely accepted privately). The search for scapegoats has accordingly led to such secondary factors as Subandrio and Peking. Objectively, there is little evidence that Subandrio was an important figure in the specific events of October 1 although he was undoubtedly informed about the plans and may even have contributed some advice. The same is true of the Chinese although their actual involvement was undoubtedly even less. It does seem extremely likely that the Chinese had advance knowledge of the September 30 Movement based on their close relations with the PKI and, to a lesser extent perhaps, with Sukarno and Subandrio. This is also indicated by the reported statements of some Indonesians who were in Peking on October 1 that the Chinese appeared to know more about the details of the September 30 Movement than had been publicly announced at the time. The Chinese reportedly said that some 40 generals were killed which coincides with reports that the original list of intended victims was at that level. All this is admittedly vague but it corroborates the probability of advance Chinese knowledge. As for direct Chinese assistance, there is less evidence although it does appear that Chinese arms were smuggled in with Conefo equipment. This is not 100 percent certain, of course, in view of the possibility of falsified evidence but the sources for such information were numerous and in some cases good ones.

In summary, we do not think the Chinese were a primary factor in the September 30 Movement or that Chinese activities were what the lawyers call a "proximate cause." The story of Mao's conversations with

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3

Aidit is palpably the work of someone's imagination and intelligent Indonesians privately scoff at such heavy-handed propaganda. More of the same is likely, however, given the general climate of opinion in Indonesia, the assumed need of the anti-Communists to whip up artificial issues in support of their continuing political offensive and the lack of sophistication of many propagandists which is only relatively greater here than in the more advanced countries of the world.

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