

1968

## The Fall of Sukarno

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Vittachi, Tarzic. *The Fall of Sukarno*. New York: Praeger, 1967. 191 p.

Here are presented clearly and concisely the background to, and the details of, the fall of Sukarno and the bloodbath that followed the abortive PKI (Communist Party of Indonesia)-Palace Guard - Air Force - sponsored coup of 30 September 1965.

The author quotes Sukarno as boasting:

I'll tell you what I have to be proud about. In twenty years I have made this country of 7,000 islands, from Sabank to Merauke, stretching wider than the United States of America, composed of people of different heritage, speaking different tongues with varying demands and needs, into ONE NATION.

The costs of his pride are pointed out: a chaotic economy with runaway inflation and a built-in need for graft; brutal repression of individual thought, speech, and press; hunger and poverty in one of the most fertile areas of the world; and an aggressive war to crush Malaysia. It is not part of *le grandeur* of the charismatic leader to be humble, of course, or even objective; but the megalomaniac foibles of Sukarno as recounted in this book rival the misconceptions of the best of our current group of "third-world" leaders. The book suffers from a lack of maps, and, more importantly, from a credibility standpoint — the author recounts (presumably at first hand and as facts) facial expressions, dialogue, and even the thoughts of individuals in closed meetings. These faults are easy to overlook, however, since the author's style contributes to a quicker understanding of the scene and the personalities involved. After reading the book it is difficult to feel quite as confident as before that Indonesia's main problems were Sukarno and the PKI. Generals Suharto and Nasution will need all the help they can find. "Amok," the author

reminds us, is one of the few Malay words of common cognition.

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Von Braun, Wernher and Ordway, Frederick I., III. *History of Rocketry and Space Travel*. New York: Crowell, 1966. 244 p.

This fascinating book divides rocketry and space flight into two separate compartments of history, which proceeded in parallel, unrelated fashion for hundreds of years until the last decades of the 19th century. Authors Wernher von Braun and Frederick I. Ordway, III, are both eminently qualified to present the story. In his introduction, Mr. Frederick C. Durant, III, Assistant Director, Astronautics, National Air Museum, has stated: "Much is presented comprehensively for the first time in a single volume, and the work promises to be an important standard reference. The book should enlighten all who read it." The volume is the result of years of research and writing. For the rocket and space buff every page contains much to be devoured and reflected upon. For the student of military technology, modern weapons, trends, and techniques, the last four chapters of the book, "Post-war Military Rocketry," "Probing the Fringe of Space," "The Remote Explorers," and "Manned Space Flight," are of particular interest. Well-documented, especially well-illustrated, excitingly told in a lucid and lively style, this account of some of the more fascinating achievements in man's attempts to understand and conquer not only his own world, but an entire universe compels the reader to hurry from page to page in order to learn more about the many marvelous things which seem guaranteed for tomorrow. However, the authors bring the reader back to earth time and time again to consider the