

## Chapter 13

### Conclusion

In these brief concluding remarks I will address the following three concerns. Firstly, I will discuss the model of Indonesia as a rentier-militarist state, the nature of totalitarian ambition in this state, and the role of militarization, surveillance and terror. Secondly, I will make some brief comments on the possible future developments of rentier-militarisation in Indonesia. Finally I will make some brief comments on the implications of the Indonesian example for the theoretical issues discussed in the first five chapters. This will involve a simple model of variations in Third World intelligence regimes; discussion of the idea of intelligence organizations as self-conscious elements of the state steering societies; and a discussion of the peculiarly modern character of Third World militarised intelligence regimes.

#### **Indonesia: a totalitarian ambition in a rentier militarist state**

The quarter century of military rule in New Order Indonesia has been variously characterized as the rule of "the state *qua* state" (Anderson), "bureaucratic pluralism" (Emmerson), "neo-patrimonial" (Crouch), "bureaucratic capitalist" (Robison), "bureaucratic authoritarian" (Budiman), the "rise of the Powerhouse State" (Schiller), and in Liddle's view, "evolution from above" leading to institutionalization of the New Order state beyond the person of Soeharto.<sup>1</sup> (One is almost tempted to say "Guided Democracy".) It is easy enough - and quite right - to say that there is something useful in all of these models, particularly if due account is taken of the consolidation and elaboration of the political and economic institutions of the New Order over more than two decades.

However the previous chapters of this thesis detail a view that is somewhat different from each of these approaches. Indonesian politics is best understood in terms of an ambition towards totalitarian rule set in the specific context of rentier militarization.

#### *Rentier-militarization*

In that earlier discussion I have placed great emphasis on the relation of the Indonesian economy and political system to the wider world-order, focussing on the key term *rentier-militarization*. While the rentier character of the Indonesian state is usually taken to refer to the domestic political economy centring on the sale of the benefices of office, it is rather the external rentier character of the Indonesian economy which is logically prior to the more spectacular domestic aspects. The crucial foundation of the florescence of the state has been the combination of state revenues from oil export levies and foreign aid flows, and the *rentier* character of both of these sources. The essential pattern has been that either oil or aid or both have been the national economic base for a quarter of a century, with only the relative mix varying. Between 1974 and 1988, oil never generated less than 40% of domestic revenue, and oil and foreign aid together

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1. Benedict Anderson, "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective" *Journal of Asian Studies*, XLII,3 (1983); "Patrimonialism and military rule in Indonesia", *World Politics*, XXXI,4 (1979); Donald K. Emmerson, "The bureaucracy in political context: weakness in strength", in Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (eds.), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); R. William Liddle, "Soeharto's Indonesia: personal rule and political institutions", *Pacific Affairs*, 58,1 (1985); Richard Robison, "Towards a class analysis of the military-bureaucratic state in Indonesia", *Indonesia*, 25 (1978), and his *Indonesia - The Rise of Capital*, (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986); and James W. Schiller, *State Formation in New Order Indonesia: The Powerhouse State in Jepara*, (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Politics Department, Monash University, 1986).

always accounted for 55% or more of the government's total budget (indeed more than 75% for several years).

Equally importantly, the survival of the Soeharto regime, and the pattern of its relationships with domestic social forces has been contingent on the location of that state in the wider world order established under American aegis after 1945. Most importantly in economic terms, the United States orchestrated the allocation of Southeast Asia and Indonesia in particular to the Japanese sphere of influence. The full manifestation of that structure is only now emerging as Japan leads the international support for the Soeharto regime in the face of a decline in the price of oil and rapid rises in levels of debt repayment.

However Indonesian "rentier-militarization" is also a product of the current world order characterized by Pax Americana in its second aspect: militarization. Until the late 1980s, the pattern of Indonesian militarization was resolutely inwardly facing, with the exception of the invasion of East Timor. Indeed, despite the cruelty of the Indonesian occupation of that country, the protracted nature of the war in East Timor owes as much to the initially domestic- rather than foreign-oriented Indonesian force structure as to the will of the Timorese to resist. The rentier background of the military, and the *lack* of a specific US strategic requirement of the Indonesian military, permitted a level of military incompetence that would have been inconceivable in the Cold War-moulded US ally in South Korea. While this is cold comfort to those who face the Indonesian military in Timor, it does point to the central place of global determinants in explaining variations in types of militarization.

Both the political and economic aspects of the external character of Indonesian rentier-militarization are crucial. The peculiar quality of rentier-militarist regimes, understood in this externally-oriented sense, is their relative capacity to ignore, or at least postpone, cultivation of domestic support and the class compromises which that process requires.

#### *Totalitarian hopes and methods*

The would-be totalitarian character of Indonesian political life lies in the mix of militarization, surveillance and terror that has formed the core of rule for more than two decades. A little should be said in summary about each of these aspects

Four qualities should be noted about Indonesian *militarization*. Firstly, more than any other example that comes to mind the Indonesian military *are* the state. The number of *karyawan* officers (in non-military postings) is unclear, and has in any case varied over time. But there is little doubt that a remarkable proportion of serving military officers (in addition to their retired colleagues) have non-military state jobs. This may have been initiated as a means of dealing with an over-staffed army, but it has long outlived that. It may well be that demands for professionalization are leading to calls for review of the *karyawan* system, and such calls may well lead to the winding back or even abandonment of the system. However, Indonesian military rule has been quite literally that.

Secondly, prior to the invasion of East Timor, the Indonesian military, large though it has always been, had had very little fighting experience since the end of the Revolution in 1949. The little fighting it had seen was a series of counter-insurgency actions against secessionist groups in one part of the archipelago or another. The real - and overt - role of the military was internal policing. From the beginning of the New Order until the early to mid-1980s, this was reflected clearly in the force structure and philosophy of the armed forces - and in their political behaviour. By that time, the impact of the Timor debacle had

begun to alter both force structure and strategic outlook - and with that, military budgets, the technological base of arms imports, and the military-related component of the national debt, which at one point, appears to have risen to about 30%.

Thirdly, the military in Indonesia are the only substantial long-running example of a military officer corps transforming themselves into a class - a bureaucratic capitalist class. To be sure, in the process, many of the individuals moved beyond the military - into retirement and/or serious money-making. To be sure, as Robison has argued, there is a separate, largely Chinese large-scale or corporate capitalist class in Indonesia.<sup>2</sup> But it is precisely that capitalist class which is reliant for its survival in the present order of things upon the group of officer political-entrepreneurs - a group whose economic role is distinct enough to be called a class, even if they are, like most classes, but infrequently coherent. Again, the irrationalities of military money-making are at war with the rationality involved in constructing a serious war-fighting capacity, and pressures for change after twenty five years are building up.

Fourthly, the long-run solidity of the Soeharto government comes from the extraordinary congruence of interests supporting continued rentier-militarization: the direct interests of the military-entrepreneur class themselves, at each point of challenge over twenty years having a personal and institutional interest in defending what has been acquired; the memory of the inflationary chaos of the last years of Guided Democracy; the clearly expressed strategic interests of the United States and Japan; the class interests of US and Japanese transnational capital; and the unenviable position of large-scale Chinese capitalists who have flourished in conspicuous alliance to the military class.

*Surveillance* by the complex of military and other intelligence and security agencies has grown to an extraordinary degree in the New Order period. While pre-1966 intelligence agencies were politically active, their powers were nothing compared to the articulated system of surveillance reaching from the Armed Forces Strategic Intelligence Agency [Bais] headquarters through the Army intelligence staff and line structure into the villages, the parallel military and civilian social-political affairs "commissars", and the village- and kampung-based *rukun tetangga* structure that constitutes the "base level of political intelligence" in Indonesia. Specialist intelligence divisions are located in the prosecutor's office, and elsewhere. The industrial relations system in industrialized areas is controlled by Kopkamtib/Bakorstanas intelligence officers coordinating "industrial monitoring" and "crisis intervention" teams. All of 1.7 million alleged former communists or left sympathizers are regularly and closely monitored in their political activities, their living place, their manner of employment, and that of their children and their children. And there is substantial evidence of attempts at scientizing the mass detection and monitoring of both left and Islamic dissidents through psychometric studies of ideology and personality.

Much of this surveillance is unseen and unfelt because it is only a matter of catching the dust of history, noting only the normal patterns of life and the untoward variations. Moreover, the grand design of intelligence bureaucrats is always unevenly realized, somewhat ineptly practiced, and intermittently acted upon. But all the same, the evidence suggests that the monitoring and surveillance of the Indonesian citizenry, especially those who are in social or political categories considered by the state to be

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2. Robison, *Indonesia: the Rise of Capital*, op.cit.

"susceptible to subversion", is comprehensive and penetrating.<sup>3</sup>

While this thesis has emphasized the class-related aspects of Indonesian militarization, the punitive surveillance apparatus directed against ex-tapols indicates another dimension of Indonesian militarization - the construction and management of a caste system. At the apex of this degenerate version of older Javanese-Hindu systems, the military are the warrior knight caste - the *ksatriya*.<sup>4</sup> The marked Javanization of the nomenclature and symbolism of the military (indeed, the state as a whole) under Soeharto has been one of the vehicles for the elaboration and projection of this caste ideology.<sup>5</sup>

But the other pole of the caste system - indeed, its only other substantial component - has been the millions of ex-political prisoners, former detainees, and their families by blood or marriage. The tapols and their families (in a society where kinship is still a powerful component of social organization) are the untouchables, the necessarily vile things that make the glory of the *ksatriya* knights palpable. The system of overt and covert surveillance, monitoring, registration and re-registration, marked identity cards, and possibly most importantly the banning of tapols from a wide range of occupations all serve as markers of ritual status and pollution boundaries. Surveillance then, is more than a matter of dubious instrumental rationality but part of the cultural construction of hierarchy. The Indonesian version of the intelligence state may have borrowed methods from the Japanese Kempeitai and US psychological warfare schools and foreign computer manufacturers, but there it also is used a means of re-constructing a selective version of Javanese "tradition".<sup>6</sup>

*Terror*, the last element of the quest for totalitarian rule in Indonesia, is of four main kinds. In the beginning was the massive establishment violence that took place between late October 1965 and March or April 1966. Since then, the main acts of terror, though there are exceptions, have been of three main types. In the peripheries of Indonesia - Irian Jaya and Aceh - and most of all in occupied East Timor, terror has been extreme and continuous for many years. Special Forces [Kopassus] troops were also involved in the campaign of mass murder of alleged criminals in the major cities of the country in 1983-84. And for more than ten years, Muslim dissidents have been the target of intelligence-based campaigns of penetration, provocation, and outright terrorist violence (e.g. the killings at Tanjung Priok).

However, these terrors of the geographical and social peripheries, together with numerous smaller-scale acts of political violence have worked together to consolidate the underlying component of effective continuing low-level terror - the rehearsal of memory of 1965-66.

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3. See Chapters 8 - 12 and Appendix 12.

4. See Peter Britton's study based on extensive interviews of Indonesian officers in the early 1970s: *Military Professionalism in Indonesia: Javanese and Western Military Traditions in Army Ideology to the 1970s*, unpublished MA thesis, Department of History, Monash University, February 1983.

5. See the language of the military's explanation of its own mission in society, reproduced in Appendix 12.

6. The caste aspects of Indonesian militarization were forcefully pointed out to me in a acute discussion by several distinguished ex-tapols, who pointed out with some asperity the deformed and truncated nature of the military-imposed Javanese caste system compared with that of India itself. They also emphasized the great emphasis on "blood" and pollution in the concerns of the military to exclude those related to tapols by blood or marriage up to three generations. They also suggested that in this the military were following the approach of the Dutch after the crushing of the rebellion by the Javanese hero Prince Diponegoro in the 1820s.

Rentier-militarization, surveillance and terror are the key elements of what I have called the totalitarian ambition in Indonesia. An ambition is not a reality, and the New Order ambition to totalitarian rule is unsystematic in conception and thwarted in practice. It is thwarted in part by the sheer scale of the task - of all countries, Indonesia is one of the more unwieldy in administrative terms. It is thwarted in part by the ineptness with which the huge task is sometimes carried out - exemplary apocryphal stories are legion. It is thwarted in part by the very resistance which it is trying to subvert, even though the forces of civil society remain more or less enervated by New Order depoliticizing strategies and the effects of surveillance and terror. It is also thwarted by what appears to be a certain lack of coherence and constancy at the heart of the state itself, rather like the Soviet Union after destalinization.

Wildt's distinction between totalitarian *systems* (e.g. under Stalin) and totalitarian *regimes* is helpful to understanding my claim about Indonesia. In a passage already quoted he links mass terror to legitimation derived from overcoming deep-seated problems of accumulation:

The fact that it [fascism] temporarily succeeds in solving these problems provides the *totalitarian system* enough legitimation to develop the terror sufficiently to prevent all effective opposition. Stalinist mass terror has fulfilled its historical function of depoliticizing the population and rendering it apathetic long enough to stabilize the specific class structure of Soviet state capitalism under conditions of extreme accumulation problems.<sup>7</sup>

In *totalitarian regimes* of Eastern Europe, even with Stalinist terror in their establishment phases, sufficient apathy was not generated for such system stabilization to occur. Militarization, in the form of occupation by the Red Army, was a prerequisite for the survival of Eastern European state capitalism. Indonesian rentier militarisation, like Eastern European state capitalism,

cannot therefore be called *totalitarian* with regard to the genetically and structurally conditioned constitution of social consciousness, but only with regard to its political constitutions."<sup>8</sup>

Despite the large government investment in Pancasila ideological production, there can be little doubt that Wildt's comment is accurate as to the level at which Indonesia can be considered totalitarian. But that is no small claim.

### **Intelligence regimes**

Intelligence regimes are usually labelled "strong states", but as I have already argued in Chapter 6, at least four senses of "strength" are usually conflated in that term. Both Indonesia and South Korea are "strong" in the sense of *repressive* or "tough". But there are three important senses of "the strong state" on which they differ - *robustness*, *administrative effectiveness*, and *autonomy*.

Domestic intelligence regimes vary considerably - in their predominant style of operation, in the mix of surveillance and violence, in the sophistication of technical

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7. Andreas Wildt, "Totalitarian state capitalism: on the structure and historical function of Soviet-type societies", *Telos*, 41, (1979), p.54. My emphasis.

8. *Ibid.*, p.56.

means of surveillance, in the number of target groups in the society, and in degree of effective autonomy from other sections of the state. (See Figure 13.1.) Many states in recent history have had "strong" intelligence and security apparatuses, but as with the qualities implied in the term "strong state" more generally, the differences are important. In contemporary Southeast Asia, a number of states have "strong" intelligence and security forces - Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore. Yet these can be distinguished, as in the following figures (13.1 and 13.2), according to the mix of violence and surveillance, and according to the degree of sophistication of the control apparatus compared with the number of target groups. In Indonesia in the late New Order period, the level of violence is (East Timor and at times, Irian Jaya and Aceh apart) low compared to the founding period of the New Order, or Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge, while still being markedly higher than in most liberal democracies. Surveillance is intense, as it is also in Singapore, and in more industrialised societies in severe conflict such as Northern Ireland and West Germany. It seems likely that state surveillance in these countries is more intense than in the Philippines, where the state is less

**Figure 13.1**  
**Domestic intelligence regime types (1)**

		Level of violence	
		<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Surveillance	<i>Intense</i>	USSR-Stalin Nazi Germany Kampuchea	Indonesia Singapore West Germany Northern Ireland
	<i>Low</i>	Philippines	Most liberal democracies

**Figure 13.2**  
**Domestic intelligence regime types (2)**

		Number of target groups	
		<i>Few</i>	<i>Many</i>
Sophistication of control	<i>High</i>	Malaysia Singapore	Northern Ireland
	<i>Low</i>	?	Indonesia

coherent, and more reliant on diffuse state and non-state agents of violence. However, these cases can also be distinguished according to the number of target groups which the state surveillance system addresses. In Malaysia and Singapore, a relatively small number of groups come under extremely close and sophisticated attention. (See Figure 13.2.) In Indonesia, a complex apparatus of surveillance attempts to deal with a much broader range of "obstructions" to state policy, with an overall lower level of sophistication. But where necessary, surveillance resources can be mobilized and focussed closely on a small number of target groups - such as certain Islamic groups or labour.

### **The end of rentier-militarisation?**

In Indonesia the promise of the coming period, where declining oil revenues must be replaced either by more aid or by taxation of the population, is that either way, substantial political pressure will be placed on the palace-centred beneficiaries of much of the domestic rentier structure.<sup>9</sup> Both scenarios strengthen the influence of external forces, at least in the short run, even if certain changes occur in domestic social and economic pressures as a result. Further foreign aid at the level of recent years allows the possibility of the domestic structure continuing, but strengthens the hand of the international donors. On the other hand, successful pressure for deregulation from a coalition of foreign and domestic critics will also involve ceding a certain degree of sovereignty over economic policy formulation to external sources of legitimation. It remains to be seen whether differences in the interests of the different donor countries (especially between Japan on the one hand and the US and the IMF/World Bank on the other) will emerge, or whether there will in fact be a unified coalition with domestic groups in favour of deregulation of trade barriers.

Should international donors be unwilling to match the lost oil funds over a long period of time, then the government will be forced to treat with at least some sections of the population for revenue.<sup>10</sup> In Tilly's terms, the class coalition that receives the protection of the state will have to be expanded in order to raise the revenue for the state to survive.<sup>11</sup> That, it should be noted, is not necessarily a recipe for democratization. The state can remain militarist whilst liberalizing certain aspects of Indonesian political life. Moreover, the state may remain militarist while pursuing a non-rentier model of accumulation. Expanding the social base of the state is probably incompatible with the flourishing rentier-phenomena we know today. There would be definite increases in current pressures to cut government budgets, to regularize the irregular and arbitrary in government practises, and to close off at least some popular (in elite circles) avenues of unproductive investment.

However while in the present conjuncture, the repressive character of Indonesian

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9. These paragraphs were drafted before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent rise in oil prices. To the extent that the price of oil rises and stays high, the argument of these paragraphs is clearly invalidated. On the other hand, while a short term price rise was easy to predict under such circumstances, the longer term consequences, barring catastrophic destruction of Iraqi, Kuwaiti or Saudi oil fields, are less clear.

10. On recent taxation initiatives see Anne Booth, "Efforts to decentralize fiscal policy: problems of taxable capacity, tax effort and revenue sharing", in Colin MacAndrews (ed.) *Central Government and Local Development*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1986).

11. Charles Tilly, "War-making and state-making as organized crime", in Peter Evans, Dieter Rueschmeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.) *Bringing the State Back In*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).



politics is linked to the rentier structure of the economy, there are other state-economy projects yielding a militarist outcome, indeed, ones even more dependent on political repression. It is perfectly possible to imagine a coalition of foreign and domestic state and class forces constructing an essentially non-rentier economic structure which makes even greater calls for militarized controls over the population than at present, especially over labour and other urban groups. An attempt at export-oriented industrialization would almost certainly have such a character in the present world economy. Indeed, as shown by the replacement of Kopkamtib by Bakorstanas, the call for a non-military elite school for administrators by General Moerdani, and the increasing professionalization of the military's surveillance, intelligence assessment and social and political control capacity, such considerations may well be in the minds of the longer-term military political thinkers in Jakarta.

But whether these strategies or some other emerge in the near future, it is difficult to see how either economic growth which generates greater national control over the Indonesian economy, or more importantly, a greater measure of social equity and genuine stability, can emerge under the present conditions of Indonesia's relations to the global economic and strategic systems. Without either substantial alteration in the global economy or the strategic situation, or in the ability of the Indonesian state to negotiate the terms of external involvement, it is unlikely that the hopes of those who seek both democracy and justice in Indonesia can be met within the prevailing political options in Jakarta.

Just as for the past quarter century, external factors - or more precisely, the manner in which the Indonesian state deals with those factors - will be the predominant influence on the limits of possibility in Indonesian politics for the coming decade. The domestic rentier state and class structure will be impossible to sustain without continued oil revenues supplemented by high levels of foreign aid: the external rentier structure is a precondition of the survival of the domestic rentier - and militarist - structure. Pressures induced by changes in that external rentier-structure will undermine the domestic structure, and are already doing so. However, that is quite different from saying that profound changes will automatically follow, or that the domestic rentier structure must collapse. External influence is not external control, and influence, as the Korean example shows, is never uncontested. Not only is the future of the external rentier structure - oil and IGGI - unclear, but its trajectory will set the limits of choices to be made by Indonesians. Just how domestic social forces will manifest themselves and political figures make choices within those limits, or use the opportunities to devise new domestic arrangements that may transform those limitations, is another matter altogether. In any case, the calculus of relations between "state" and "civil society" in Indonesia, a source of hope as much as of the constraining of possibility, must now be done with a sense of a dialectic between the national weaknesses and strengths that transnationalization of both state and economic structures forebodes, and the fact that the channels of popular political action, in Indonesia as elsewhere, remain tied to the aging national state.<sup>12</sup>

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12. See Richard Falk: e.g. "The state and contemporary social movements" in Saul Mendelovitz and R.B.J.Walker (eds.), *Towards a Just World Peace: Perspectives from Social Movements*, (London: Butterworths, 1987).

## Intelligence and society

As outlined previously in Chapter 4, the functions that may be carried out by intelligence agencies in contemporary societies include the following:

- (a) surveillance and the provision of information considered useful to state policy formation and execution;
- (b) political intervention, either in the form of overt repression or covert action;
- (c) generation and maintenance of normative or ideological systems; and
- (d) steering of the state and society towards specified system goals.

As I have already described, the Indonesian intelligence apparatus is involved in all four activities, although ideological production is predominantly under the control of other sections of the military and the military-controlled state. Surveillance and political intervention are, of course, the primary concerns of the apparatus.

However, the steering of state and society appear to be important. There is as yet little direct evidence of the views of the Indonesian intelligence apparatus, or the different parts of it, about the direction in which Indonesian society should be taken, apart from those of the military as a whole. The concerns for corporatist state-centred order and capitalist development, the interpretation of differing views of society as "resistances" and "obstructions" or as expressions of "fanatical" outlooks, are all clear from even a cursory look at military explanations of their role.<sup>13</sup>

But the social engineering ambitions of the Indonesian intelligence apparatus raise a more general question about the nature of such attempts to steer societies through the state - or more precisely, the capacity of political sub-systems of society to steer the whole. Habermas has raised fundamental issues which are relevant to the claimed role of some intelligence agencies in a discussion of the apparently distant problem of the perplexities of contemporary social democracy - or what may be termed ambitions for benign social engineering.<sup>14</sup>

Social democratic welfare state theorists have been stymied by late twentieth century experiences of the twin problems of capitalist economic crisis *and* the non-neutral and ineffective character of the welfare state as a means of taming such crisis tendencies.<sup>15</sup> I have already quoted Durkheim's remark that "the state is society become

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13. See, for example, the Seskoad document translated in Appendix 12.

14. Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

15. Habermas sums up the latter point in a way which connects back to the question of the management of the political consequences surveillance in the broadest Foucauldian sense (*ibid.*, pp.361-2):

Advocates of the social -democratic state regarded it as unproblematic that an active government should intervene not only in the economic cycle but also in the life cycle of its citizens - the goal indeed was to reform the living conditions of the citizens by way of reforming the conditions of labour and employment. Underlying this was the democratic tradition's idea that society could exercise an influence over itself by the neutral means of political-administrative power. Just this expectation has been disappointed...The legal-administrative means of translating social-welfare programs into action are not some passive, as it were, propertyless medium. They are connected rather, with a praxis that involves isolation of facts, normalization, and surveillance., the reifying and subjectivating violence of which Foucault has traced right down into the most delicate capillary tributaries of everyday communication.

conscious of itself".<sup>16</sup> Characteristically, Durkheim elides the question of power, but at the same time points to a certain kind of self-consciousness - or rather a self-consciousness of society which is also in practice a self-consciousness of the state itself. This is manifest in the activities of steering society by the state.

However, in the conditions of modern industrial societies where the economic and political aspects of life are thoroughly differentiated and institutionalized out of the everyday life-worlds of the citizens, is it possible, even in a systems-theoretical sense, to speak in a such a way, either for benign or totalitarian purposes?

For a society to influence itself in this sense it must have, on the one hand, a reflexive centre, where it builds up knowledge of itself in a process of self-understanding, and, on the other hand, an executive system that, as a part, can act for the whole and influence the whole. Can modern societies meet these conditions?<sup>17</sup>

The twentieth century social democracy expected the state - a political sub-system of society - to take such a role, but its failure is now evident. The systemic reason, argue both Habermas and conservative systems theorists such as Niklas Luhmann, is by now fairly clear:

Once the state has been differentiated out as one among many media-steered<sup>18</sup> functional systems, it should no longer be regarded as the central steering authority in which society brings together its capabilities for organizing itself. A functional system that has grown beyond the horizon of the lifeworld and become independent, that shuts itself off from the perspectives of society as a whole, and that can perceive society as a whole only from the view of a subsystem, stands over against the processes of opinion and will formation in a general public sphere, which, however diffuse, are still directed to society as a whole.<sup>19</sup>

This last remark applies exactly to the would-be steering role of intelligence agencies, indeed to all social engineering projects of any political colour. But intelligence agencies, with their voracious appetite for data coupled to the fantasies of power inherent in the surveillance project, are particularly vulnerable to the illusion that it is possible to direct societies by a mix of coercion and manipulation and unilateral social planning.

### **The military and modernity, again**

Lest the remarks of theorists of late industrial capitalism - or even post-modern society - seem inappropriate in a discussion of the politics of one of the poorer countries of the world, or in the context of the misery inflicted by terror, let us briefly reconsider the question of the putative modernity of the Third World military. It is easy enough to look back at the more gross American versions of the "modernizing military" theories of the 1960s with grim humour. The military, we were told, were the sole institution of new

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16. Durkheim's remark is in his essay *Socialism*. See Steven Lukes, *Emile Durkheim - His Life and Work: A Critical Study*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), p.269.

17. Habermas, *op.cit.*, p.357.

18. Referring here, for example, to money and power as the *media* of the economy and state respectively.

19. *Ibid.*, p.362.

states that was committed to instrumental rationality, technological progress, and state institutional development. The military would substitute for the missing bourgeoisie in the "modernization" of the Third World.<sup>20</sup> After a quarter of a century of normal Third World militarization the obviously ideological character of such approaches has given the whole question of "modernity" a bad reputation in relation to questions of militarization.

Yet if the militarization of the Third World is placed in its proper global context then the question looks different. The Third World military *are precisely* the representatives of modernity, the local manifestations of a world system involving globalized commodity production, states dependent on expanding surveillance apparatuses and a global structure of militarization.

In Indonesia, the processes of militarization, surveillance and even mass terror are not atavistic throwbacks, or indications of some moral "underdevelopment". They are rather expressions of the relation of that country's state and economy to the most "modern" elements of the world system. The domestic political surveillance apparatus of Indonesia is anything but pre-modern. It is a highly rationalized system of political domination, although not so well-realized as either the fantasies of its proponents or the fears of its victims. The political economy of Indonesia is, of course, a highly complex mixture of diverse modes of production, and the social life of the communities of Indonesia as complex as any in the world. And the bulk of Indonesian citizens remain poor rural farmers. But for all that, the military officers are very much part of the modern world.

The point, of course, is that this version of Third World military modernity is rather darker than that of the 1960s. Modernity, in this sense, is nothing to celebrate, merely the experience of the varying conjunctures of late capitalist society. "The vocation of a socialist revolution", remarked Perry Anderson, "would be neither to prolong nor to fulfil modernity, but to end it."<sup>21</sup> Consideration of the totalitarian qualities of Indonesian political life brought by the thoroughly modern mix of militarization, surveillance and terror comes to the same conclusion.

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20. See above all the work of Lucien Pye, e.g.: "Armies in the process of political modernization" in J. Johnson (ed.) *The Military in Underdeveloped Countries*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962).

21. Perry Anderson, "Modernity and revolution", *New Left Review*, 144 (March-April 1984), p.113.