

Murder of “communists” continue in Indonesia

Published: *World Outlook* March 11th 1966

<https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/world-outlook/v04n06-mar-11-1966-wo.pdf>

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MURDER OF "COMMUNISTS" CONTINUES IN INDONESIA

The murder of "Communists" is still going on in Indonesia in what has become one of the most massive slaughters of modern times. The latest report is from Seth S. King, special correspondent of the New York Times, who writes from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, under a March 4 dateline:

"The killing of Communists in Indonesia continued this week despite President Sukarno's removal of Gen. Abdul Haris Nasution, who had led the army's campaign to destroy the Communist party."

Authoritative sources in Djakarta, according to King, "described the nightly execution of Communist prisoners or suspected Communists in eastern Java, Bali and Lombok."

"Travelers passing through these areas as late as Feb. 25," King continues, "reported seeing bodies in several villages. In one village they saw heads fixed on poles in the market place.

"When they questioned villagers, they were told that it was necessary to kill all Communists because they were evil and enemies of Indonesia."

King appears to believe that Sukarno is attempting to end the bloody mass purge but that it may be continuing through the momentum initially given it or because of a breakdown in communications. He writes:

"The continued executions indicated that antileftist groups outside Jakarta were either ignoring the implications of General Nasution's dismissal or had not been ordered to end the killings. In the latter case this could have been caused by Jakarta's poor communications with the outer islands."

It still remains to be seen whether Sukarno will succeed in his efforts to reestablish a balance in the contending class forces in Indonesia -- with himself occupying the strategic but precarious center position. On March 4 some 3,000 reactionary students, who were instigated and protected by the army before Sukarno dismissed Nasution, barricaded themselves in the University of Indonesia and formed the "Hakim Regiment," named after a university medical student killed the week before by palace guards during rioting in front of the palace. The student action was taken in defiance of Sukarno's order the day before to close down the university as a damper to the reactionary student movement.

On March 5 a crowd of 3,000 screaming schoolchildren tried to invade Foreign Minister Subandrio's office. Troops fired several warning shots over their heads.

University students painted anti-Subandrio slogans on the walls of the building and on the street.

In some instances, army officers appeared to be divided in attitude toward the student demonstrations. They have not permitted them to achieve such objectives as storming the government palace or Subandrio's office. On the other hand, in a covert way, they give the impression that they are not really against continuation of the reactionary demonstrations.

Seth S. King notes that Brig. Gen. Amir Machmud, commander of the Djakarta military district, has issued equivocal statements. The general ordered all persons having arms to turn them in by March 6, declaring that there were "wild and illegally armed troops in Djakarta." These troops, he said, had been raised by "elements of last October's coup."

This was taken by some observers to mean, according to King, "that the army might be preparing another roundup of leftists despite President Sukarno's apparent attempt to revive them as a political force."