

shop concluded optimistically that with necessary reforms the existing state of affairs could be improved. The presentation by Sandeep Shastri used a sample survey which showed that an almost similar feeling of disappointment prevailed among the citizens of the country too. The workshop was thus reflective of the sombre mood prevailing in the country. What is heartening is that the above-mentioned survey also showed that despite feeling disappointed and let down, citizens continued to have a high level of expectation about the performance of parliamentary and governmental institutions. Therefore there is "hope on the horizon" and all is clearly not lost.

K.K. Kailash

Indonesia after the Asian Crisis – Plural Society between Reform and Disintegration

Munich, October 29, 2001

Two years after the first democratic elections since 1955, the Herbert-Quandt-Stiftung, Foundation of BMW, in cooperation with the Department of Political Science of the University of Freiburg gathered a round of experts from academia and business to discuss the achievements and prospects of the new democratic regime in Indonesia. At this conference, the second of its kind after last year's expert round on China (see Vol. 32, No. 1–2, pp. 181–186), the immediate and mid-term future of the Indonesian archipelago was at question in view of a prolonged economic crisis, the still looming threat of disintegration and a democratization process that is losing its dynamics. Establishing a link between domestic stability and international security issues, the events of September 11 have added an extra momentum to the Indonesian case and the workshop itself.

Speaking on the sustainability of the democratization process, Prof. Theodor Hanf, Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg, gave a two-sided account of institutional and attitudinal issues. The unresolved question of amending or rewriting the constitution and decentralization, the immense project-in-progress, both reflect the anxiety of the elite about losing control of its monopoly of power, resources and symbols. Whereas decentralization is essential for a pluralistic Indonesian society, Hanf emphasized its evident drawbacks which are the loss of the state monopoly of the use of force and the emergence of various types of conflicts.

On a more positive note, Hanf affirmed the existence of a significant majority of the populace with clearly democratic attitudes. While the proportion of reliable democrats is positively correlated to rising incomes and

higher education, the thesis of modernization theory which links democratization with economic growth is reversed in Indonesia: Democratization is a result of economic downturn and crisis.

Prof. Ingrid Wessels' (Humboldt University Berlin) analysis of the political parties showed that the Indonesian party system is as fragmented and authoritarian as it lacks programmatic appeal and firm roots within society. Not only have parties thus far contributed little to the solving of socio-economic problems, they are held in very low esteem due to their personalization and focus on power and patronage politics. Reformists are having a difficult stand in the face of a conservative re-orientation of party elites. As elsewhere in Asia, there is no party on the left of the political spectrum, which leaves the handling of socio-economic issues to extra-parliamentary arenas, thus risking radicalization. The dominant if only cleavage is between secular and religious parties both of which are predicted to resort to money politics and patronage in the forthcoming elections in 2004.

Turning to ethno-religious conflicts and separatism, Dr. Martin Ramstedt of the International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, saw the Suharto clan and the military at the heart of the issue. Having a high organizational potential, their agenda is to destabilize the fragile democracy using military-trained militias, criminals and ethno-religious motives. It was agreed that religion, more precisely, Islamism played only a secondary role in most of the supposedly religious conflicts, the key to their solution being social justice and the restoring of the state monopoly of the use of force.

Focusing on the most relevant veto power in Indonesia's democratizing process, Dr. Klaus Schreiner of INFID (International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development), Brussels, reported on the state of the Indonesian military (TNI) and its reform. He saw little progress. The TNI are still hanging on to *dwifungsi* and the territorial structure as their real power base. Whereas professionalization has made little progress, civilian politicians are not only unwilling or incapable of implementing civilian primacy over the military, but they gladly use it for their politicking. Unfortunately, Megawati's take-over has not brought any clear signs of a desire to exclude the military from politics, to reform its inner structure and to deal with past abuses of power.

Speaking on 'Human rights and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*', Dr. Anja Jetschke, University of Freiburg, continued by exploring the role of the military and its efforts to come to terms with past actions. Explaining that Indonesia has chosen the remarkable step of prosecution under criminal law and established a criminal court, Dr. Jetschke nevertheless concluded that due to the lack of legal certainty no case has yet been brought to court. This in turn has prevented any meaningful attempt to come to terms with the past as well as the coming to life of constitutional institutions to deal with past human

rights abuses. Dr. Jetschke emphasized the importance of international pressure. However, given the contemporary international priority of *realpolitik* instead of a human rights focus, this pressure is likely to be reduced.

Little positive news has been heard about the Indonesian economy. Dr. Rüdiger Machetzki, Institute for Asian Affairs, Hamburg, was not able to give any either. In his opinion the prospects for economic recovery were grim: a weak growth rate, high indebtedness, very little foreign direct investment, flight of Indonesian capital. Even more troubling, neither have there been nor are there any signs of substantial reforms. The most important reasons are the widespread absence of the rule of law and an effective judicial system as well as the deadlock in parliament, where nationalist ideas have gained prominence and a return to the corporatist Asian model is sought. Adding to the prevailing uncertainty is the current decentralization drive in which a lack of supervision and monitoring has caused an abundance of regulations that hamper the economy.

Rounding up the conference, Prof. Jürgen Rüländ, University of Freiburg, provided a fast-paced tour of Indonesia's foreign policy. The main thesis was to expect inconsistent see-saw policies. As young democracies are still aspiring for a truly autonomous foreign policy, they often attempt to compensate domestic problems on the international stage, which by no means guarantees civil, community-oriented policies. International relations in Southeast Asia are still dominated by the realism paradigm, resulting in a state of paralysis within ASEAN after Indonesia gave up its leadership claim. Given the lack of agreement on organizational principles and alternative leadership, ASEAN has failed to manage both the financial and the East Timor crisis. Recent initiatives for new regional fora or the extending of ASEAN to become ASEAN+3 are signs of the diversion of attention as well as the attempt to regain bargaining power in international fora. With the events of September 11, however, there is a new perspective for collective action within ASEAN and also for more Indo-US cooperation.

As was discussed throughout the conference – which was masterfully moderated by Dr. Horst Teltschik – the attacks on the WTC and the US-led assaults on Afghanistan may have a profound impact on all aspects of the Indonesian domestic situation. The unresolved issues of democratization, human rights, ethno-religious conflicts, foreign policy and economic recovery are likely to gain new dynamics in the face of intense US-Indonesian military cooperation and domestic unrest. Whereas 'the cliffhanger' (Hanf) Indonesia is still facing a precarious present and future, there was one positive message from a former troubled spot. As was exclaimed by one participant: "Well, East Timor is happy!"

Mirko Herberg