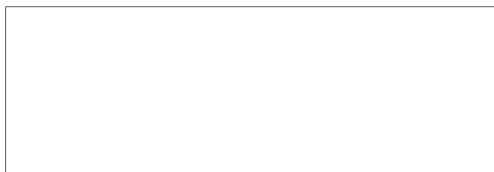


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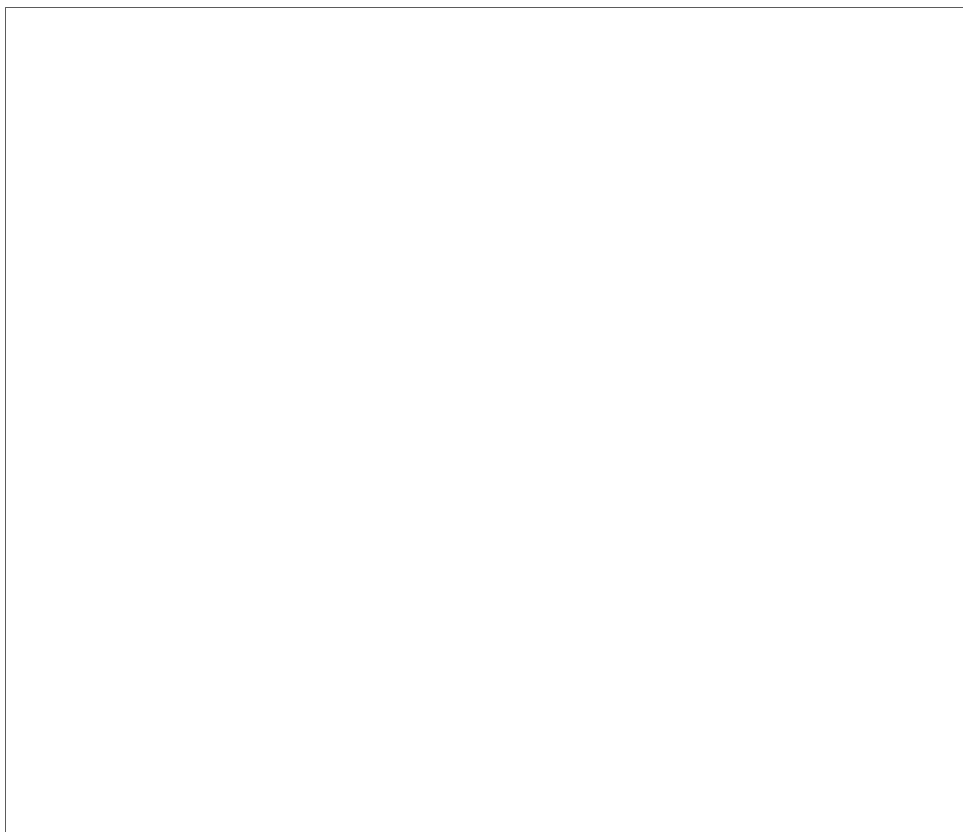


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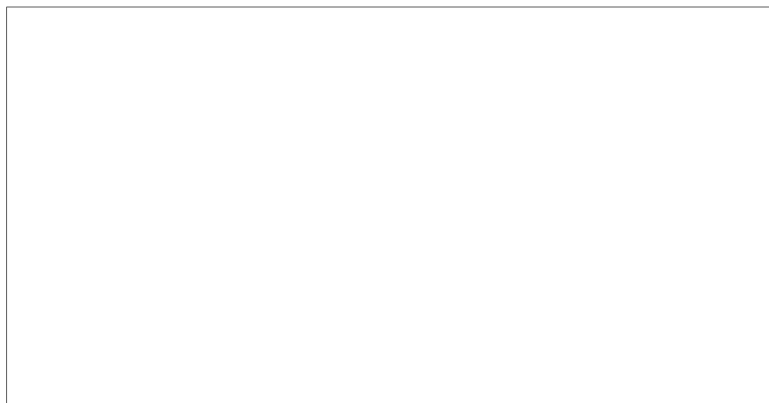
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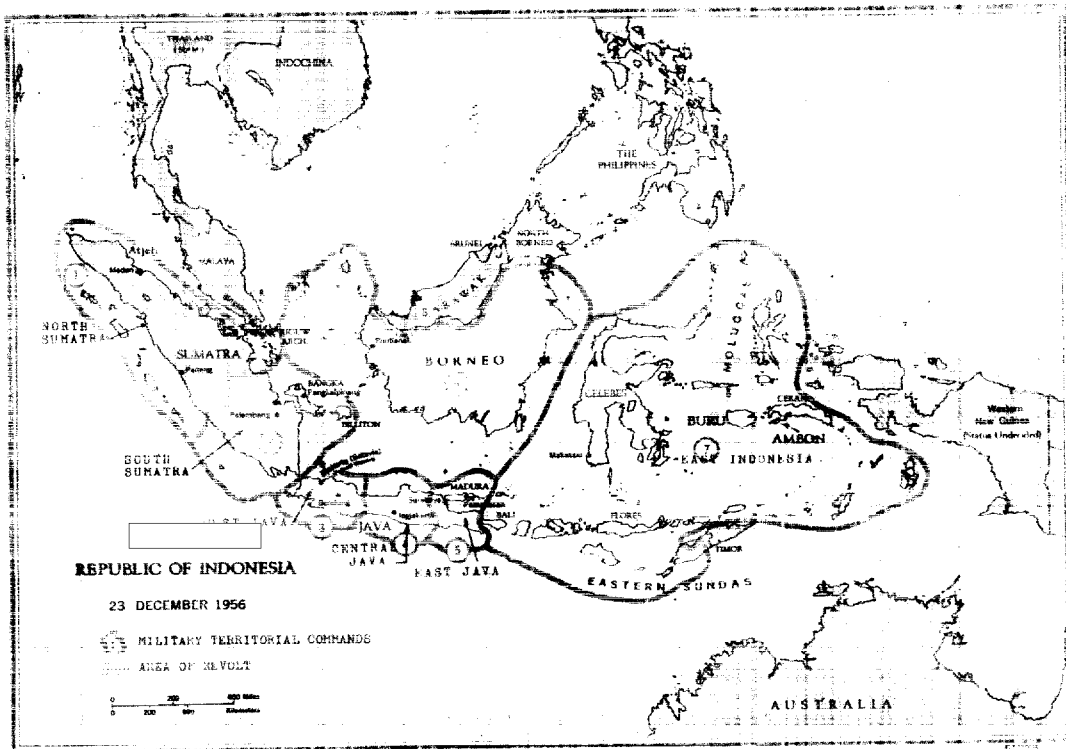
1. ARMY REVOLT IN INDONESIA

Comment on:



The announcement by Col. Simbolon, Indonesian army commander in northern and central Sumatra, that he is no longer responsible to Djakarta's authority may spark defiance of the government by other territorial commanders or their subordinates. Simbolon, who is now backing the revolt begun on 20 December by one of his regimental commanders, is one of the army's ablest figures and commands widespread respect in military circles. Any further defections would be most likely to occur in commands comprising the areas of southern Sumatra, Borneo, western Java, and the Celebes.

Premier Ali's government has little capability of forcefully restoring its authority in areas outside Java. It is faced, moreover, with the prospect that certain



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Indonesian political groups, particularly the two major Moslem parties, may take advantage of the situation to bring about the government's downfall. These groups share the army's grievances against governmental corruption and central authority.

Evidence of the opposition's growing strength is apparent in the attorney general's announcement on 22 December that Foreign Minister Abdulgani has been officially charged with corruption. When the accusation was first made in August, the government maintained there was insufficient evidence against him to press charges. It apparently is now bowing to general pressure, possibly in an attempt to conciliate criticism among the major parties, as well as the army.

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2. SYRIAN RIGHTISTS MAY ATTEMPT COUNTER-ACTION

Comment on:

The resignation of the Asali cabinet in Syria on 22 December and the announcement on the same date of the arrest and pending court martial of Syrian politicians and army officers allegedly involved in an Iraqi-sponsored coup may drive rightist elements to attempt counter-action. The new cabinet is likely to be dominated by leftists, although Asali himself may be asked to form it. The court martial may be the signal for a concerted leftist effort to obliterate rightist influence.

The rightists may feel they must act now if a complete consolidation of leftist, pro-Egyptian influence is to be prevented. Their chances of staging a successful coup, however, appear slim. Leftist elements under Colonel Sarraj appear to have already fairly well consolidated their position in the army.

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3. BRITISH SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN BECOMING FIRMER

Comment on:



Britain's policy of support for Pakistan, whose continued co-operation in the Middle East it regards as extremely important, is becoming firmer. British officials have suggested that the breach between London and New Delhi over Suez would make it necessary for London to reassess its relations with India.

In this connection, Britain evidently intends to abandon its efforts to keep Pakistan from pressing the Kashmir question in the UN. A spokesman for the Commonwealth Relations Office indicated on 21 December that the British cabinet has now in effect authorized general support for Pakistan in any Security Council discussion of Kashmir by agreeing that the UN should seek a new solution and by recommending that a UN observer visit the area. Plans are being made in London to favor Pakistan over India in supplying arms.

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