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The Press in 'New Order' Indonesia: Entering the 1990s

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'NEW ORDER' INDONESIA:
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by
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PRECIS:

This Working Paper presents a preliminary survey of developments in the Press
industry in Indonesia since 1965. It is intended for those who seek a brief
introduction to, and analysis of, the Indonesian print media today. The focus is
generally on national daily newspapers, although reference will be made to major
news weeklies, periodicals and magazines, together with certain significant
regional publications. It concentrates primarily on the rapid changes which have
taken place over the past decade, locating these developments within the context
of relations between the press and the state after the ascension from 1965 of
Major-General Suharto and the government dubbed the 'New Order'.

After providing a brief account of the historical antecedents of the 'New Order'
press, the discussion will highlight key points of friction, and some of the controls
within which the industry operates. Attention will be given also to expanding
circulations and markets, and changing patterns of ownership and financial
control, particularly the emergence of press empires. Four major metropolitan
press conglomerates will be discussed in some depth: those centred on Kompas,
Suara Pembaruan, Tempo and the relative newcomer Media Indonesia. Various
organisational press bodies, such as the Press Council, the Journalists Association
and the Newspaper Publishers Association, are themselves significant regulatory
structures which will then be examined. After raising some of the challenges
which face the changing press in the 1990s, the Working Paper concludes with
some brief comments on press-related aspects of Australian-Indonesian bi-lateral
relations.

* In exploring the Indonesian press world, I have incurred a considerable debt of
appreciation for the patience and guiding understanding shown by numerous
Indonesian journalists, most particularly Harry Bhaskara (of the Jakarta Post),
Atmakusumah and Mochtar Lubis (both formerly of Indonesia Raya), all of whom
would disagree no doubt with much of the interpretation that follows. Paul Tickell has
shared with me an outsider's fascination for the Indonesian press, sharing too his
well-ordered documentation and more specifically his instructive unpublished paper
'The Indonesian Press: Past Historic, Present Political and Future Economic', which
has informed much of the following discussion, for which I thank him. The flaws and
imperfections which inevitably persist in what follows remain my responsibility. This
Working Paper presents current work-in-progress and I would welcome comments and
responses from interested readers.
"The flourishing growth of the media, both electric and printed, is an indication of the existence of an Indonesian middle class whose increasing buying power is a determinant for further growth. Needless to say, the socio-economic setting in today's Indonesia creates a conducive climate for foreign investment."

Sabam Siagian
Indonesian Ambassador
National Press Club, Canberra
18 September 1991

A: Antecedents of the 'New Order'

Since the turn of this century, the press in what is now Indonesia has been a forum for the expression of nationalist aspirations and political agitation. The Bataviase Nouvelles, the first of what can be regarded as a modern newspaper in Indonesia (then the Dutch East Indies) was published in 7 August 1745; only about 55 years after the world's first newspaper, Publick Occurences Both Foreign and Domestick, was published in Boston. Apart from the government gazette, the earliest publications in Indonesia were largely advertising broadsheets, providing details of commercial auctions and the like. They were initially in Dutch, with a Javanese- and Indonesian-language press (though still frequently Dutch-financed) emerging in the 1850s. By the turn of the century nationalists such as Abdul Rivai and Tirtoadisuryo (upon whom Pramoedya Ananta Toer based his four volume epic This Earth of Mankind) recognised the power of the periodical and began publishing Indonesian-language 'news' papers providing a nationalist interpretation of the political situation. This growing sense of unifying 'Indonesian' identity -- embodied in the term 'pergerakan' [the movement] -- was strengthened by a 1928 milestone Youth Conference and Pledge to struggle for 'One Homeland, One Nation, One Language', that of 'Indonesia'. In that year, of the country's 33 newspapers, only 8 were Indonesian-language (or 'Malay' as it had been known), with the remainder being in Dutch (13) or 'Chinese Malay' (12).

During their pre-Independence times Indonesian language periodicals, both those explicitly nationalist in editorial orientation as well as those with more commercial motivations, struggled against enormous financial odds. But more intimidating were a series of Dutch colonial laws and regulations governing printed matter. Most restricting were the despised Haatzaai Artikelen ['Sowing of Hatred Articles'] and a 1931 Press Act, which could be invoked against anyone disturbing 'public order' or spreading 'hatred' or dissent against the government. Under this mandate, the Governor-General had the power to ban publications deemed offensive or destabilising, a prerogative used with some alacrity.
While the Japanese Occupation of the Dutch East Indies in 1942 had its own pre-publication censorship constraints it did offer press industry workers a greater opportunity for skilling and training. In addition to fostering the establishment of Indonesian language papers, of which *Asia Raya* [Glorious Asia] was the first of many, the Japanese provided press training programs for journalists. Senior staff positions were 'Indonesianised' to replace the ousted Dutch and since the Japanese language was difficult to master quickly and remained unpopular, Indonesian replaced the banned Dutch language in dealings with the bureaucracy and in the press.

The Declaration of Independence by Sukarno in August 1945 and the subsequent establishment of the Republic of Indonesia government was enthusiastically disseminated and supported by a nationalist press. Soon after the Declaration the semi-governmental news agency ANTARA re-emerged in September 1945 (originally founded in 1937 it was absorbed by the Japanese DOMEI agency during the Japanese inter-regnum). So too, appeared a growing clutch of 'nationalist' papers, primary amongst them the Jakarta-based *Merdeka* [Independence]. Founded on 1 October 1945 only 44 days after the Declaration, *Merdeka* is today Indonesia's oldest-running, most irrepressible national daily. The young activist-journalists who established the paper (BM Diah as editor-in-chief was only in his mid 20s) took over the Japanese-sponsored Indonesian-language daily *Asia Raya*, together with its printery, De Unie, formerly owned by the Dutch, with six months supply of newsprint. *Merdeka* proved to be an enormously important training ground for a generation of journalist/editors (such as Mochtar Lubis, Rosihan Anwar and Asa Bafagh).

Such 'nationalist' papers were permitted relatively free rein under the gaze initially of a transitional Allied administration in Indonesia, and later a United Nations commission which oversaw the negotiations between the Republic of Indonesia and the Dutch. This was the 'pers perjuangan', the press of political struggle; partisan, and proud of it. It was this principle which largely dominated press life in Indonesia until (it can be argued) the 1980s.

In the fresh currents of Independence, newspapers blossomed 'like mushrooms in the rainy season' throughout the 1950s, as political parties sought media promotion for their views. In 1949, the year the Dutch recognised Independence, there were 75 press publications, with a total circulation of 413,000 per issue. Six years later in 1955, the time of Indonesia's first General Elections, the number of publications has increased six-fold to 457, with an eight-fold increase in total circulation to 3,457,910; this when the Indonesian population was about 85.5 million.

The political turbulence of the times - discontent over the rationalisation of the residual hotch-potch of irregular troops and military forces after the Transfer of Sovereignty, the vying for political power by a throng of emerging political parties, the swift rise and fall of Cabinets, the horse-trading for government economic concessions, the disaffection of the outer regions with Central government policies - all contributed to the bubbling cauldron of 'parliamentary democracy' in the 1950s. The profusion of small papers that emerged wallowed in a quagmire of financial insecurity. A nucleus broke even or survived through
regular government or military procurements, distributed free in government offices and to the troops. Most lost money, remaining in business only by virtue of the editors’ ability to call upon sympathetic monied supporters for donations to tide them over. Advertising revenue was meagre at a time when Dutch firms which still carried considerable weight were often hesitant to put money into 'nationalist' papers, and Indonesian businesses were often on shaky footing. Press workers wages were invariably inadequate and irregular.

Of the major exemplars of the 'perjuangan' [struggle] style of politically engaged, committed partisan journalism, which weathered the military storms despite sporadic banning orders, and succeeded in attaining some of the highest circulation figures of the time, was the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) daily, Harian Rakyat [People's Daily]. From a low 1951 base circulation of 2,000 copies, by 1956 (when the country had a total population of about 87 million) it had become the largest daily with 58,000. But Harian Rakyat was not alone in its 'perjuangan' style. Most papers were party-affiliated, explicitly or by editorial alignment. After Harian Rakyat came Pedoman [Guide] (associated with the Indonesian Socialist Party, PSI) with 48,000, the PNI (Nationalist Party) Suluh Indonesia [Indonesian Torch] with 40,000 and the Masyumi (Modernist Islamic) Abadi [Eternal] with 34,000. Most other papers were lucky to sell 10,000 copies, surviving by dint of government newsprint subsidies. Such unaudited figures are always open to question, but clearly the fate of party papers was closely linked to the destiny of the Party.

After martial law (termed the State of War and Siege) was declared in March 1957 many of the papers were closed down for a range of dubious 'political' reasons, such as lending editorial support for regional movements against the Central government or offending the President or senior political or military figures. For example, in a crackdown on the Masyumi and the PSI, Abadi closed down under pressure in late 1960 and Pedoman was banned in 1961. By contrast, circulation of Harian Rakyat rose steadily to 70,000 in 1964, and finally to 85,000 copies in 1965 prior to its prohibition - along with most other 'left of centre' publications - in the aftermath of the military coup of 1 October that year.

Despite judgements by many observers that government constraints on the media were severe during the years prior to 1966, if one considers the multiplicity of publications and the breadth of circulation, 1964 was, on the contrary, something of a high-point in the press industry for there were, in that year, 609 press publications with a circulation of 5,561,000. So high was this circulation level that it was only realised in one other year, 1973, prior to a boom period in the 1980s, by which time the population of 145 million was 40% larger than 1964's 103.3 million.

Nonetheless, a cursory comparison of circulation and population statistics starkly highlights the fact that purchasing a newspaper has always been a minority activity in Indonesia. While one copy may be read by several people - estimates usually suggest about half a dozen at least - the practice of reading a newspaper is not widespread, this despite an enormous boost in circulation over the past decade.
B: The 'New Order'

1965 was the worst single year in the history of the press in independent Indonesia. In February and March 29 papers were closed for their support for an anti-PKI (and opponents argued, anti-Sukarno) bloc, called somewhat ironically the Body for the Support of Sukarnoism (BPS). In the backlash that followed 1 October 1965 within months 46 of Indonesia's 163 remaining newspapers were banned indefinitely because of their presumed association with, or sympathy for, the PKI and its allies. Many (clearly hundreds of) staff were arrested. Leftists were expelled from the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) and the ANTARA news agency. The arrests and purges of communist and sympathising journalists in 1965-66, carried out against a background of large-scale massacres in the countryside, cast a very long shadow over the press in the subsequent decades, highlighting the dangerous consequences of being accused of being 'communist' in Indonesia.

The letter of Indonesia's 1966 Act (No. 11) on the Basic Principles of the Press declares that "No censorship or bridling shall be applied to the National Press" (Chapter 2, Article 4), that "Freedom of the Press is guaranteed in accordance with the fundamental rights of citizens" (Article 5.1) and that "no publication permit is needed" (Chapter 4, Article 8.2). The reality was that during an unspecified "transitional period" [masa peralihan] (Chapter 9, Article 20.1.a) two related permits had to be obtained by newspaper publishers: the Permit To Publish (SIT) from the ostensibly civil Department of Information, and the Permit To Print (SIC) from the military security authority, KOPKAMTIB.

In 1966, the government granted a large number of these obligatory dual permits to papers such as Harian KAMI [KAMI Daily] and Mahasiswa Indonesia [ Indonesian Student], both associated with the militant student movement whose anti-PKI and anti-Sukarno posture supported the army leaders gaining power. Some pro-Sukarno papers survived, either because of military allies or by accommodating themselves to the changing circumstances (El Bahar [The Sea], for example, was protected by influential Navy and marine officers) but generally, in the words of one editor, the press wanted to be regarded by the government as "a good partner in accelerating development". In the parlance of what the incoming president, General Suharto, dubbed his 'New Order', the Indonesian press was 'free but responsible'. Journalists and critics, labouring under the constant threat of bans, rejoined 'free to do what, and responsible to whom?' As former Jakarta correspondent for The Sydney Morning Herald, Peter Rodgers has observed, "There is a striking disparity between the legal basis for domestic press operations and what happens in practice."

By 1970 the range of major newspapers could be classified into six (partially overlapping) types. There were the New Order radical press, typified by student papers which had spilled out of the campuses and into the streets, such as Harian KAMI and Mahasiswa Indonesia [ Indonesian Student], to which could be added Nusantara [Archipelago], and the revived PSI-oriented papers Pedoman and Indonesia Raya [Glorious Indonesia]. Secondly, there were politically cautious, high circulation prestige journals, notably the Protestant Sinar Harapan [Ray of Hope]
(established 1961) and Catholic Kompas [Compass] (est. 1965). There were the Army organs: Berita Yudha [Military News] and Angkatan Bersenjata [Armed Forces] (both established in 1965). (Later Suara Karya [Labour Voice] established in March 1971 as an organ of the government political organisation Golkar, joined this category.) Radical nationalist papers constituted a fourth group, including El Bahar, Merdeka (est. 1945), and Suluh Marhaen [Marhaen Torch] the reincarnation of the banned Suluh Indonesia [Indonesian Torch], flagship of the PNI. Muslim interests were represented by newspapers like Abadi, Jihad [Holy War] and the Nahdatul Ulama party's Du'a Masyarakat [Society's Ambassador]. Finally, there were popular-style, 'a-political', 'entertainment' papers, epitomised by Pos Kota [City Post], with its concentration on Jakarta crime stories.

An indication of relative market position is gained by the figures for June 1970, when most papers sold less than 20,000 copies. Only four emerged from the ruck with sales exceeding 40,000: the radical national Merdeka (82,000), the prestige/Christian Kompas (75,000) and Sinar Harapan (65,000), and the Army's Berita Yudha (75,000). The fate of these four publications illustrates the dynamics of change which swept the press industry under the New Order: Kompas and Sinar Harapan (and subsequently its successor Suara Pembaruan [Voice of Renewal]) became the flagships of empires, Merdeka and Berita Yudha faded to relative insignificance.

Key incidents which symbolise the ongoing latent tensions in the government's relations with the press in the decade of the 1970s were the crackdowns in 1974 and 1978, which were marked by sweeping multiple bans. The press, still stirred by the tradition of 'pers perjuangan' adopted a campaigning style in supporting public criticism of government policies. The government ultimately responded with an iron fist against the demonstrators and those papers which had given them sympathetic coverage.

In January 1974 widespread public demonstrations erupted over several days in Jakarta, triggered off by the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka, but rooted in growing hostility towards government social and economic policy and festering distrust for leading presidential confidantes and associates. In the aftermath, 12 publications were banned and about 470 people arrested, including Indonesia Raya's Enggak Bahau'ddin (detained for nearly eleven months) and Mochtar Lubis (for two and a half months). The press had taken advantage of the relatively cordial government-press relations over the early New Order period, to highlight dissatisfaction with a government which they had basically supported since its inception. The 1974 bans dissolved the government's fragile 'partnership' with the press, as the demonstrations did its opportunistic 'partnership' with the students. Offending journalists were 'blacklisted' by the authorities and found themselves unable to find subsequent employment in the industry. The most radical of the newspapers had been eliminated; only the moderates were permitted to re-appear.

Four years later, further anti-government student protests, which were sweeping through the main campuses, were again reported extensively even in the moderate press, which was becoming assertive once more. Government
development policies, specifically the questionable involvement of foreign investors, Chinese financiers and government officials, were targets of student censure. The president's family was specifically criticised and there were calls for him to stand down. In January 1978, KOPKAMTIB responded by disbanding all university student councils, banning seven Jakarta dailies and a further seven student newspapers, prior to the military occupation of several key campuses and the arrest of some 223 students.\(^2\)

Unlike 1974 when several of the papers were killed off, in 1978 the banned papers were back on the streets within weeks. But the squeeze largely wrung out their 'spirit of struggle' for, although there have been numerous individual bans, never again has the broad press community challenged the government in such a manner. Numerous individual publications have since been killed off however. For example, the fortnightly news magazine *Expo* had its publication permit withdrawn in January 1983 over a series of articles on 'Indonesia's 100 Millionaires', a list which included an embarrassing number of New Order confederates. *Jurnal Ekuit [Economy, Finance and Industry Journal]*, established in April 1981 by BM Diah's son, Norman, through his PT Sistem Multi Media company, was banned in March 1983 after it revealed an impending reduction of the floor price for export oil.\(^2\) Even the battle-scarred *Sinar Harapan*, whose editors were renowned political jousters usually capable of treading the fine line between boldness and banning, was formally shut down on 9 October 1986 over commentaries on economic policies. *Prioritas [Priority]*, a new burgeoning economic daily, fell soon after, on 29 June 1987, for similar reasons. Eventually, after considerable negotiating and compromised editorial restructuring the prime movers behind *Sinar Harapan* were permitted to bring out a new paper, *Suara Pembangunan*, on 3 February 1987.

Other publications suffered only temporary bans. *Topik [Topic]* (published by the Merdeka group of companies since January 1971), had its permit withdrawn for two months in 1984.\(^2\) More unusual was the strategy adopted to coopt *Pelita [Lamp]*, established to replace the banned Modernist Islamic *Abadi*, which was closed during the mass prohibitions of January 1974. Seen as a voice of Islamic opposition to the New Order, *Pelita* was closed briefly in 1978, then again between May and September 1982, before reopening under new, more pro-government leadership. In 1985 ten Golkar leaders bought 60% of *Pelita*’s shares and in May 1988 Vice President Sudharmono became an official 'adviser' to the editorial board.

Usually, prior to being formally banned, editors receive phone calls or written 'warnings' from the authorities pointing out that they are sailing too close to the wind. A range of topics are widely recognised as off limits, and have been dubbed with the mnemonic 'MISS SARA' which refers to anything deemed seditious, insinuating, sensational, speculative, or likely to antagonise ethnic, religious, racial or 'group' (class) tensions.\(^2\) Though generally papers are cautioned or banned for criticism of government policies, even government-sponsored publications are not always immune. In June 1989, the Golkar newspaper, *Suara Karya* of which the Vice-President Sudharmono is also the 'adviser', was given a rap over the knuckles by the Department of Information
because of an article on the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam, deemed likely to hurt the feelings of a neighbouring Head of State.\textsuperscript{26}

Apart from bans and warnings, the face of the press is fashioned by both personal whim and a range of government regulatory measures. A government Minister's pique may lead to certain papers being 'blacklisted', their journalists excluded from government press conferences and other official sources of information.\textsuperscript{27} More structurally, however, under guidelines laid down by the government-dominated Press Council (\textit{Dewan Pers}), newspapers are subject to prevailing restrictions on advertising space (currently limited to 35\% of total column space) and number of pages (currently 16 pages daily\textsuperscript{28}). In addition, a Department of Information program to introduce newspapers into villages (called \textit{Koran Masuk Desa}) has thrown a life-line to several regional and pro-government papers. The government places substantial regular purchase orders with them for copies to distribute gratis in villages.\textsuperscript{29}

In September 1982 the 'transitional' 1966 Department of Information's requirement for a SIT (Publishing permit) was replaced with a SIUPP (\textit{Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers}), a Press Publication Enterprise Permit.\textsuperscript{30} The change is something of a sleight of hand, for publications are still subject to strict government regulation, however now it is based theoretically on the suitability of the enterprises, that is, the press companies, rather than their newspapers' content.\textsuperscript{31} While industry proprietors generally have accepted the new legislation, more controversial have been the Minister of Information's Regulations determining the implementation of the Act, and specifically those which refer to the withdrawal of the SIUPP. Senior editors and opposition political figures have pointed out that these regulations give the Minister (currently Harmoko, himself a major player in several press companies and founder of Jakarta's sensationalist down-market \textit{Pos Kota}), power to withdraw the SIUPP and thus ban any paper, without recourse to public defence or trial. It is argued by such editors as Teuku Yousli Syah of \textit{Media Indonesia [Indonesian Media]}, that this contradicts the 1982 Act, which like the 1966 Act, stipulates that "the national press is not subject to censorship or banning".\textsuperscript{32} Opposition members of parliament argued that provision should be made for companies threatened with a withdrawal of their SIUPP to defend themselves publicly against the Minister's accusations but this has never happened.\textsuperscript{33}

While differences of opinion remain regarding methods used by the government in withdrawing a SIUPP, a consensus operates between the Information Minister and the Newspaper Publishers Association (SPS, \textit{Serikat Penerbit Suratkabar}) to limit the number of permits issued, totalling about 264 (in April 1991).\textsuperscript{34} In the interests of the established members of the SPS, this consensus keeps new players out of the industry. Jakob Oetama, head of the giant Kompas-Gramedia conglomerate, and Eric Samola, the financier behind the wealthy Tempo-Grafiti group, have both stated that they oppose 'deregulation' of the industry, since the status quo keeps out new competitors.\textsuperscript{35} Other capitalists, who appear to be increasingly keen to direct their investments into the press industry, are forced to either take over, or buy into, existing enterprises as a way of obtaining a SIUPP.\textsuperscript{36}
The focus of activity within the press industry seemed to shift in the 1980s from engaging in wide-ranging debate with the government to ensuring financial survival through hardnosed commercial expansion. With some startling exceptions, from 1978 generally it has been the marketplace rather than government bans which has determined those papers that survived. The 1980s have been marked by an unparalleled surge in total newspaper circulation, from about 5 million (in 1978) to more than double that by the end of the 1980s, topping 11.7 million at the end of 1990. However, as the total circulation figures for the industry increase, there has been a levelling off, indeed a relative decline, in the number of publications. From 283 in 1975, the number had declined to 256 in 1986, illustrating a continuing trend.

While some papers were curtailed by the government, overall the decrease during the 1980s was due to the dynamics of capital accumulation. Since the SIUPP cannot officially be bought and sold, large expanding newspaper companies have formed 'joint management and capital investment' collaborations with newspapers whose fortunes were declining. In practice this has meant smaller regional papers are collapsing or being absorbed within a limited number of metropolitan press empires, richest amongst them those empires centred on *Kompas, Suara Pembaruan, Tempo [Time]*, and the relative newcomer *Media Indonesia*.

**C: Major press empires**

1) Kompas-Gramedia group:

The morning newspaper *Kompas* is Indonesia’s most prestigious and largest circulation daily (525,000 in late 1990 with 50,000 more for the Sunday edition). Established in 1965, by Chinese and Javanese Catholics with Catholic Party backing, it began with a modest 5,000. *Kompas* became synonymous with a style of subtle, indirect and implicit criticism, often dubbed typically 'Javanese'. *Kompas* has now become the parent of an interlocking empire of around 38 subsidiaries - known collectively as the Kompas-Gramedia Group - after a massive diversification and reinvestment through the 1980s. The group includes not only Gramedia book publishers and a printery, but also a radio station, offshoots in the travel agency, hotel, heavy equipment, supermarket, insurance, leasing, banking and advertising industries (to name just a selection). Still headed by Jakob Oetama, one of the two principal founders of *Kompas* newspaper, the expanded Kompas-Gramedia Group now dominates the publishing industry and is one of the top forty conglomerates in the nation. *Kompas* itself regularly commands the largest share of the nation's print advertising revenues, usually upwards of 25% (that being about US$ 90 million in 1989 for example).

Since 1989, the Group has drawn in a clutch of regional papers, via capital injection, editorial and managerial collaboration. These include *Serambi Indonesia [Indonesian Porch]* (Banda Aceh), *Sriwijaya Post* (Palembang),
Mandala [Circle] (Bandung), Berita Nasional [National News] (Yogya) and Surya [Sun] (Surabaya). Its magazine holdings include Sigma, Foto Media [Media Photos], Info Komputer [Computer Info], Inisari [Essence], Bobo, Hai [Hi], Bola [Ball], Jakarta Jakarta, Nova, Senang [Happy], Suara Alam [Voice of Nature], Angkasa [Sky], Citra Musik [Musical Image], Tiara, Kawanku [My Friend], and, until recently, Monitor.

The success stories have been legion, with Monitor a shining example. In November 1986 when the group took over Monitor formerly a tabloid published by the government television network TVRI, it had been unpublished for two years because of its unprofitability. Kompas-Gramedia totally revamped it, directed it consciously as a middle- and lower-class readership, and launched it with 200,000 copies. By July 1987 it claimed a circulation of 720,000 (although it later dropped to around 500,000), becoming the first Indonesian publication to exceed 700,000.42 Ironically, the publication foundered after the high-flying editor Arswendo Atmowiloto offended vocal Muslim groups with a 'popularity poll' in the 15 October 1990 edition which listed the Prophet Muhammad at 11th place (somewhat under President Suharto in first place and Arswendo himself in tenth)!

The Group's market diversification has led it into highbrow journals on psychology (Tiara) and computers (Info Komputer), as well as the consciously lower-middle class Jakarta Jakarta and Monitor. As the consuming reading public, marked by an adequate disposal income, expands so too does the market for the press. With the considerable barriers to newcomers, in the form of government SIUPP restrictions and massive capital requirements, large established enterprises are well placed to continue their domination of the market.

II) Sinar Kasih group:

Sinar Harapan afternoon newspaper, original flagship of what is now known as the Sinar Kasih Group, was established by protestant Christian interests in 1961 at a time when several other anti-communist right-leaning papers, such as Indonesia Raya, Pedoman and Abadi had either been banned or had voluntarily closed down. The trend in the early years for the paper to have an expressly Protestant tone was moderated as the Church-affiliates declined in influence under challenge from those with greater professional journalistic experience. With an initial circulation of 7,500 in 1961, Sinar Harapan survived the 1960s, was amongst the bolder of the papers in the press crises of the 1970s, and moved into the 1980s targeting an expansion of their middle class readership. Since the 1970s, Sinar Harapan has generally been Indonesia's second highest selling daily, and, prior to its demise, was the second largest recipient of newspaper advertising revenues (1982-86) after Kompas. Its style was rather more explicit, assertive, sometimes even combative in its challenges to the government, and, like so many others, it was banned in 1978. In September 1986 it had the dubious honour of being the first newspaper permanently closed down under the SIUPP regulations. Its phoenix arose four months later in the form of a new paper from the same stable called Suara Pembaruan [Voice of Renewal], and the expansion of the empire continued, led by this rather more muted reincarnation.
The Sinar Kasih Group had actually begun its diversification in 1971, with a printery (Sinar Agape press) and now, in addition to its newspaper and magazine publishing branches (producing such successful popular magazines as *Mutiara [Pearl]*), it controls companies in transportation, tours and travel, advertising, book publishing, and a private radio station. Through cooperation agreements, it co-publishes several Jakarta magazines, including the specialist *TSM* (Military Technology and Strategy) and *Higina [Hygiene]* (medical journal monthly). In 1989 the Group began a management agreement with the Jakarta morning daily *Jayakarta*, whose shareholders included Ponco Sutowo (son of the disgraced former head of the state oil company Pertamina, Ibnu Sutowo) and a foundation formed by the Jakarta Military Command (*Kodam Jaya*). In the non-metropolitan regions, the Sinar Kasih Group has a cooperation agreement with the daily *Manado Post* in north Sulawesi.45

III) Tempo-Grafiti group:

*Tempo* is the nation’s premier weekly news magazine. It was established in 1971 when a contingent of highly creative young journalists and literary figures, who had worked in the student-paper *Harian KAMI* and BM Diah’s *Ekspres [Express]* magazine, gained funding from a collection of Jakarta capitalists to produce a quality weekly modelled on *Time* magazine.46 It immediately pioneered a blend of well-paced articulate and informative articles, written in a fresh, crisp language style, setting the benchmark against which all subsequent news magazines have been measured. It was ‘de-politicised’, non-party journalism, with a dash of literary flair, consciously targeted at the urban middle class reader, who had an interest in politics and economics, but no strong party loyalty. *Tempo* was a journalistic by-product of a New Order which had emasculated political parties in January 1973.47

The company behind *Tempo*, PT Grafiti Pers, is driven by a forceful Minahasan business person, Eric F.H. Samola, currently treasurer of the ruling Golkar party. Following the success of the magazine, Grafiti moved into book publishing, then established a string of related magazines (including *Zaman [Era]*, *Matra [Meter]* and *Medika [Medical]*). It cooperates in the publication of others (such as *Swasembada [Self-Sufficient]*). Banned from April till June 1982 over coverage of the General Election campaign, it still managed to attract the largest total advertising revenue for magazines during 1982-86, that being about 20.31%.48 In the month it was (temporarily) banned Grafiti gained control of Surabaya’s *Jawa Pos [Java Post]*, and used it as a base to expand into the regions, thus spawning its own regional ‘sub-group’. This *Jawa Pos* (sub-)group now has cooperative association with *Manuntung* in Balikpapan, *Akcaya* in Pontianak, *Fajar [Dawn]* in Ujung Pandang and *Riau Post* in Riau. It also runs the economic paper *Suara Indonesia [Voice of Indonesia]*, the entertainment magazine *Liberry*, the children’s magazine *Putera Harapan [Prince of Hope]*, and the papers *Bhirawa* and *Karya Dharma [The Product of Duty]* in Surabaya.49
IV) The Media Indonesia/Surya Persindo group:

The three empires discussed thus far were all founded prior to the government's policy of economic deregulation of the 1980s. They were based on existing publications, established and run by working journalists (in the case of the youngest, Tempo, collaborating with successful business people) and diversified gradually as they adjusted to the changing economic environment. The mid-1980s saw various other successful models of press empires emerging. The Media Indonesia/Surya Persindo Group provides an example of a major capitalist moving consciously into the press industry, with a clear strategy of regional diversification.

Between 1985-87, PT Surya Persindo, a publishing company established by an Acehnese-born former Member of Parliament, Surya Paloh, had published the controversial straight-talking, rather flashy daily Prioritas, which was the first Indonesian daily to feature regular colour cover photos and, on 29 June 1987, was the second paper to have its SIUPP revoked (the first being Sinar Harapan). The revocation order stated that it has published "reports which are not true and are not based on facts, and which are cynical, insinuative and tendentious", and that it had deviated from its SIUPP provisions to publish 75% economic news and only 25% general news. However, it was widely believed that the paper met its demise because of its ability to 'anticipate' government economy policy in an embarrassing manner.50

When Paloh was refused permission to establish another paper, tentatively named Realitas [Reality], he obtained access to an existing SIUPP by becoming co-publisher of a lack-lustre daily, Media Indonesia, established in 1969 by Teuku Yousli Syah.51 Paloh breathed new life into it injecting funds from his firm PT Surya Persindo and bringing a large number of former Prioritas staff. After its 11 March 1989 launch and with a logo reminiscent of Prioritas, its popularity rose steadily, passing its 'break-even point' within 20 months, when its daily circulation hit 85,000, despite (or perhaps because of) a 'final stern warning' (the penultimate notification prior to a ban/revocation of SIUPP) from the Department of Information for a 23 March 1990 article comparing President Suharto with Pharaoh. By February 1991, Media Indonesia was advertising a circulation of 300,000 (boosted by the interest in the Gulf War), 72% of whom were holders of bank accounts (an implied measure of middle class status), a "market which really possesses a very high 'disposable income'" (the English term was used).52

Paloh and Surya Persindo quickly diversified into regional publishing. In 1989-90 he invested in editorial and management assistance (often regarded as euphemisms for 'take-overs') with a total of ten regional publications in Banda Aceh (the weeklies Peristiwa [Event], Atjeh Post), Medan (daily Mimbar Umum [Public Forum]), Padang (daily Semangat [Spirit]), Palembang (Sumatera Express), South Sumatra (daily Lampung Post), Bandung (daily Gala), Yogyakarta (daily Yogya Post formerly Masa Kini [These Times], affiliated with the Islamic Muhammadiyah organisation53), Pontianak (Dinamika Berita [News Dynamics]), and Manado (Cahaya Siang [Mid-day Light]). While he has obtained some flagging regional papers at fire-sale prices (the Atjeh Post, for example was
obtained for only Rp 1 million or US$543, while Medan’s Mimbar Umum required a Rp500 million initial investment), the stable of papers is estimated to be costing him about Rp 100 million per month. His target in these ventures was to reach 'break-even point' with a year, a goal attained with the Lampung Post and the Yogya Post, though not in all other cases.

The entry of newcomers like Surya Paloh into the press industry has created new tensions between the older proprietors (particularly of smaller regional papers) and the new strategies of high-fliers from Jakarta. Media Indonesia has been promoted aggressively in new markets. Surya Paloh closed down his two recently-obtained Aceh papers Atjeh Post and Peristiwa at the end of 1990 and instead began selling Media Indonesia on the local Aceh market at only Rp.100 (about seven cents Australian) (compared to the Jakarta cover price of Rp300) in an attempt to undercut and woo readers away from competing local publications. The North Sumatra branch of the Press Publishers Association (SPS) protested strongly about this practice, termed 'dumping', to which the Jakarta magnate responded that his strategy was prompted by the altruistic motive of raising the level of public knowledge, and the more pragmatic goal of increasing circulation to attract greater advertising. Such pressure from the major national conglomerates exacerbates the declining fortunes of the unaffiliated regionals (a matter to which we shall return).

Neither Surya Paloh’s aggressive style nor his entry as one of the potential big players in the industry is unique. Other indigenous Indonesian (pribumi) capitalists have invested heavily, such as Aburizal Bakrie, from Bakrie Brothers (in Pelita and Warta Ekonomi [Economic News] in collaboration with Fadel Muhammad) and Sutrisno Bachir from the Ika Muda group (in Berita Buana [World News], Mode Indonesia [Indonesian Fashion], Infobank, Anda [You] and Prospek [Prospect]). Several of these entrepreneurs have brought their own forceful marketing practices from other sectors of business. The new-style Berita Buana, for example, was initially distributing about 20% of its print run free as promotional copies. A particular suburb or housing complex would be targeted with vendors handing out free copies door to door as an inducement to subscribers.

While several such pribumi entrepreneurs have invested heavily in recent years in the press, on the surface the industry seemed relatively free from Suharto family involvement. This contrasted starkly with the television industry, in which all private channels, now permitted in Jakarta, Surabaya and most recently in Ujung Pandang, are effectively monopolised by companies associated with the Suharto family, either son, Bambang, or foster brother Sudwikatmono. After the 1986 banning of Sinar Harapan Sudwikatmono did try to buy the paper, but this did not eventuate. However in March 1991 a foundation headed by Sudwikatmono began publishing a 24-page weekly tabloid, Bintang Indonesia [Indonesian Star] devoted to television, video, radio and film news, and purporting to "meet society's need for light reading". In an attempt to capture the market identified by Kompas-Gramedia’s lucrative Monitor magazine banned only months previously, Sudwikatmono brought over 20 staff from Monitor. Bintang Indonesia commenced with a print run of 200,000 and ambitions of topping 500,000 by the end of the year. In addition, the highly respected Far Eastern
Economic Review has reported that Surya Paloh's group was bailed out in 1988 by the Bimantara Group of Bambang Suharto, and noted the suspicions of some observers that the funds behind the Ika Muda Group's Prospek magazine come from Bank Duta, which is controlled by three foundations headed by the president. Such recent moves suggest an increasing engagement by the presidential family in this powerful sector of the media.

D: Press organisations

I) The Press Council (Dewan Pers)

The Government regulates the press through a variety of Department of Information administrative units (particularly the Press and Graphics Guidance section) and intermediary institutional structures, most notably the Press Council. This Council is intended as a meeting point between the Government and the various organisations representing press interests, namely the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI), the Newspaper Publishers Association (SPS) and the Press Graphics Association (SGP), the Advertising Companies Association of Indonesia (P3I) together with community representatives.

In theory the Minister of Information is advised on matters to do with the withdrawal of SIUPP by the Press Council. In practice, the Council is dominated by government members with the Minister of Information (as Chairperson), the Director-General of Press and Graphics Guidance, the Secretary-General of the Department of Information, the Junior Attorney-General for Intelligence, and the Director-General for Social and Political Affairs (in the Department of Internal Affairs), all heading the list of members. The weight of the military (either serving or retired) too is heavy. In the 1990-93 Council, for example, there are four Brigadier-Generals, a Colonel and a Rear Admiral. One of the Brigadier-Generals, Nurhadi Purwosaputro, head of the Armed Forces Information Centre (PUSPEN ABRI), seemed at pains to emphasise that he was not formally representing the Armed Forces, but was there "as a member of the society, a community representative".

Civilian members of the Council are believed to be privately hoping that the Government may permit future Councils to be less government- and military-dominated and more representative of public and industry interests. They are currently looking overseas for appropriate models for a new-style Press Council but have no guarantee that such liberalisation will be permitted.

II) Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI)

Under the a Department of Information Ministerial degree (No.02/PER/MENPEN/1969, chapter 1, article 3) "Indonesian journalists are obliged to become members of an Indonesian Journalists Organisation which is recognised [disahkan] by the Government". Only one organisation, the
Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) is so recognised. Like many key professional organisations and all labour unions (with the exception of the recently formed Setia Kawan Free Trade Union, still unrecognised by the Government) the PWI is tightly regulated and directed by the Government. Its current executive chairperson is a retired brigadier-general, Soegeng Widjaja, editor of the Army's Berita Yudha daily, and chairperson of the Executive Board of the government's political organisation, Golkar. Current chairperson of the Education Committee, similarly, is a retired brigadier-general, M. Hilny Nasution.

At various times in its history the membership has rejected office-bearers unacceptably tainted by behind-the-scenes government machinations. An example is the split within the Association in 1970 between factions led by Merdeka's BM Diah (believed to be backed by the government's OPSUS Special Intelligence Operations branch) and Pedoman's Rosihan Anwar. Generally, however, explicit government intervention is unnecessary since the leadership is selected from the more moderate senior members of the profession, who already have cordial working relations with the Government. For the rank-and-file however, a PWI membership card is essential and rejection by (or in the recent case of Monitor's editor Arswendo Atmowiloto, expulsion from) the Association, for whatever reason, formally closes the door on a press career. Hence, the PWI executive has the power to act as a gate-keeper for the government in controlling professionals seeking access to the industry.

The small often collegial working style which typified papers from pre-Independence through to the 1970s, exemplified in dailies such as Indonesia Raya and Abadi, which were pervaded by an ethos of intense company loyalty, shared commitment and ideology, is the exception rather than the rule. The boom in the number of new or revamped, expanded publications has introduced 'head-hunting' into the labour market stimulating intense competition for experienced staff, improving pay and conditions, with attractive fringe benefits and transfer fees being offered to key personnel.

Nonetheless, the idea of journalists participating in an independent labour organisation is as anathema to those heading press empires as it is to the government. When four journalists in Kompas (regarded as one of the most 'liberal' and 'democratic' papers) attempted to set up a labour union within the company in March 1988, the paper's management moved firmly either to dismiss the ring-leaders or 'transfer' them to other parts of the Group's empire. Rather than support the rights of journalists to act collectively in this manner, in a strongly worded letter the central leadership of the PWI (dominated by newspaper editorial/management staff rather than rank-and-file journalists) backed the Kompas management's action and condemned the concept of the labour union.

III) Newspaper Publishers Association (SPS)

The influential Newspaper Publishers Association (SPS), which represents the newspaper companies, plays a significant role in determining such policies as newsprint import levels and prices. It is the closest thing in Indonesia to an
employer confederation, whose interests may be interpreted as antithetical to those of an employees' organisation such as the PWI. It is surprising, therefore, to find several of the key leadership of the PWI also sitting on SPS executive committees. Overlapping members currently include Zulharmans (former editor of Harian KAMI, now editor-in-chief of Neraca economic daily, and chairperson of Golkar's Mass Media, Publications and Information Department), Jakob Oetama (Kompas-Gramedia chief) and Atang Ruswita (from the Bandung daily Pikiran Rakyat [Thoughts of the People]) while Brigadier-General (ret.) Soegeng Widjaja, a former Parliamentary spokesperson for the Armed Forces and public relations officer with the all-powerful Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (KOPKAMTIB), chairs the SPS Advisory Council. While such a close arrangement between the PWI and the SPS may smooth communication between the two bodies, it could be seen to weaken any advocacy role of the PWI in supporting non-managerial employees in press companies.

E: Changes and challenges in the 1990s

As we have seen by 1990 the groupings of newspapers had changed markedly from the early years of the New Order. If ideological position had been the key determinant two decades ago, commercial orientation is far more significant now. Six very different, yet still overlapping, categories can be identified. The first would be the large-scale newspaper empires which have sprouted from established, formerly politically-aligned flagships, chiefly Kompas and Suara Pembaruan, now directed more towards commercially successful production of the newspaper as commodity rather than bearer of an explicit political posture or voice of a particular community or religious group. Secondly there has emerged a new category of market-driven 'professionalised' 'a-political' commercial ventures, such as Media Indonesia, which were conceived as investments capitalising on the economic deregulation of the 1980s and the business sector's increasing 'need to know'. Many of the new-style 'business' and 'economic' papers which began to emerge after 1985, such as Bisnis Indonesia [Indonesian Business] and Neraca [Balance], could be included here. Thirdly there are the occasional surviving nationalist 'perjuangan' papers, such as Merdeka (whose circulation appears now to have plummeted from a peak of 100,000 to around 30,000\(^c\)). In the fourth category are the pro-government or pro-Army papers, such as Suara Karya, Angkatan Bersenjata, Berita Yudha and even Pelita. Had it not been for strong government support these papers, which generally lack an autonomous commercial footing, would slide into the fifth group, namely the poorly capitalised small-scale, small-circulation papers, now struggling to maintain their market presence. Most of the regional papers not associated with the press empires of the first category could be placed in this group. Finally, the sensationalist entertainment press, such as Pos Kota (associated with the Minister of Information, Harmoko) continues to expand, though less markedly than the first two classifications.

The trend away from 'pers perjuangan' [press of political struggle] towards greater technological 'modernisation' and 'professionalism' could be interpreted as going
hand in hand with a greater assimilation into the networks and operating style of international (Anglo-American) media. These pressures may well also be activated through such organisations as the Press Foundation of Asia, the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists and various other international training programs such as journalist scholarships offered by the East-West Centre in Hawaii or the Niemann Fellowships to Harvard, and perhaps also through such professional institutions as the recently established Dr Soetomo Academy of Journalism under the auspices of the Dr Soetomo Press Foundation.\textsuperscript{68}

Dhakidae predicts that by the time the national circulation rate hits 15 million (within four years on current trends) the number of publications will have halved (to about 181).\textsuperscript{69} There will be a greater economic concentration of the press run by a diminishing number of proprietors who may have a far greater coalescence of interests - economic and political - in both an open de-regulated economy (albeit with limitations on entry into the press sector) and a stable political environment. With enormous financial risks involved in any disruption, they are likely to be wary of the destabilising uncertainty of political and economic change. The fortunes of such press capitalists are clearly dependent upon government media policies, but since policies have not seriously constrained the economic expansion of empires as the Kompas-Gramedia Group, or the Tempo-Grafiti group (even given such factors as the controls on the SIUPP, the guidelines on advertising space) it would not be from these quarters that regime-threatening political opposition is likely to emerge (which is not to say that such publications would not cover oppositional politics if such coverage had commercial advantage.)\textsuperscript{70}

Such 'survivors' have, over the course of their development, and particularly since the bans of 1978, reached a relatively accommodating relationship with the New Order government. Banning orders such as those against \textit{Sinar Harapan} (1986) and \textit{Prioritas} (1987) are these days the exceptions rather than the rule. Most major empires have proved to be adequately self-regulating, and able to negotiate their continued good health with the government. The \textit{Monitor} case is illustrative. Kompas-Gramedia head Jakob Oetama was chairing the extraordinary three-member executive meeting of the Press Council (of which he has been a member for 21 years) which recommended unanimously to the Minister of Information that \textit{Monitor}'s SIUPP be rescinded. He was also an adviser to the National Executive of the Indonesian Journalists Association, at the time the Jakarta chapter expelled \textit{Monitor} editor, Arswendo Atmowiloto. Oetama, who also held an executive position in the powerful Newspaper Publishers Association (SPS), then formally dismissed Arswendo from all his positions in the Kompas-Gramedia Group. Arswendo was later sentenced to five years jail for offending religious sentiments.\textsuperscript{71}

In a related episode following swiftly on the heels of the \textit{Monitor} ban, on 2 November 1990 the Kompas-Gramedia voluntarily closed down, and returned the SIUPP of, another of its periodicals, the fortnightly \textit{Senang [Happy]}, because the 21 September issue had published a reader's letter and illustration which may have given offence to Muslim readers. The management claimed it had taken the remarkable step after a period of "introspection and self-correction".\textsuperscript{72} While Jakob Oetama's personal position in the cases of \textit{Monitor} and \textit{Senang} was an
unenviable one, ultimately the Kompas-Gramedia Group had graphically displayed its willingness to terminate publications - even one of its most successful - and to sack one of its most talented editors to ensure that its other financial interests are not jeopardised. Later Oetama, head of the richest press and publishing empire in Indonesia, said of the press generally "We are becoming less critical because we have to survive".73

The trend towards increasing commercialisation and capital concentration within the industry may also be linked with an increasing secularisation of the industry. Developments have largely left Islamic voices out of the media choir. The fate of Pelita illustrates this point.

Established in 1974, Pelita replaced the modernist Islamic Masyumi-aligned Abadi banned earlier that year. During the 1977 and 1982 elections, when its usual circulation of 50,000 nearly doubled, it was identified as a voice of the opposition Islamic coalition, the PPP (United Development Party). Banned immediately after the 1982 elections, it re-appeared about four months later with a more moderate editorial line, a more commercially pragmatic management, and was largely abandoned by its readership. In 1985 it was taken over by Golkar figures, eventually even listing the Vice President Sudharmono as an adviser (pembina) in late May 1988. Given a capital injection of about Rp.4.5 billion by 'pribumi' capitalists Aburizal Bachrie and Fadel Muhammad in mid-1990, the new management recruited several key personnel from Kompas, with ambitions of drawing a large percentage of Kompas' Muslim staff. Instead of achieving their goal of emulating the number one daily, by July 1991 Pelita was rent asunder by a controversy over the sacking of 52 of their 253 staff in an attempt to trim costs. Circulation, which senior staff claimed at 90,000 in late 1990, may have dropped to under 40,000 by July 1991.74

While there are still modest circulation explicitly Islamic magazines (such as Amanah [Message], Kiblat [Pointing to Mecca] and Panji Masyarakat [Banner of Society]), and while other publications (such as Media Indonesia) provide sympathetic coverage of developments in the Islamic world, compared to the selection of Islamic newspapers of the 1950s and even the 1970s, today's consciously Islamic communities are largely without a substantial and identifiable press.75 In April 1990 a new explicitly Islamic tabloid weekly, Jum'at [Friday], began publication, under the editorship of a former Director of Religious Information in the government's Department of Religious Affairs and with a staff of 25 journalists. With an ambitious initial print run of about 400,000 and a modest cover price of only Rp.200, it was distributed largely through mosques and religious organisations.76 It remains to be seen what impact Jum'at will have on a market somewhat resistant to such papers.

By contrast, two of the largest players in the industry - Kompas and Suara Pembangunan - are associated with Christian interests (although these papers too have become increasingly secularised, as 'professionalism' rather than religious affiliation became the crucial consideration77). Perhaps the backlash against the enormously successful Monitor magazine, from the nominally Catholic Kompas-Gramedia stable, when it 'offended Islamic sentiments' in its 1990 popularity poll, can be interpreted as a display of Muslim frustration at their absent press voice.
There are no obvious newspapers which champion their causes, leaving them to seek other avenues to express their ire.

Like the Islamic media, the regional press too faces enormous challenges. Symbolically, the future for the regional papers of Indonesia is being fought out in East Java. Four players highlight the competition. There are two burgeoning offshoots of the Jakarta-based national press empires. The Jawa Pos originally established as a family concern in 1949, was incorporated into Tempo-Grafitti Group in 1982 and is now rumoured to be the second largest circulation newspaper in Indonesia with an estimated circulation of about 300,000, a 'regional' capable of taking on the 'nationals' and winning. Surya was set up as a new venture by the sensationalist Jakarta Pos Kota paper (of the Minister of Information Harmoko) in 1986. With an initial circulation of about 50,000, it slid back badly and was rescued by incorporation into the Kompas-Gramedia Group in 1989. It now competes strongly for the upper end of the market and, after initially printing about 160,000 copies (many distributed free), seems to have quickly built up a second place circulation in excess of 90,000 (pre-Gulf War). Behind them comes the Surabaya Post, established in 1953, as a strong regionally-oriented daily, with no pretensions of going 'national'. Its facilities are modern and computerised and its circulation is also between about 75,000 - 90,000 (pre-Gulf War), but it can only be expected to fall behind the two high-fliers in the long term. Representing the dying breed of small-scale regionals is Memorandum, with 25,000 circulation. From its roots as a student weekly in the provincial town of Malang, Memo, moved to the regional capital of Surabaya in 1982 and struggled to find a niche. It tried an Islamic flavour till about 1987, then became more sensationalist, and is now testing reactions to a more 'news'-based style. Crowded out by high-tech competitors (Jawa Pos, Surya), and more strongly entrenched regionals (Surabaya Post), papers like Memo have little future. When the Gulf War exploded the limitations of the small, often family-owned, medium-technology regional papers were starkly evident in their sparse coverage. They do not have the capital nor the professional expertise to seize new initiatives for expansion, despite the belief of Memo's editor-in-chief, Agil H. Ali, that, with a current ratio of one paper to 40 inhabitants in East Java, the province can still absorb the aspirations of the smaller dailies.

An enormous boom in circulation generated by the January 1991 Gulf War could be interpreted as demonstrating the tremendous potential for expansion in the near future. Circulation figures nationally skyrocketed: sold out were Kompas' increased print run of 700,000, Suara Pembaruan's 406,000, leaving the street vendors short of stock. Papers with cover prices of Rp 250 were being hawked at Rp 1,000. Despite the difficulties of competing with the national giants, with their superior technology, even regional papers' sales generally increased by about 10%. Surabaya's daily Jawa Pos in the Tempo-Grafitti group, which sent two journalists to the war front, claimed a massive surge to 550,000 in circulation! While it seems unlikely that the tremendous gains of this period can be sustained in the short to medium term, the potential for long term growth was strikingly demonstrated.

The skyrocketing of newspaper circulation during the 1980s (topping 11.7 million in 1990) and into the 1990s indicates the extending parameters of a public
with an adequate disposable income, an interest in information and entertainment reading. This certainly is the opinion of the new Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Sabam Siagian, former editor of the *Jakarta Post* English-language daily, whose quotation commenced this Working Paper. While expenditure on newspapers is not a definitive demarcation of a middle class, it may suggest changing social, economic and cultural patterns of the society. For example it may be that, with their concerted push into the regional press, empires such as Kompas-Gramedia, Tempo-Grafiti and Media Indonesia have identified and tapped the emergence of a substantial middle-class outside of Jakarta, comprising a ready market for aggressive advertisers and wanting a diet of international, national and specifically regional news.

Amidst this enormous commercial explosion, one striking feature is the increasing tendency for the state-sponsored interstices with the press industry, such as the Press Council, the Journalists’ Association and the Publishers Association, to appear to ‘self-regulate’, enforcing conformity with government policies upon renegade journalists and publications. Of the 1970s, Dhakidae (1991:214) observed "The quelling of opinionated journalism ... was, curiously enough, carried out more by the press itself than by the state", a trend accelerated into the 1990s. In the ultimate analysis, as Dhakidae argues persuasively, "The real power over Indonesian journalism rests with this state repressive apparatus."(p.546)

In summary then, how do Indonesian journalists approach their challenges and the constraints which operate upon them? What are the implications of these constraints for newspaper readers? In 1978, the year of the second sweeping attack by the 'New Order' government upon the nation’s press, Nono Anwar Makarim, the former editor of *Harian KAMI*, one of the most vocal student papers to emerge in the 1960s and to be cut down in 1974, wrote frankly that "hard facts in government-press relations seldom emerge in an environment where a feeling for subtle hints and signals has proved more important for the continuation of a functioning press than open and formal statements, or even written law." Working journalists require a sensitivity to these 'signals' in order to remain employed. As the industry faces the 1990s, an understanding of the content of the nation's press still requires a honed ability to read the unsaid rather than the explicit. As sociologist Ariel Heryanto noted recently "There are more than enough lessons in the immediate past to show that if the government deems it necessary, it has the power to ban any publication, or even publisher, at anytime and without trial. Prior experience, and perhaps some perceptiveness to occasional occurrence of subtle and largely silent changes in the political dynamics of the top state leadership, have taught [those in the press] which areas are strictly proscribed, which are conditionally publishable, which are permissible, and which are imperative...[Readers of the press] should keep in mind at least the fact that these constraints exist."
F: Australian-Indonesian relations

The changes taking place in the Indonesian press industry may have ramifications for press relations between Australia and Indonesia. The growing financial strength of the new Indonesian press empires now enables them to employ full-time correspondents in Australia, something unknown prior to the 1980s. Australian-based correspondents are not a high priority, clearly less significant than good coverage of the USA, Western Europe, Japan, and neighbouring Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Singapore. However, currently *Kompas, Suara Pembaruan, Editor, Tempo* and *Jawa Pos* have either correspondents in Australia or active 'stringers' (who are paid per article rather than a regular salary) filing stories on an occasional basis.86 While the quality of this output varies, generally correspondents have a reasonably intimate knowledge of Australia, for though originally from Indonesia, most are long-time residents here. They are fluent English and Indonesian speakers and while not formally trained in journalism, display initiative and energy. Stories tend to be either about Indonesia-related events, Australian affairs culled from the local press, or general human interest stories.87 In addition, the major papers periodically send senior journalists to Australia to cover particular events or for familiarity visits. 'Sister-state' agreements (such as that between Western Australia and East Java) have enabled even provincial papers to send staff to Australia for familiarisation.

From the perspective of the Indonesian government, much Australian press coverage of Indonesia (particularly since the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975) is seen to be unacceptably critical of the New Order. A prominent example was David Jenkins' 1986 report on Suharto family financial interests.88 The supposed offence may have been all the greater since Jenkins was extremely well-connected in Jakarta with impeccable highly-placed sources and years of professional experience there, an example of a highly professional, exceptionally well-equipped foreign correspondent.89

In attempting to counter such criticism, the Indonesian government has followed a variety of stratagems, most severe of which has been strict restrictions on Australian journalists working in Indonesia. After Peter Rodgers of *The Sydney Morning Herald* was refused a visa extension and made to leave in 1980 there were no representatives of Australian media based in Indonesia until James Dalmeyer of the Australian Associated Press' arrived in 1988. While the Australian Ambassador in Jakarta has attempted to smooth over this gap by pointing to the growing numbers of Australian journalists who visited Indonesia during the late 1980s, scattered brief visits by journalists with no special knowledge of Indonesia are no substitute for well-informed resident professionals.90 Indonesian government restrictions have created a situation whereby, over this past decade, there have been more regular correspondents from Indonesian publications in Australia than Australian correspondents in Indonesia. Of late, there have been several positive signs of increasing access for Australian correspondents seeking residence in Indonesia. A touchstone may be whether unimpeded access is given to cover the General Elections in 1992.
While restricting access for Australian journalists, diplomatically, the Indonesian Government has directed itself squarely at the Australian press. It has appointed two recent ambassadors with considerable press experience. The first, Major-General August Marpaung (retired), had been head of the Armed Forces Defence and Security Information Centre (1971-72) and head of the National News Agency Antara from 1979 until taking up his ambassadorship in Canberra (1984-87). While a military man not a journalist himself, his appointment did flag the importance Jakarta placed on firm, articulate 'handling' of the Australian press. Marpaung's forceful manner (at such events as the National Press Club luncheon on 20 June 1984) was seen to serve Indonesian government interests well.

Keen to repeat such diplomatic successes, Sabam Siagian, editor-in-chief of the English-language Jakarta Post, was chosen as the current Ambassador. The son of a Calvinist pastor, Siagian spent 13 years studying and working in America, and was a senior editor of the independent-minded Sinar Harapan for a critical decade (1973-83) which included the two greatest crack-downs on the Indonesian press (in 1974 and 1978). Since he took up his Jakarta Post position, the Post has become Indonesia's largest English-language daily, selling more than twice that of its nearest rival. He is the first journalist to be appointed ambassador by the New Order government, a practice frequently followed during the 1950s, suggesting that the profession may once again become important politically as a training ground for spokespersons, now promoting a new image for an ageing New Order. Although one of the members of the Post's sponsoring Indonesian-language papers is Suara Karya, the paper of the New Order's electoral organisation, Golkar, the Post is also backed by Kompas, Suara Pembangunan and Tempo, and is not regarded as a solely government organ. In this context it is significant that Jakarta has chosen, not a 'government man' from one of the explicitly Army-, Golkar-, or government-controlled papers, but a nominally 'detached' editor, with good connections in Australian press, Department of Foreign Affairs and academic circles (particularly with the more conservative groups at the Australian National University).

At Siagian's Jakarta swearing in, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, expressly stated that his appointment was intended to foster "an interaction and better dialogue with Australian society, and particularly with the press and non-government organisations" (my emphasis). The Ambassador's performance at the Canberra National Press Club on 18 September 1991 displayed the honed journalist's skill at taking command of the forum, eloquently ranging over the breadth of Australian-Indonesian relations and Indonesia's significant economic gains in a well-crafted speech, while adroitly avoiding the thrust of any pointed questions. The appointment demonstrates the high priority being given in Jakarta to 'managing' press relations, if necessary by refuting criticisms by the Australian press, by direct rebuttal by an articulate and forthright journalist colleague with considerable experience in both the media and in international affairs.

Press relations between Australia and Indonesia will inevitably increase in importance and complexity. It is gradually being recognised that it is in the interests of both governments to encourage the broadest possible coverage by a
diversity of journalists representing a multiplicity of publications. Attempts to control or limit such access will only impoverish both communities.
ENDNOTES


2. These pioneers are regarded by some observers as 'proto-nationalists' rather than 'nationalist' in the post-1945 sense, for their vision of a future was often more ethnic or regional. The organisations they founded, for example, bore names like 'Young Sumatrans' rather than 'Young Indonesians' but their sentiments identified with their people and their land rather than the Dutch colonial presence.

3. Pramoedya's tetralogy based on the life of Tirtoadisuryo has been translated into English by Max Lane as *Awakenings* (incorporating the first two volumes, *This Earth of Mankind* and *Child of All Nations*), *Footsteps*, and *The Glass House* (all published by Penguin, Ringwood, respectively in 1991, 1990 and forthcoming).

4. The term 'Chinese Malay' ['Melayu Tionghoa'] is used to describe a form of Malay language that was identified linguistically with locally-born ethnic Chinese, and also to describe those papers published by and primarily for that population. See Leo Suryadinata *Pers Melayu Tionghoa* (pp.35-64) in Abdurrachman Surjomihardjo (ed) (1980) *Beberapa Segi Perkembangan Sejarah Pers di Indonesia*, Departemen Penerangan RI & LEKNAS-LIPI, Jakarta, esp. p.35. For statistics on the 1928 newspapers, see Abdurrachman Surjomihardjo & Leo Suryadinata 'Pers Indonesia' (pp.65-86, esp. p.80) also in Abdurrachman Surjomihardjo (ed) (1980).


6. I have translated the names of Indonesian newspapers and magazines. Where no translation is given, the title refers to an untranslatable name (e.g. *Bobo*) or the title is in English or is readily recognisable (e.g. *Gala*).


9. This was certainly the case with the daily newspaper *Indonesia Raya*, edited by Mochtar Lubis. While fervently maintaining its 'independent' status, it was receiving irregular but significant financial injections through the intervention of key military intelligence officers. See David T. Hill (1988) 'Mochtar Lubis: Editor, Author, Political Actor', unpublished doctoral thesis, ANU, pp.58-66.


11. Kerry Groves (1983) 'Harian Rakjat, Daily Newspaper of the Communist Party of Indonesia - its History and Role', unpublished MA thesis, ANU, Canberra, p.110-1. Groves is using *Harian Rakyat* sources, but discounts as an exaggeration the paper's claim that the 1957 figure was 110,000.

12. Figures drawn from Dhakidae 1991 Table i, p.551.

13. Tickell makes the point that, although "most newspapers are consumed in urban areas", not all readers are wealthy, since publications are often posted "on public reading boards outside of newspaper offices or government offices. Old newspapers and magazines, in particular, are sold more cheaply [in markets, bus stations or by mobile vendors] and therefore open up a new audience." ('The Indonesian Press: Past Historic, Present Political and Future Economic', draft, p.4.)


15. The following paragraphs are elaborated upon in Hill 1988:135-39, which provides more detailed referencing.

16. This law, promulgated on 12 December 1966, was signed by Soekarno, in his formal capacity as President. However, after 11 March 1966 effective control of the Parliament and the reins of power had transferred to General Suharto. Quotations are from the official English version, published by the Department of Information.

17. KAMI was a student action front organisation established by anti-Communist and anti-Sukarnoist students. In Indonesian, the word 'kami' means 'we, us, our', hence the newspaper's title plays on the double meaning 'our daily/KAMI daily'.


22. For a detailed discussion of events and newspaper coverage, see Dhakidae 1991:301-23.


25. For a discussion of the range of issues and events that cannot be published, see David Hill (1990) 'Publishing within Political Parameters', *Inside Indonesia*, No.23, June, pp.16-17.


27. Justice Minister Ismail Saleh reportedly blacklisted journalists from *Media Indonesia, Pos Kota, Berita Buana, Tempo*. (See 'Blokade Ismail Saleh', *Tempo*, 23 February 1991, p.22.)

28. Till July 1986 the maximum was 12 pages daily, which was then increased to a permissible 16 twice-weekly, raised again to four times weekly from January 1990. In March 1991, 16 pages could be published daily. See USIS 1990 Vol. 1, p.16, and 'Lebih Tebal Lebih Makmur', *Tempo*, 16 March 1991, p.30.

29. For example, since 1979 the Armed Forces paper *Angkatan Bersenjata* has had a government contract to supply 20,000 copies to villages and about 16,000 to the Army, totalling more than half its daily circulation of 52,000. Similarly 10,000 copies of *Berita Yudha*, a paper regarded as close to the military intelligence network, have been distributed under this scheme. The government also assists the Yogyakarta paper *Kedaulatan Rakyat* publish an eight-page Javanese-language weekly called *Kandha Raharja* as part of this Newspapers for the Village program and the *Bali Post* also has a special weekly edition assisted by this program (See USIS 1990 Vol. 1, pp.5, 7, 41 & 54).

30. Although the SIUPP legislation was introduced in 1982, it was not enacted formally until 1985.

31. Kopkamtib had abandoned the SIC (permit to print), obligatory since the early NO period, on 3 May 1977 (see 'Kronologi Perkembangan dan Pembreidelan Pers di Sekitar 'Malari' Januari 1974' in Abdurrachman Surjomihardjo (ed) 1980:247-253, esp. p.253). One of the possible advantages of the SIUPP system for the rank-and-file journalists might be that, if their paper was banned, they might still be able to work
with the company, though not officially in the newspaper itself. This might be the case, for example, with a journalist like Aristides Katoppo of the *Sinar Harapan* group, who was 'removed' during the shift to *Suara Pembaruan*, but still holds a key position in the Group's overall structure.


33. The opposition position was put during a June 1991 meeting of a Parliamentary Commission (DPR Komisi 1) with the Minister of Information, broadcast in the *Parlementaria* television program on the government television network, TVRI, 28 June 1991.

34. A total of about 275 SIUPP have been issued, while about 11 of them have been withdrawn for various reasons, some banned, others for failing to publish on a regular basis. 'Daripada Menganggur Lebih Baik Terkubur', *Tempo*, 13 April 1991, p.82.

35. On their opposition to de-regulation and the issuing of new SIUPP, see 'Yang Senang di Regulasi', *Tempo*, 17 June 1989, p.28.

36. 'Ekspansi dalam Keterbatasan', *Tempo*, 20 October 1990, p.32.

37. The figure of 11.7 million was given by Soebrata, the Director-General of the Department of Information's Press and Graphics section [Dirjen PPG]. See 'Dari Soal Bredel sampai Saham', *Tempo*, 1 December 1990, p.88.

38. Dhakidae (1991) illustrates this point graphically, providing statistics in Table i (p.551) in addition to graphs comparing circulation increase and number of publications (Figures 1.12 and 1.13, pp.66 & 67).

39. Dhakidae (1991) has superbly documented this process of capital accumulation by *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan* and *Tempo*, and it is from this source that most of the following statistical analyses are drawn.

40. Not all the Group's endeavours have been successful. Their film company went bankrupt, the shrimp culturing concern was closed down, and their Grasera supermarkets are apparently not particularly remunerative. An orange plantation was a slow starter, as was a tissue paper factory. (See 'Seperempat Abad Oom Pasikom', *Tempo*, 30 June 1990, pp.80-81.) The figure of 38 companies is given in Michael Vatikiotis 'Masses of Media', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 July 1990, pp.46-47.

41. The *Kompas* parent company, PT Kompas Media Nusanbora was listed as the 32nd largest tax-payer in 1990, down from its 28th ranking in 1989. (See 'Seperempat Abad Oom Pasikom', *Tempo*, 30 June 1990, pp.80-1.) In 1988, when the group included only 19 companies, total assets were estimated by Christianoto Wibisono's authoritative Pusat Data Bisnis Indonesia to be in excess of Rp.200 billion. (See 'Oom Pasikom Terbang Tinggi', *Tempo*, 26 August 1989, p.27.)

42. USIS 1990 Vol.2, p.32 gives these figures, claimed by Arswendo Atmowiloto; Dhakidae (1991) gives only 500,000 for 1987 and 570,000 for 1988. Nonetheless the acceleration since 1986 had been unparalleled.
43. Ostensibly the ban was because the paper had published speculative reports on the economy and devaluation likely to cause 'restlessness' among the population. Some observers believe a more likely reason was the paper's editorial jousts at business monopolies, which might have been interpreted as business interests of President Suharto and his family. See Max Lane (1986) 'Why Sinar Harapan was silenced', *Inside Indonesia*, No. 9, December, pp.6-7.


47. On the New Order's forced amalgamation of the political parties into two aggregations, the Islamic-oriented Development Unity Party (PPP) and an alliance of nationalists and Christians called the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), see Harold Crouch (1978) *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, pp.245-72.


49. 'Ekspansi dalam Keterbatasan', *Tempo*, 20 October 1990, p.32.


52. See the advertisement for *Media Indonesia* in *Warta Ekonomi*, No.36/II/4 February 1991, p.34.


59. The foundation was called *Yayasan Tujuh Dua*. See "Bintang Indonesia" Segera Beredar*, *Kompas*, 2 March 1991, p.12.


64. For details of the membership of the PWI executive, see USIS 1990 Vol.2, p.83. The letter was signed by Zulharmans, General Chairman (editor-in-chief of *Neraca* economic daily, formerly with *Harian Kami*) and Atang Ruswita, Secretary General (General Chairman and editor-in-chief of *Pikiran Rakyat*). Both were concurrently office-bearers in the Newspaper Publishers Associations (SPS), Zulharmans as General Chairperson of the Executive Board, and Atang Ruswita as vice Chairperson of the Advisory Council. As such, these editors-in-chief of substantial papers might be seen as more likely to act in the interest of Jakob Oetama, *Kompas*’ editor in chief, rather than those of the rank-and-file journalists. For a detailed discussion of the *Kompas* incident, see Dhakidae 1991:404-413.

65. For a detailed discussion of the SPS’ role, see Dhakidae 1991:492-516.


68. The Dr Soetomo Press Institute (Lembaga Pers Dr Soetomo), based on an idea emerging from the Press Council’s 1987 Plenary Session to establish a training institute for professional journalists, was opened by the Minister of Information, Harmoko, in July 1988. (See 'Mencetak Kuli Tinta yang Profesional', *Tempo*, 30 July 1988, pp.76-77.) It runs short professional courses. This program was expanded into the Dr Soetomo Academy of Journalism in April 1989, with the goal of providing year-long 'MBA-style' courses in journalism. Staff include a former head of the Supreme Court, leading journalists and editors, and an American Cornell University graduate curriculum designer. (See 'AJS, buat Reporter M.B.A.', *Tempo*, 5 May 1990, p.33.)


70. It should be stated clearly however, that print media concentration in Indonesia is nowhere near the level of Australia, nor it is likely to become so in the foreseeable future. Nor is the political and financial positions of Jakob Oetama, Eric Samola, Surya Paloh, BM Diah and even of Harmoko (in the long term) comparable to Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch in Australia.


75. On the range of small-scale publications directed towards Islamic teaching institutions (*pesantren*), see 'Pasar di Antara Pesantren', *Tempo*, 23 May 1987, p.32.


77. Dhakidae 1991:350 provides a graph indicating that the number of Muslims employees equalled Catholics in the Kompas Gramedia Group by the mid 1980s.


79. While August Parengkuan, head of the Kompas-Gramedia Group's Public Relations section, denied that they injected any money into *Surya* and emphasised that only editorial and management support was provided, other (unnamed) sources in *Surya* are quoted as saying that *Kompas* invested about Rp.6 billion, of which one third went on promotional expenses and Rp.1.2 billion went to purchase a new printery.(See 'Pertempuran' di Surabaya', *Tempo*, 25 November 1989, p.37.)


82. See 'Di sana hujan bom, di sini hujan emas', *Tempo*, 2 February, 1991, p.100. Figures are rubbery, since 'Demam Scud dan Patriot', *Editor*, 2 February 1991, pp.93-4, gives the increase in *Jawa Pos* circulation as a nonetheless considerable 80%.

83. Mohammad Chudori, the Managing Editor of the *Jakarta Post*, gave the figure 10.5 million in February 1990, while in December that year the Director-General of Press and Graphics, Soebrata stated 11.7 million. (Compare 'Jor-joran di Dalam dan di Luar Lapangan', *Tempo*., 10 February 1990, p.30, with 'Dari Soal Bredel sampai Saham', *Tempo*, 1 December 1990, p. 88).


86. *Kompas* is represented by Ratih Hardjono (based in Sydney), *Media Indonesia* by Nuim Khaiyath (Melbourne), *Tempo* by Dewi Anggraeni (Melbourne) and *Editor* by Francis Song (Brisbane). In addition, some Indonesian temporary residents and postgraduate students write occasionally for the press, for example, currently Fachry Ali and Mohammad Sobary (both studying at Monash University) produce columns in *Tempo*.

87. An excellent collection of Indonesian press articles about Australia, which illustrates the increasing sophistication of coverage of Australia since 1974, is P. Kitley, R. Chauvel and D. Reeve (ed.) (1989), *Australia di Mata Indonesia: Kumpulan Artikel Pers Indonesia 1973-1989*, PT Gramedia, Jakarta. This publication was sponsored by the Australia-Indonesia Institute of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which is also funding an English translation.

88. On 10 April 1986 the *Sydney Morning Herald* published a front page article, by Foreign Editor, David Jenkins, discussing the wealth of the Suharto family, under a striking headline, 'After Marcos, now for the Soeharto billions', likening the Indonesian president to the recently deposed Philippines' President Marcos. It sent shock waves through government circles in both Jakarta and Canberra, and came to symbolise the beginning of a breach on good official relations.

89. It should not be assumed that Indonesians generally are upset by articles critical of the President, such as those by Jenkins. Quite the contrary. On a visit to Jakarta in January 1991 a vociferous taxi driver, on hearing I was Australian, highly praised Jenkins for exposing the President's dubious financial practices. So great was this man's respect for Jenkins that he asked me for the journalist's photograph so he could put it on his bedroom wall, along with his two other heroes, former President Sukarno and Rolling Stone, Mick Jagger!

90. See for example, the Ambassador's Australia Day address in January 1990.

91. The *Jakarta Post* was audited in 1990 at 22,216 daily circulation, and is assumed to have grown to around 25,000 in 1991 (See 'Award untuk JP', *Tempo*, 4 May 1991, p.73). USIS 1990 Vol.1, pp 11-13 gives the Indonesian Times and the Indonesian Observer as 10,000 each.

92. The most recent journalist appointed as Ambassador prior to Siagian was the head of the *Merdeka* empire, BM Diah, who served in Czechoslovakia, England and Thailand between 1959-68. (See 'Sabam Siagian: 'Moga-moga Saya Dianggap sebagai Rekan...", *Kompas*, 17 May 1991, p.1.)

93. It is however widely believed that *Suara Karya* holds the largest share interest (35%) with the current Minister of Information, Harmoko also holding 5%. *Kompas* is estimated to have 25%, *Tempo* 15% and *Suara Pembaruan* 10% (USIS 1990 Vol. 1, p.13).
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

David T. Hill (b. 1954) completed his Bachelor of Arts (Asian Studies) degree at the Australian National University, Canberra, in 1977 with a Honours thesis on Indonesian popular literature. He spent two years living in Jakarta (1980-82) while researching his ANU doctoral dissertation 'Mochtar Lubis: Author, Editor, Political Actor' (1988). Dr Hill has taught in the Department of Indonesian and Malay, Monash University, and is now concurrently Research Fellow in the Asia Research Centre and Lecturer in Southeast Asian Studies at Murdoch University, Perth. He has recently edited and introduced the memoirs of Ruth Havelaar, the wife of a former political prisoner, entitled Quartering: A Story of a Marriage in Indonesia during the Eighties (Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Clayton, 1991). At present, his research interests cover the Indonesian press and Jakarta metropolitan culture.

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