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Chapter 8

Unifying Diversities, c. 1950-1958

Introduction

The previous chapter has explored the process of recovery and institutionalization undergone by the teacher training system from 1945 to 1949. Although sources indicate the precarious nature of schooling in the jurisdiction of the Indonesian Republic, they also tend to show the relatively dominant position of the Netherlands Indies government in educational policy making. The 'dualistic' geographical views on the educational policy making officially ended in December 1949 when the political unification of Indonesia became a reality following the transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands. However, the havoc which resulted from the breach in the colonial dike continued to characterize education and teacher training in Indonesia until about a decade later. The years following the transfer of sovereignty made up the second phase of the waves of the breaking down political dam of the colonial society.

This chapter deals with the years from 1950 to 1958 and will focus on two main points. It will begin by exploring the process of unification of the educational system and policy making, approximately during the first eight months following the transfer of sovereignty. After this it will examine the new educational philosophy which was thought should underlie schooling practice. Successive Indonesian governments were continuously busily re-organizing and tinkering different models of teacher training systems until a new standard one was finally established. As pointed out in Chapter 6, the collapse of the socio-political structures of the colonial society not only promoted the mass participation and the social mobility of educated people, it also disrupted the process of system establishment. The theme of this chapter will be to explore the efforts of the government to overcome the chaos in education during the period.¹ It will deal with 'micro aspects' of changes in school institutions and the curricula.

One point is worth a brief note. In Indonesian historiography today, the Proclamation of Independence of August 17, 1945, stands perhaps as the greatest historical monument of all. Nevertheless, it should be noted that not until the recognition of the Independence of Indonesia by the Netherlands and the transfer of sovereignty, on December 27, 1949, did the Proclamation of Independence really take effect throughout all territories it had claimed. The 1949 recognition of the independence by the Netherlands affirmed the political unification – at least theoretically – as a basis of educational reform at the national level. However, it did not take too long for the realization to dawn: the provision of public education was first and foremost a problem of finance and human resources. The lack of teachers, study materials and school buildings loomed as an enormous challenge. While there was a general wish for an educational system which should be Indonesian in character, for the time being the existing, and perhaps the only workable, model was the pre-war type of the system. Hence, regardless of political independence and the world's recognition of it, a confused process of transition muddled on for a considerable time. Efforts to tackle the problems could only gradually achieve any success. The foundation of the teacher training college in 1954,

¹ In this 'stabilizing' and institutionalizing process, the financial and expertise support of foreign governments and institutions was critical. This will be discussed in Chapter 10.

followed by the abolition of several secondary-school teacher trainings in 1958 marked a turning point in the institutional establishment, which renounced the old colonial system. In a nutshell, although characterized by different political episodes, the period from 1945 to 1958 was one period of educational history, marked not only the public's enthusiasm for progress but also chaos and episodes of trial and error in the educational and teacher training system.

A. Centralization, c. January-August 1950²

When the Netherlands transferred sovereignty on December 27, 1949, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI or RIS/ *Republik Indonesia Serikat*) was the licit recipient.³ Therefore, when the RUSI was dissolved in August 1950 because all participating federal states merged into the Indonesian Republic⁴—which was itself a federal participant in the RUSI—the Netherlands post-war authority over the State in Indonesia also became null and void.⁵ The Indonesian Republic and the other federal states and territories re-grouped into the Unitary States of the Republic of Indonesia (USRI or NKRI/ *Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*).

Neither the RUSI provisional constitution nor the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty contains any clause, which affirms an imperative condition for the return of sovereignty to the Kingdom of the Netherlands should the RUSI be dissolved. The chairman of the Netherlands delegation to the Round Table Conference (RTC) was already aware of this 'point of no return'. In his speech during the opening ceremony of the RTC in The Hague on August 23, 1949, he said: 'This transfer of sovereignty, once having been effected, shall never again be revocable. Any idea that the sovereignty could even return to the Netherlands is excluded.'⁶ Accommodating the speech

² This section ('Centralization, c. January-August 1950') has appeared as 'Unifying Diversities: Early Institutional Formation of the Indonesian National Education System c. December 1949-August 1950', *Humaniora Journal of Culture, Literature and Linguistics* Vol. 24, No. 1, February 2012, 3-16.

³ The transfer of sovereignty was the outcome of the Round Table Conference (RTC) which opened in The Hague on August 23, 1949. Three government delegations participated in the Conference, namely the governments of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Indonesian Republic, and the delegates of the Federal Consultative Assembly (FCA or BFO/ *Bijenkoms Federaal Overleg*). The FCA was a consultative body of the federal states which the Netherlands had formed in Indonesia. These federal states included the States of East Indonesia, East Borneo, the Madura, East Sumatra, South Sumatra, the Pasundan and autonomous territories like Bandjar, Bangka and Billiton. The federal states were run under the umbrella jurisdiction of the Netherlands Indies government in Batavia. During the second plenary meeting of the Conference on November 2, the three parties agreed to ratify the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty, the Statute of the Union of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the RUSI, and the Transitional Measures. On the RTC, see Secretariaat-Generaal van de Ronde Tafel Conferentie, *Ronde Tafel Conferentie te 'S-Gravenhage 1949: Feiten en Documenten* (Den Haag: Secretariaat-Generaal van de Ronde Tafel Conferentie, 1949); *Rules and Procedure for the Round Table Conference at The Hague* (idem: 1949).

⁴ Article 44 of the provisional Constitution of the RUSI made possible the merging of federal territories, whether or not they were participants in the RUSI. It reads: 'Alteration of the territory of any participant territory and the acceding to or association with an existing participant territory by any other territory—whether or not being a participant territory—can only be effectuated in accordance with regulations to be established by federal law, in compliance with the principle set forth in Article 43. The above-mentioned accession or association of territories requires the approval of the participant territory concerned'. See the RUSI Provisional Constitution in Secretariat-General of the Round Table Conference, *Round Table Conference*, enclosure pages.

⁵ It also means that the recognition of Indonesian independence by the Netherlands on December 27, 1949, is the recognition of an independent State (RUSI), which had already collapsed in August 1950 and no longer existed.

⁶ 'Address by the President of the Netherlands Delegation', in The Secretariate General of the Round Table Conference, *Speeches Delivered at the Solemn Opening of the Round Table Conference, The Hague, August 23, 1949* (The Hague: Secretariate General of the Round Table Conference, 1949), 73-5; quote from p. 74.

somewhat, Article 1 of the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty reads: ‘The Kingdom of the Netherlands unconditionally and *irrevocably*⁷ transfers complete sovereignty over Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and thereby recognizes [the] said Republic of the United States of Indonesia as an independent and sovereign State’.⁸ The USRI achieved the ideal structure of the Indonesian Republic, which was proclaimed on August 17, 1945.⁹ Therefore, the USRI legacy dated back to the war, even the pre-war period. Its emergence and the *raison d’être* of its existence did not have anything to do with the political and military claims, which the post-war Netherlands had made to Indonesian territories. Awareness of this position might help understand the setting and the course of educational policy and practice in Indonesia during the second phase of the post-war period (1950-1958).

The present section deals with the tumultuous process of political unification in the educational system and policy making in Indonesia during a particularly brief period of eight months from December 1949 to the August 1950. This was when the RUSI was established and received the transfer of sovereignty but was immediately dissolved as the participating federal states merged into the Indonesian Republic, the USRI. This brief period was one of the most critical ones in the early years of the Indonesian state formation. Unfortunately it is often only touched in passing in the writing of Indonesian (education) history. Publications on the history of Indonesian education by Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers have generally overlooked the RUSI period of educational transition. One publication which addresses it in some details is *Sejarah Pendidikan di Indonesia Zaman Kemerdekaan* by Helius Sjamsuddin, Kosoh Sastradinata and H. Said Hamid Hasan. Chapter 2 of the publication by Sjamsuddin, Sastradinata and Hamid Hasan concerns the transition from the RUSI to the USRI educational systems (pp. 41-70). This publication provides few archival sources, particularly *Sedjarah Pendidikan Indonesia* by Sutedjo Bradjanagara (1956) and to *Pendidikan dalam Alam Indonesia Merdeka* by Soegarda Poerbakawatja (1970).¹⁰ As policy makers during the afore-said period of educational transition, Bradjanagara and Poerbakawatja presented an eyewitness perspective of the history of Indonesian education. Yet, the numerous archives preserved at the Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI) in Jakarta also serve as valuable sources for another perspective of history on the topic concerned. References to these primary archives are unfortunately missing in the publication by Sjamsuddin et al.

Between 1945 and 1949, the making of educational policy was in the hands of different autonomous governments. The post-war Netherlands Indies Education Department in Batavia, which

⁷ Italics mine.

⁸ See ‘Draft Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty’ in Secretariat-General of the Round Table Conference, *Round Table Conference: Results as Accepted in the Second Plenary Meeting Held on 2 November 1949 in the ‘Ridderzaal’ at The Hague* (The Hague: Government Printing Office, 1949), 9. ‘Draft’ version of the Charter, also of other RTC documents referred to here, means the contents of the Charter (and of the other documents) had been agreed upon by the RTC delegates during the Second Plenary Session, but, at the time of publication, were not yet technically signed/ratified.

⁹ Article 1 of the Indonesian Republic Constitution of 1945 reads: ‘The State of Indonesia is a Unitary State of a Republic structure (*Negara Indonesia adalah Negara Kesatuan, yang berbentuk Republik*)’.

¹⁰ See Helius Sjamsuddin, Kosoh Sastradinata and H. Said Hamid Hasan, *Sejarah Pendidikan di Indonesia Zaman Kemerdekaan* (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1993), 41-70; Sutedjo Bradjanagara, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Badan Kongres Pendidikan Indonesia, 1956); Soegarda Poerbakawatja, *Pendidikan dalam Alam Indonesia Merdeka* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1970).

operated as an umbrella institution for the federal states and the territories outside the Indonesian Republic, had resumed its operations as early as 1947.

Six federal states and nine autonomous constitutional territories operated under the umbrella jurisdiction of the Netherlands Indies government.¹¹ The pertinent question is in how far these federal states actually existed and if so worked on the development of their education. Limited sources indicate that the East Indonesia State, one of the federal states, had had its own Department of Education since April 1947. Figure 1 shows the structure of the educational system of the East Indonesia State. In 1948 the Netherlands Indies government in Batavia proposed an educational budget of 133 million guilders to the Netherlands government in The Hague and projected 33 million of it to be assigned to the East Indonesia State.¹² To what extent the educational system of the East Indonesia State ever materialized is not known.¹³

The Ministry of Instruction¹⁴ of the Indonesian Republic in Yogyakarta existed independently of Batavia. On November 11, 1947, Minister of Instruction Ali Sastroamidjojo established an advisory body for the formulation of an educational bill. This advisory body surveyed the aspirations of Indonesian (Republican) society. Its recommendation to the government came to be the basis of Fundamentals of Education and Instruction Act No. 4/1950 of the Indonesian Republic.¹⁵ The educational law produced by the Republican administration during these revolutionary years would largely shape educational policy throughout Indonesia in the years to follow. Unfortunately, little is known about schooling practice in Republican jurisdiction, except that it was prone to disruption for the military mobilization necessitated by Dutch attacks on the capital, Yogyakarta.

¹¹ See Article 2 of the RUSI Provisional Constitution.

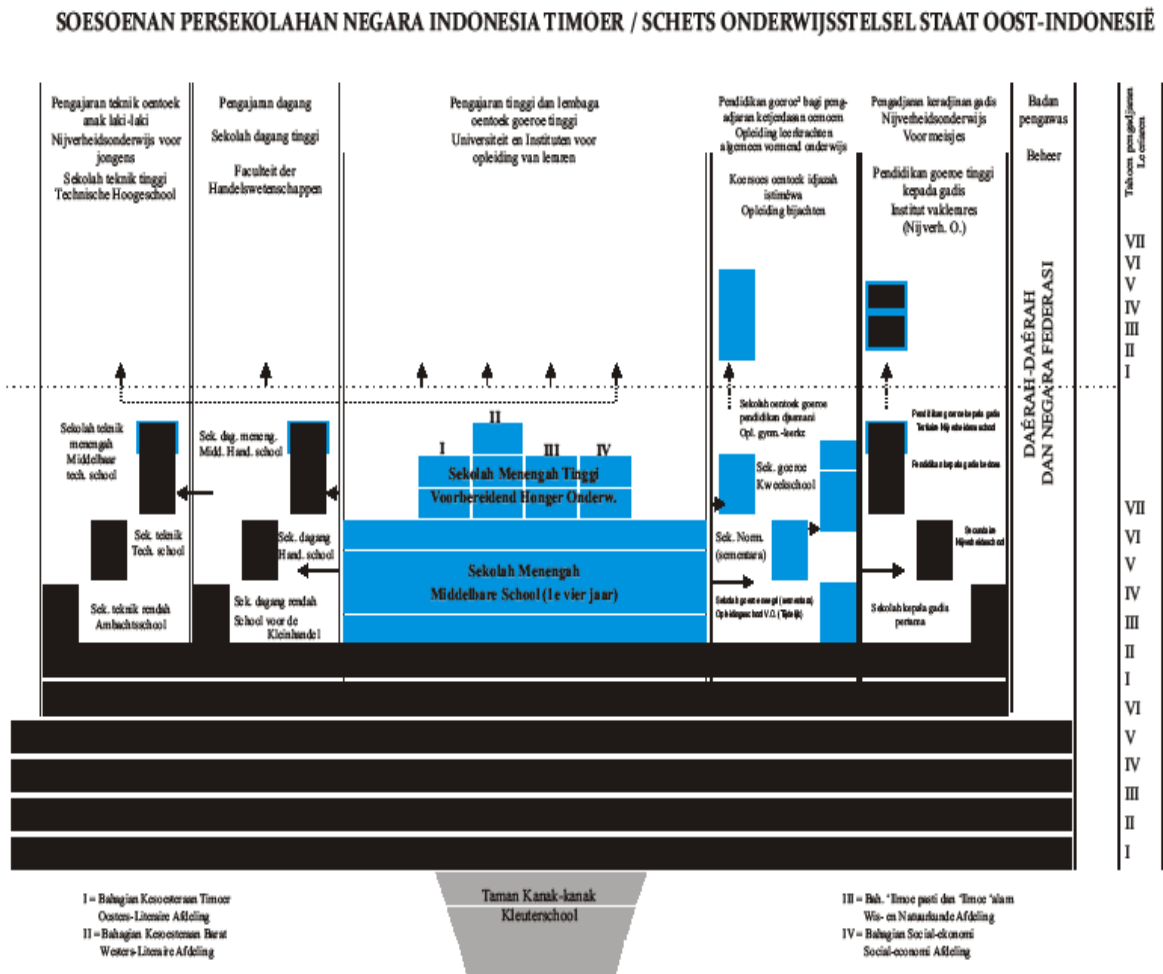
¹² 'Paedagogische Problemen in Indonesië: Grote en Spontane Belangstelling voor Scholen en Onderwijs', *De Volkskrant*, 13 November 1947, page unknown.

¹³ In December 1948, the Dutch official C. Nooteboom observed that, however well established the East Indonesia State seemed to be, its government suffered from a severe lack of educated officials, its parliament was short of experienced politicians, and there was no clear set-up of any organized party system. The political arena was dominated by three principal groups, namely feudal princes and royal families, the Christian Ambonese and Minahasans, and sympathizers of the Indonesian Republic. According to American analyst H. Arthur Steiner, the East Indonesia State and the other federal states which fell under the umbrella jurisdiction of the Netherlands Indies did not gain international recognition. See C. Nooteboom, *Oost-Indonesië: Een Staat in Wording: Uittreksel van 'Zaire' December 1948* (Bruxelles: Editions Universitaires, 1948); H. Arthur Steiner, 'Post-War Government of the Netherlands East Indies', *The Journal of Politics* Vol. 9 No. 4 (Nov. 1947), 624-52.

¹⁴ 'Kementarian Pengadjaran', or 'the Instruction Ministry', was the official name of the education department of the Indonesian Republic given by Soekarno's presidential cabinet installed on September 2, 1945 up to the Second Parliamentary Cabinet of Amir Sjarifuddin was dissolved on January 29, 1948. In the First Parliamentary Cabinet of Mohammad Hatta, which was installed following the dissolution of Sjarifuddin's cabinet, the name changed into the Department of Education, Instruction and Culture. See Kementarian Penerangan RI, *Kabinet-Kabinet Republik Indonesia* (Djakarta: Pertjetakan Negara, 1955), 15-27.

¹⁵ 'Pendjelasan Umum Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950 tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran di Sekolah', Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105 (ANRI), 12.

Figure 8.1: Structure of the educational system of the East Indonesia State



Source: *Madjallah Kita* Tahoen II No. 8 (1 July 1948), supplement page.

The ratification of the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty in December 1949 was decisive to the future educational programme. According to the Statute agreed, the RUSI and the Kingdom of the Netherlands would co-operate in promoting cultural and educational developments in the two countries.¹⁶ Such co-operation would encompass exchanges of professors, teachers and experts in the field of science, education, tuition and the arts.¹⁷ The RUSI government should take over all the civil servants (including school teachers) formerly in the service of the Netherlands Indies government. In

¹⁶ The Union Statute does not recognize the Netherlands Indies, but the RUSI. See 'Draft Union Statute' in Secretariat-General of the Round Table Conference, *Round Table Conference*, 10-5.

¹⁷ See 'Draft of Cultural Agreement between the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands', in Secretariat-General of the Round Table Conference, *Round Table Conference*, 37-40.

future, the two governments could freely recruit personnel for the civil services from among each other's nationals and in each other's jurisdiction.¹⁸

Soon after the transfer of sovereignty, the RUSI government in Jakarta – consisting of a president, a premier and fifteen ministers¹⁹ – began work on the elaboration of the transitional measures and other agreements it had reached with the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Abu Hanifah of the Masjumi²⁰ served as the RUSI minister of Education, Instruction and Culture. Deriving its legacy from the former Education Department of the Netherlands Indies administration, the RUSI Education Department inherited the bulk of the educational reform plan Batavia had begun to implement in 1947, with its emphasis on higher education expansion, the establishment of the centre for national culture, and making headway in illiteracy eradication.²¹ However, the political dynamics of the federal states, both inside and outside the territories of the Indonesian Republic, edged Indonesia away from the RUSI construction.

On February 8, 1950, the Indonesian Republican premier, Abdul Halim, presented the programmes of his cabinet to the *Badan Pekeraja* – the Working Body or the provisional parliament of the Republic in Yogyakarta. The Republican government would continue to work on achieving the ideal unitary structure of State to cover the entire jurisdiction of Indonesia (the RUSI jurisdiction). The democratization of political life and administration would be achieved by calling general elections. In the meantime, in order to comply with the 1945 Constitution of the Indonesian Republic, the government was planning to set up strategic programmes to effect a prosperous society. Those taking part in defending the Republic would be compensated. The school children who had participated in the war mobilization would be exempted from re-starting the classes they had missed in public schools; they would be admitted directly in the year which they should have been. 'The government was bound to develop the spiritual as well as the intellectual capacities of the people,' the educational programmes of Halim Cabinet read. It would expand religious and school education.²²

¹⁸ See 'Draft Agreement Concerning the Position of the Civil Government Officials in Connection with the Transfer of Sovereignty', in Secretariat-General of the Round Table Conference, *Round Table Conference*, 50-1; also the Appendix to it, pp. 52-3.

¹⁹ In Scheveningen, The Hague, on October 29, 1949, the delegates of the Indonesian Republic and the FCA reached an agreement on the RUSI provisional constitution. Following this agreement, representatives of the RUSI federal states (including the Indonesian Republic) convened in Yogyakarta on December 15-16, 1949. They appointed Soekarno the president of the RUSI and he swore his oath to them on December 17. On December 20, the RUSI cabinet was installed with Mohammad Hatta as premier. At the time of their appointment as the RUSI president and premier, Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta were respectively the president and the vice-president of the Indonesian Republic. Upon their appointment to the RUSI administration in Jakarta, Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta left their posts in the Republican government in Yogyakarta. On December 27, Assaat assumed the position of acting-president of the Indonesian Republic, replacing Soekarno. On January 16, 1950, a new cabinet of the Indonesian Republic was installed with Abdul Halim as premier. For details of information concerning this administration formation, I have referred to P.N.H. Simanjuntak, *Kabinet-Kabinet Republik Indonesia dari Awal Kemerdekaan sampai Reformasi* (Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan, 2003), 91-107; Kementerian Penerangan RI, *Kabinet-Kabinet*, 30-5.

²⁰ Masjumi, i.e. Majelis Sjuro Indonesia, was a political party.

²¹ On the RUSI ministries and cabinet programmes, see Kementerian Penerangan RI, *Kabinet-Kabinet Republik Indonesia*, 44-5.

²² On the programmes of Halim's Cabinet, see 'Lapangan Pekerajaan Kementerian2 Republik Indonesia Kabinet Dr. A. Halim: Dikutip dari Keputusan Rapat Kabinet RI oleh Menteri Sosial RI', Arsip Kabinet Perdana Menteri Republik Indonesia Yogya No. 63 (ANRI); further references shall be Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya. See also Simanjuntak, *Kabinet-Kabinet Republik Indonesia*, 106-7; Kementerian Penerangan RI, *Kabinet-Kabinet Republik Indonesia*, 44.

The programmes of the Halim Cabinet's invited a wide range of critical feedback from the twenty-one members of the *Badan Pekeraja*. The response to the feedback which Halim announced during the parliamentary meeting on February 16 demonstrates this point.²³ The programme devised to realize the unitary structure of State was given whole-hearted support by the eleven members of the *Badan Pekeraja*. Halim assured the *Badan Pekeraja* members that the (Republican) 'government would take active, vigilant and careful measures' to achieve the objects of this programme.²⁴ He said that the Republican government endorsed the proposal sent forward by Sudiono and Asrarudin, both *Badan Pekeraja* members. Asrarudin, who represented the Trade Union, suggested that the government should nationalize foreign and domestic companies which were vital to improving people's living standard. For his part, Sudiono said the Republican government should encourage the RUSI government to nationalize strategic companies all over Indonesia. Although saying that the government endorsed the proposal, Halim also reminded the *Badan Pekeraja* members that nationalization was not the only way to achieve an economic progress. Before nationalizing any companies, the Republican government would empower the agricultural and plantation sectors and the small- and medium-scale enterprises, like the batik industries.²⁵ Unfortunately, Halim gave only a short response to educational issues. He said education was the principal foundation of economic progress. The government would focus on schooling which improved the people's skills and knowledge of agriculture.²⁶

The educational programme of the Halim Cabinet, as set out in the job description of his ministries, seemed to be less political than implied in the parliamentary debate.²⁷ The Republican government would redefine the characteristics, sorts and contents of formal schooling and extra-mural education. Policy would embrace formal, adult and social education, but not the religious instruction, which was to remain in the domain of the Department of Religious Affairs. The government would develop strategic measures by which to support and supervise existing schools, including those for non-Indonesians. Schoolbooks would be printed on a large scale and study materials were to be purchased. Public libraries would be made available even in rural areas. The government would compile statistics in order to obtain quantitative figures of the educational situation in the Republican territories during the 'Revolution years'.²⁸ Last but not least, the government would develop cultural centres and would work on international co-operation in education and culture. The education department of Halim's administration, which bore the same name as that of the RUSI, was chaired by S. Mangunsarkoro of the PNI.²⁹

Although it would take time to implement the entire educational programme, the Republican education department worked fast on strategic issues. Five weeks after the transfer of sovereignty, it began to centralize educational management in the Republican territories in Sumatra. The purpose of

²³ Kementerian Penerangan Republik Indonesia, 'Djawaban Pemerintah atas Pandangan para Anggauta Badan Pekeraja Tanggal 16 Pebruari 1950: Diutjapkan oleh Perdana Menteri Dr. A. Halim', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 9 (ANRI).

²⁴ Ibid. 4.

²⁵ Ibid. 7-11.

²⁶ Ibid. 7.

²⁷ 'Lapangan Pekerajaan Kementerian2, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 63 (ANRI), 4.

²⁸ As regard to the Yogyakarta area, this program only came into being in 1953.

²⁹ PNI, i.e. Partai Nasional Indonesia, was a political party.

this policy was 'to guarantee a standardized level of quality education' throughout the Republican territories. Until January 1, 1950, the Commissariat of the (Republican) Central Government in Bukittinggi was responsible for the supervision and administration of schools in Sumatra. After this date, the Department of Education in Yogyakarta assumed the authority of Bukittinggi over these schools. It began on February 6, with public senior high schools and the six-year teacher training schools (*Sekolah Guru A* or SGA) in the provinces of Atjeh (Kotaradja), Tapanuli (Padang Sidempuan and Tarutung), Central Sumatra (Bukittinggi and Padang Pandjang), and southern Sumatra (Bengkulon).³⁰ The transfer of junior high schools followed on March 28.³¹ The Republican central government would subsequently assume the financial responsibility for those schools.³²

In April 1950, the centralization policy was elaborated in far greater detail and made effective in all territories, including the State of East Java, which had joined the Indonesian Republic by then. The central government and autonomous local administrations agreed to share different portions of responsibility. The composition of educational curricula, schoolbooks, requirements for teacher recruitment and student admission, all fell under the authority of the central government. The central government also held the authority of supervise, evaluate and finance, in short, to set a national standard of education. The provincial government took charge of the founding and the administration of *Sekolah Rakjat*, the primary school of the Republican type. It also had to establish training programmes for teachers who would work for the compulsory education project. In the extra-mural sphere, it bore responsibility for the founding, administration and maintenance of community learning centres and the public libraries, as well as for matters concerning the local youth and the arts. One stage higher, the regency government was to establish centres for compulsory education and illiteracy eradication programmes. It should also establish centres for community learning, the arts and public libraries, all with a focus on local needs and characteristics. Under this regulation, the lowest administrative level, the *desa*, was not accorded any particular educational responsibility.³³

The aim of such a division of responsibility, the Education minister S. Mangunsarkoro said, was 'not to reduce the autonomy of local or regional administrations'. The division of responsibility, which put preponderance of authoritative aspects on the central government, was devised to promote the uniformity of the system and to standardize the quality of education. In this respect, Mangunsarkoro stated, the position of the primary school was critical as it was the basis for education at higher levels. Therefore primary school should be under national aegis. Another consideration was that the financial capability of one regency was not that of another, so that their competence to handle primary education might vary. Although this was often the case, subsidiary assistance between regencies was out of the question because each of them was autonomous. For example, the transfer of school teachers from one regency to another regency which needed more teachers was hindered by

³⁰ 'Kutipan dari Daftar Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan RI No. 844/B Tanggal 6 Pebruari 1950', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12 (ANRI).

³¹ 'Kutipan dari Daftar Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan No. 2115/A Tanggal 28 Maret 1950', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12 (ANRI).

³² 'Kutipan dari Daftar Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia No. 2900/B', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12 (ANRI).

³³ 'Penjerahan Urusan Pendidikan dan Pengajaran kepada Daerah-Daerah Otonoom', Arsip Kabinet PMRI No. 269 (ANRI).

the teachers' status as the employees of a certain regency. The transfer of some authority to the central government would solve these problems, Mangunsarkoro believed.³⁴

The Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI, *Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia*) insisted that the central government take over the authority for primary school entirely, but the government decided to raise the administrative authority from the regency to the provincial level. It did no more than assume a supervisory authority. Mangunsarkoro was convinced that the regency should continue to play a critical role in compulsory education and illiteracy eradication. These programmes, if successful, could be transformed into primary education, which would then have to be handed over to the provincial government.³⁵ Later, in November 1951, the policy governing the distribution and sharing of educational authority was finalized and made fully binding all over Indonesia, when the government ratified *Peraturan Pemerintah* (Government Regulation) No. 65/1951.³⁶

In the meantime, the afore-mentioned educational Act No. 4/1950 caused a public outcry about religious instruction. The Law recognized the individual right of schoolchildren to receive instruction in their religion. To comply, public schools would have to provide religious lessons for pupils according to their respective religions. Private schools held full authority to decide what religious lessons were most suitable to their institutional ideology. Consequently, in private schools schoolchildren – regardless of the religion they adhered to – would most probably be instructed in the religion on which their school based its educational values. However, the Educational Act did not lay down whether or not the children were obliged to follow religious lessons. It was up to the children and their parents to decide whether they wanted to attend a religious lesson. Under the Act, a success or failure mark in religious lessons should not be a component in the school exams. In short, under the Educational Act No. 4/1950 the State recognized the people's religious beliefs by letting them exercise freedom of choice in religious instruction.³⁷

The 'neutral' position adopted towards religious education by the State in the Educational Act provoked resistance from the Partai Sjarikat Islam Indonesia (PSII) and the Masjumi. In its motion of April 25, 1950, PSII insisted that the government review and reconsider the implementation of the Act, especially regarding the teaching of Islam. The PSII argued that school education should provide both temporal and religious learning. 'PSII opposes any educational system which humiliates mankind,' the motion reads, implying that the Act No. 4/1950 should meet this condition.³⁸

An even more explicit motion had been adopted by the Masjumi two days earlier, on April 23. The Masjumi refused to accept the Educational Act because it did not contain any article which made religious education at school compulsory. 'By not making religious lessons a compulsory subject for schoolchildren, the government is jeopardizing the future life of the Indonesian people, in particular

³⁴ Ibid. 1-2.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ 'Peraturan Pemerintah No. 65 Tahun 1951 tentang Pelaksanaan Penjerahan Sebagian daripada Urusan Pemerintah Pusat dalam Lapangan Pendidikan, Pengadjaran dan Kebudajaan kepada Propinsi', Arsip Peraturan Pemerintah No. 97 (ANRI).

³⁷ 'Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950 Republik Indonesia tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran Disekolah', Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105 (ANRI), especially Article 20 and its explanatory addendum, pp. 9 and 19.

³⁸ 'Statement PSII terhadap Undang-Undang Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran Republik Indonesia', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 270 (ANRI).

Muslims. The government has made a policy which diverges from the first principle of the State ideology, the Pancasila,' the Masjumi motion states.³⁹ The motion of the Masjumi declares that the draft of the Law had only been approved by the Badan Pekeraja in early 1949, following the walk-out of the Masjumi members from parliamentary debates. At that time, it had immediately elicited resistance throughout the Republican territories. In Sumatra, Mohammad Sjafei of the nationalist NIS school in Kayutanam was in the van of the defiance. He submitted what was known as the Sumatra Memorandum to Minister of Instruction, Ali Sastroamidjojo. He was followed by the Military Governor of Atjeh who submitted another statement, the Atjeh Memorandum, to Minister S. Mangunsarkoro. Soekarno, who was still the president of the Republic in early 1949, did not ratify the educational law already passed by the parliament because he was aware of the Muslim reaction. Assaat, who acted as the Republican president replacing Soekarno in December 1949, had no such qualms and ratified the educational law so making it effective and binding throughout the Republic. 'We condemn the Acting-President for not realizing the potential danger arising from the educational Act,' the Masjumi motion reads. 'We call on all members of the Masjumi to continue to resist the implementation of the Act.'⁴⁰ Act No. 4/1950 was perhaps the most critical source of dispute about school policy in the Republican politics during the first few months after the RUSI was established but the archives available do not indicate whether the dispute affected the centralization policy on which the government was working.

During this period, the political dynamics outside government offices were gaining ground against the federal administration of the RUSI. As early as January 20, 1950, the Bogor Chapter of the *Ikatan Pemuda Peladjar Indonesia* (IPPI, Association of Indonesian Students and Youth) stated it could not accept the administrative system which resulted from the RTC agreements and included all schools in the area of Bogor in the Pasundan State administration. The IPPI insisted the RI government in Yogyakarta 'take the necessary measures to resume control of the supervision and management of schools in Bogor'. The IPPI claimed to represent students of the junior and senior high schools, the teachers' schools and the domestic science schools for girls in the area of Bogor.

The IPPI stated that the Pasundan State of West Java was not the creation of the people. Nor was its foundation inspired by the will of the people. The IPPI could not comply with the RTC agreements which affirmed that higher education should be under the direct supervision and management of the central RUSI government in Jakarta, while the supervision and management of secondary and primary education would remain on the hands of the federal states. As the jurisdiction of the Pasundan State also covered the RUSI capital Jakarta, the IPPI feared the Pasundan State government would favour schools in the Jakarta area above those in other areas under its jurisdiction. 'Students in Bogor are no less enthusiastic in pursuing education than those in Jakarta,' the IPPI motion read.⁴¹

The Corps Peladjar Siliwangi (CPS, the Siliwangi Students Corp) and the Corps Peladjar Daerah Bogor (CP, the Bogor Students Corps) issued another motion on February 11, 1950. The

³⁹ The first principle of the state ideology, the Pancasila, reads: 'Belief in one God'.

⁴⁰ 'Statement Masjumi tentang Undang2 Pokok Pendidikan dan Pengajaran', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 270 (ANRI).

⁴¹ 'Resolusi Ikatan Pemuda Peladjar Indonesia Tjabang Kota Bogor', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 25 (ANRI).

majority of the members of these two bodies were ex-members of the *Tentara Peladjar* (TP, Students Brigade) of the Indonesian Republic. Before joining the TP, many of them were students of transitional public schools in the Republican area of West Java under the terms of the Renville Agreement. The CPS and the CP urged the Republican government in Yogyakarta to take 'concrete action' about sending the ex-members of the TP back to school. The CPS and CP motions read:

'There should be regulations like those in Central and East Java concerning the education of former TP members in West Java as soon as possible. The Indonesian Republic Department of Education has put an announcement in the daily *Merdeka* of February 6, inviting ex-TP members in Central Java to return to school. We, the students in West Java and especially those in Bogor, do not want to lag behind of our counterparts in Central Java. The Republican government has to take action as soon as possible because the Residency of Bogor decided in January [1950] to sever its relationship with the Pasundan State administration and to return to the Indonesian Republic.'⁴²

In Yogyakarta, in a speech he delivered during the Taman Siswa Congress on March 1-5, 1950, Ki Hadjar Dewantara criticized the RTC results, especially Articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 and 17 of the Cultural Agreement between the RUSI and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.⁴³ His point was that the RTC agreements would open the way for the return of the colonial power. It was not an exchange between equal partners. The agreement about the exchange of professors and experts would never be carried out in its true sense; because Indonesia did not (yet) have professors and experts, what would happen instead of exchange was that Dutch professors and experts would flood into Indonesia. Dutch newspapers, books and reading materials would dominate Indonesian literacy. The cultural agreements, although explicitly aiming to promote equal co-operation and exchange, would imply the covert practice of colonialism. Therefore, 'because the RUSI is bound to the agreements with the

⁴² 'Resolusi Corps Peladjar Siliwangi dan Corps Peladjar Daerah Bogor', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 29 (ANRI). According to historian M.C. Ricklefs, following the arrest of some Pasundan leaders for suspected complicity in the which was known as Westerling's plot on January 23, the parliament of the Pasundan State urged on January 27 that Pasundan be dissolved. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*, Fourth Edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 269-70.

⁴³ Information on this is available in the report by Commissioner Soekatmo of the Police Department to the Prime Minister and the Attorney General of the Indonesian Republic. The Cultural Agreement consisted of twenty articles. The ones pointed out by Ki Hadjar Dewantara read, *Article 6*: 'The two partners [RUSI and the Netherlands Kingdom] shall aim at the promotion in their own country of a reasonable knowledge of the fundamental elements of the other partner's culture. This aim shall further be realized by means of radio, film, press, libraries, distribution of reading matter, education and manifestations of art'. *Article 7*: 'The two partners undertake to promote the exchange of radio broadcasts in the cultural field and of news'. *Article 8*: 'The two partners undertake to support each other, in the interest of the development of education and science and in general of the promotion of culture, if either partner so requests'. *Article 9*: 'Without prejudice to the provision of article 8 the two partners shall promote the exchange of professors, teachers, experts in the field of science, education, tuition and arts'. *Article 10*: 'The two partners may establish and maintain in each other's territory institutes of education and art and of other cultural nature, subject to the legal provisions prevailing in the country of establishment'. *Article 15*: 'The two partners shall promote the establishment of contacts between organizations recognized by the respective countries and active in the cultural field, including youth organizations, taking into account the interests of public security and moral welfare of the people in society and state'. *Article 16*: 'The two partners deem it desirable that books, newspapers and periodicals published in one of the two countries be freely admitted to the territory of the other country and shall aim at freedom of duties and of other restrictive measures in this respect. The import of such material may be restricted only by reason of measures in the interest of public security and moral welfare of the people in society and state'. *Article 17*: 'The two partners shall promote to the extent of their ability the translation of publications issued in the language (languages) of the one country into the language (languages) of the other country'.

Netherlands, it is the Indonesian Republic which has to prevent the danger [of returning colonialism]. The Taman Siswa repudiates the RTC agreements and will help the Republic abort them.’⁴⁴

Whether this statement by Ki Hadjar Dewantara made an impact on the government policy is not known. Nor do the archival sources I collected indicate whether the Cultural Agreement between the RUSI and the Netherlands elicited any reaction in the jurisdictions outside the Pasundan State and the Indonesian Republic. This incident nevertheless presents a relevant background to the process of the homogenization of education which happened next. In June 1950, a Joint Commission was formed by representatives of the RUSI and the Indonesian Republic Departments of Education (Table 8.1). The task of the Joint Commission was to discuss the structure of the school system and the structure of the Education Ministry of the Unitary State, and to deal with the status of educational officials and employees after administrative unification. In its report signed by Hadi, Chairman of the Republican delegates, the Commission stated out that the legality of its existence was based on the Government Instruction on ‘the merger of the ministries’.⁴⁵

Table 8.1: The RUSI and RI Education Ministries Joint Commission

RUSI representatives		RI representatives	
Name	Position at RUSI Education Department	Name	Position at RI Education Department
Soemitro Reksodipoetro	Secretary General	Hadi	Secretary General
Soekanto	Chief, Public Affairs	Soegardo Poerbokawotjo	Inspector General
A. Bachtiar	Chief, Instruction Affairs	Soetedjo Brodjonagoro	Chief, Mass Education
Sadarjoen Siswomartojo	Chief, Education Affairs	Soedarsono	Chief, Cultural Affairs
S. Soemardjo	Chief, Cultural Affairs	Soejono Kromodimoeljo	Chief, Personnel Affairs
X.S.M. Ondang	Chief, Personnel Affairs		

Source: ‘Laporan Singkat Pekerdjaan2 Panitia Bersama Kementerian2 PPK RI dan RIS’, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62.

Details of the basis for the formation of the Joint Commission are found in the explanatory addendum to Law No. 12/1954 on the passing of Law No. 4/1950 of the Indonesian Republic. It is explained that on May 19, 1950, the prime ministers Mohammad Hatta of the RUSI and Abdul Halim of the Indonesian Republic, signed a Charter of Agreement covering three points. First, both governments agreed to merge to form a unitary structure of the State, which had been the ideal of the Proclamation of Independence of August 17, 1945. Secondly, until the USRI established its own laws, the existing federal laws should remain effective in the respective federal territories. However, it was strongly encouraged that those federal states should seek to adopt the laws which were already effective in the Republican jurisdiction. Finally, both premiers agreed to form joint commissions, which would take care of the merging of corresponding ministries of the two administrations.⁴⁶ It was on the basis of this Charter that the Joint Commission of the education departments was formed.

⁴⁴ ‘Pidato Ki Hadjar Dewantara’, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 107 (ANRI).

⁴⁵ ‘Laporan Singkat Pekerdjaan2 Panitia Bersama Kementerian2 PPK RI dan RIS’, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62.

⁴⁶ ‘Memori Pendjelasan mengenai Rantjangan Undang-Undang No. 12 Tahun 1954 tentang Pernyataan Berlakunya Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950 dari Republik Indonesia dahulu tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran Disekolah untuk Seluruh Indonesia’, Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105 (ANRI), 3.

During its first meeting in Jakarta from June 2 to 3, the Joint Commission members agreed to use the school system of the Indonesian Republic in all Indonesian territory.⁴⁷ This would be effective commencing with the School Year 1950/1951, which began on July 31, 1950. Under the agreement, all other types of schools would be abandoned. The Republican school system itself would subject to continuous review and improvement. Table 8.2 presents a list of the types of schools which had to go and those which replaced them.⁴⁸

Table 8.2: Abolished and surviving schools as of July 31, 1950

Abolished school	Surviving school
Elementary education: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Algemene Lagere School 2. Lagere School 3. Sekolah Rendah 4. Europese Lagere School 5. Hollands Chinese School 6. Hollands Arabische School 	Sekolah Rakjat enam tahun (SR VI, six-year elementary school)
General secondary education: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (MULO) 2. Middelbare School 3. Indonesische Middelbare School 4. Sekolah Menengah 5. Hogere Burger School 6. Algemene Middelbare School 7. Voorbereidend Hoger Onderwijs 	Sekolah Menengah Umum bagian Pertama (SMP, Junior High School) Sekolah Menengah Umum bagian Atas (SMA, Senior High School)
Teachers' education: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kweekschool Nieuwe Stijl 2. Normalschool 3. Opleiding van Volksonderwijzers/essen 4. Optrekskursus Kweekschool Nieuwe Stijl 5. Optrekskursus Normalschool 	Sekolah Guru enam tahun (SGA, six-year Teacher Training School) Sekolah Guru empat tahun (SGB, four-year Teacher Training School) (merged with SGB) Kursus Persamaan SGA (Courses equivalent to SGA) Kursus Persamaan SGB (Courses equivalent to SGB)
Technical education: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Middelbare Technische School 2. Technische School 3. Ambachtsschool 4. Sekolah Tehnik Rendah 	Sekolah Tehnik Menengah (STM, Senior Engineering High School) Sekolah Tehnik (ST, Junior Engineering High School) Sekolah Pertukangan (S.Ptk., Technical School) (idem)
Domestic science education for girls: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opleidingschool Vakonderwijzeressen 2. Sekolah Kepandaian Gadis 3. Primaire Nijverheidsschool 4. Opleidingschool Hulpvakonderwijzeressen 	Sekolah Guru Kepandaian Putri (SGKP, Training School for teachers of Household Education School for Girls) Sekolah Kepandaian Puteri (SKP, Household Education School for Girls) (idem) Kursus Guru Kerajinan Wanita (Courses for teachers of Household Education for Girls)

⁴⁷ 'Laporan Singkat', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62, 1 and Appendix A.

⁴⁸ 'Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia No. 5122/B', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12

Trade and Economics education: 1. Primaire Handelsschool 2. Secundaire Handelsschool 3. Tertiaire Handelsschool (Middelbare Handelsschool)	Sekolah Dagang (SD, Trade School (idem) Sekolah Ekonomi Menengah (SEM, Secondary High School in Economics)
Physical education: 1. Opleiding Lagere Akte voor het geven van Lichaamsoefeningen 2. Applicatie cursus Lichaamsoefeningen	Sekolah Guru Pendidikan Djasmari (SGPD, Training School for teachers of Physical Education) Courses of Physical Education

Source: 'Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengadjaran dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia No. 5122/B', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12 (ANRI)

The institutional organization of the new Education Department would consist of a top management, an administrative office, offices running formal education, non-formal education, culture, and infrastructure, and a division dealing with educational and teaching research. This decision was made during the second meeting of the Joint Commission in Yogyakarta from June 27 to 29, 1950.⁴⁹ The institutional organization was agreed to be centralized in nature. The decision making was in the hands of central offices and the co-ordination and the supervision would be carried out by their corresponding subordinate offices at provincial and regency levels. For the national working programme, the Commission adopted the educational programme of the Halim Cabinet.⁵⁰

In this process of merger, the schools for non-Indonesian children and the status of the educational officials and teachers emerged as crucial issues. The Joint Commission stated that the new government to be formed in Indonesia would recognize but differentiate between Indonesian citizens and foreigners. Places at public schools would be available to all Indonesian citizens, would use Indonesian as the language of instruction, and would teach Indonesian history from an Indonesian perspective.⁵¹

The Indonesian government would not run specific schools for foreigners. However, it permitted foreigners to run their own schools up to the end of the 1949/1950 School Year. Beginning the 1950/1951 School Year, these schools for foreigners had to become private institutions. All private schools had to have the Indonesian language at least as a course subject. If the educational curriculum of the public schools was adopted, these private schools would receive a government subsidy. Last but not least, the government would hold supervisor authority over these schools.⁵²

The unification of employees in education was problematic. 'The employees will feel unsettled because of the possibility of positions being transferred or even rationalized,' the Commission report reads.⁵³ Indonesian employees of the RUSI could not simply be affiliated to corresponding positions in the Republican administration. Dutch employees had to be strictly selected for re-employment, among other criteria for their mastery of the Indonesian language. There would be a rigorous determination

⁴⁹ 'Laporan Singkat', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62, 1.

⁵⁰ 'Rentjana Susunan Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengadjaran dan Kebudayaan', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62.

⁵¹ 'Laporan Singkat', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62, 2 and Appendix B.

⁵² 'Pengumuman Bersama Kementerian PPK RIS dan PPK RI, Djakarta, June 30, 1950', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62.

⁵³ 'Laporan Singkat', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62, 2.

whether these employees truly matched the new requirements and demands. Because of the complicated nature of the issue, the Joint Commission could not make a final decision about the status of the RUSI employees. The chairman of the RUSI delegates to the Joint Commission, Soemitro Reksodipoetro, and the RUSI minister of education, Abu Hanifah, suggested that the Commission hand the employee issue over to the education minister of the Unitary Republican government, which would soon be established.⁵⁴ Despite their recommendation, the Joint Commission decided that, for the duration of two years starting December 27, 1949, the government would cover half the number of the teaching staff of the primary schools for non-Indonesian children.⁵⁵

The government opened vacancies for Dutch teachers who wanted to enter Republican service. Commencing with 1950/1951 School Year, these Dutch teachers were only allowed to teach in Indonesian. To allow them to do so, special courses in the language were offered. Dutch teachers who specialized in Pedagogy for Lower and Secondary Education – as shown by *Lager Onderwijs Akte* or *Middelbare Onderwijs Akte* – were recruited by the government. They were to train Indonesian teachers, who would teach in secondary schools. Other Dutch teachers would be subjected to a strict selection process.⁵⁶

By August 11, 1950, the process of merger or unification had almost been completed. Joint representative offices of the Department of Education were established in Surabaya, Bandung and Palembang. The Surabaya office handled the transition of education in the former States of East Java and Madura, as well as in the former Dajak autonomous constitutional territories of South and East Kalimantan. The Bandung office handled the transition in the former Pasundan State, and the Palembang office that in the former South Sumatra State. An educational inspector assumed office in Semarang to deal with the former autonomous constitutional territory of Central Java. The government would evaluate the process of school re-organization in the Republican Sumatra territories of Atjeh, Tapanuli, Medan, Padang, and Bengkulu. Representative offices of education followed in other states and territories, like Bangka and Belitung as well as the East Indonesian State. Later these were upgraded to provincial offices of educational inspection.⁵⁷

The Republican Education Department in Yogyakarta came to the fore in the decision making in step with the unification process, co-ordinating with the RUSI Education Department in Jakarta. It made sure that those representative offices followed the Republican school system as presented in Table 8.2. In the new educational curriculum, history lessons were reformed ‘to educate children to be good Indonesian citizens and principled persons’. The Dutch language was completely dropped from schools so that it was no longer even a course subject. The government allowed the use of Dutch up to the 1949/1950 School Year only in the HBS, the AMS and other secondary schools like the VHO (*Voorbereidend Hoger Onderwijs*). If they wanted to continue the use of Dutch, these schools had to opt to become private schools and, as formerly indicated, were required to teach Indonesian as a course subject. The Republican government also agreed that the RUSI Education Department should organize the final examination of the 1949/1950 School Year for the schools in the federal territories,

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ ‘Pengumuman Bersama’, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62.

⁵⁶ ‘Ichtisar Tindakan-Tindakan jang Sudah Dilakukan Didaerah-Daerah jang Baru Menggabungkan Diri pada Republik Indonesia’, Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 62, 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 1.

but it would supervise the exam materials. Only non-Indonesian students would have to sit the final examination on Dutch. Indonesian students were obliged to sit an exam on Indonesian.⁵⁸

The Education Department ensured that the literacy programmes were operating all over Indonesia. This task included overseeing the programmes of illiteracy eradication and community education at the regency as well as the provincial levels. Representative offices and educational inspectorates were encouraged to open public libraries in which Indonesian literature and reading materials would be accessible to the people. They also had to initiate and support reading clubs in urban and rural communities. It was reported that, by August 1950, East Java had moved fast in establishing centres for community learning and running public libraries. Perhaps for nationalist sentiments, the East Java local authorities closed down Dutch public libraries (the *Taman Pustaka Belanda*) in the territory, made a list of all the books and reading materials, and collected these books and materials at the provincial inspection office in Surabaya.⁵⁹ It is not known what happened to these books and reading materials. Nor is there any record of how other territories worked out details on the educational programmes.

Within a relatively short period of eight months, the educational policy making had been centralized and increasingly homogenized throughout the country. This process of centralization and homogenization was also a process of *Indonesianization*. Indonesians or, more specifically, the Indonesian Republicans in the Yogyakarta administration, now dominated the arena of educational policy making and determined the educational goals. The institutional organization, the educational system, curricula and the school personnel were all transformed into what the Republicans claimed to be of an Indonesian character. For the second time after 1942, the Indonesian language replaced Dutch as the language of instruction in all primary schools. The Dutch school system, its students and teachers, once the major focus of public educational policy in the Batavia-controlled federal territories, were now marginalized and superseded by Indonesian (Republican) dominated politics.

The *Indonesianization* of education in the early 1950s showed the nationalist inspirations to unite Indonesian people and to stimulate their sense of identity. On the other hand, the sudden and abrupt removal of Dutch language, teachers and school system also meant a closure of the gateway to the West for Indonesians. It degraded the quality reference and swept away the international standard to which the training of Indonesian teachers had been accorded through the *Kweekschoolplan* since 1927.

B. The creation of public intellectuality

From an Indonesian's perspective, the dissolution of the RUSI and the administrative unification of the USRI completed the political revolution fought since 1945. The historian M.C. Ricklefs says that Indonesia now 'faced the prospect of shaping its own future'.⁶⁰ However, there were fundamental issues which Indonesians had not had the opportunity to confront during the years of anti-colonialism and revolution but which would rise up to challenge them in the years following the political

⁵⁸ Ibid. 1-2.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 2-3.

⁶⁰ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 273.

revolution.⁶¹ These issues concerned the formation of the ideal *State* and its implication for the creation of the expected 'exemplary citizen' on the one hand, and the social realities affecting the competence, wellbeing and ideological consciousness of the majority of the Indonesian *Nation* on the other hand.

One lesson learnt from the four years of revolution, again according to Ricklefs, was that 'Indonesia was not to be several things: neither a federal state, nor an Islamic state, nor a Communist state, nor above all a Dutch colony'.⁶² The preamble to the 1945 Constitution clearly states what Indonesia was going to be. The Nation and the State of Indonesia were to be developed on the ideological basis of the Pancasila, the Five Principles of Statesmanship. Not only did the Indonesian people want freedom from colonialism, oppression and poverty, they desired freedom to achieve self-determination, dignity and equality among other world nations.⁶³ This was how 'independence' was understood and would be realized. 'Every Indonesian citizen, as a member of the Nation, should have the balance of inner and outer feelings. Inner feelings include religious life and humanity; outer feelings cover nationality, sovereignty and social prosperity. Indonesian citizens as a whole should live in co-operative collectivism so that they would become a strong Nation.'⁶⁴ In other words, the Pancasila-based State would consist of citizens who shared an individual standard of moral values and living balanced by tight social cohesion. With citizens embodying these ideal characteristics, Indonesia would enter the international community – 'the family of Nations' – in the position of an independent and sovereign member, equal to other fellow members.⁶⁵

Although the direction in which independent Indonesia was headed in its quest for development was relatively comprehensible in the State ideology, many Indonesian leaders – the thin layer of intellectual elites who had graduated from Dutch schools before the war and who assumed most of the positions in government offices after the war – realized the taxing challenge they were facing. They reviewed the recent-past experience of the nation.⁶⁶ Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the political consciousness of the people had grown by unprecedented leaps and bounds.⁶⁷ Ever-growing numbers of Indonesians had begun to realize their inferior social and economic position in the colonial society. They had also become aware of differentiating between themselves as Indonesians and those categorized as non-Indonesians, the majority of them Europeans and the Chinese.⁶⁸ The Japanese occupation and the war against the Dutch crystallized their desire for

⁶¹ Ibid. 270.

⁶² Ibid. Here Ricklefs is perhaps referring to several 'landmark' political events in the Indonesia history from 1945 to 1950. The dissolution of the RUSI in 1950 apparently laid bare the rejection of a federal structure of the State. It concluded the resistance against the returning Dutch colonial power. Then, the discarding of the so-called Jakarta Charter in June 1945 was a sign that Indonesia would not be an Islamic state. The Jakarta Charter drafted a State ideology in which everyone embracing Islam was bound by a State law to observe the *Islam syari'at*. Finally, the inimical public reactions to the 1948 revolt of the Indonesian Communist Party in Madiun, East Java, indicated a common trend against a predominantly Communist-ruled state.

⁶³ Preamble to Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945.

⁶⁴ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia* (Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, Republic of Indonesia, 1953), 4.

⁶⁵ Department of Information, *Rentjana Mass Education* (Jakarta: Department of Information, 1950), 6-7.

⁶⁶ This review appears in several government publications of the 1950s. See Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 5-6 and 17-24; Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia: A Contribution Based on Our Experience with Reference to Mass Education in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, 1951), 3-6.

⁶⁷ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 46-7.

⁶⁸ See again the making of a political teacher in Chapter 5.

freedom from any oppressive ruler.⁶⁹ Finally, after a long political journey, Indonesians found they had undergone a transformation 'from an oppressed and subjugated people [to] a nation thoroughly conscious of its own power'.⁷⁰

Regardless of all these changes, the Indonesian masses in general had remained ideologically illiterate. In the early 1950s – and later – many did not understand what being an Indonesian meant or should mean. Even though they had become politicized in their opposition to oppressive (foreign) rulers and demanded equal participation in the public affairs, the majority of Indonesians were not wholly aware of what they were going to do with the independence for which they had successfully fought.⁷¹ In 1953 a government educational official observed that, having lived as different peoples in the archipelago for centuries, most Indonesians knew little about what it should mean to be one Nation and to be citizens of an independent modern State.⁷² Casting a long shadow was a psychological barrier. Most people relied on belief in fate to explain their living conditions. This fatalistic attitude does perhaps show a degree of religious submission as some people have said. Nevertheless, for one reason or another most people did not measure up to the imagined figure of the State citizens, who, to be able to compete on an equal footing with other nations, were supposed to be self-reliant, self-motivated and bursting with enthusiasm and energy for progress and achievement. 'Both the method and the process of thinking of the masses, a tradition of the colonial days, have to be altered and changed in harmony with the achieved freedom,' reads a government document.⁷³

One of the mental preconditions towards achieving an ideal(ized) Indonesia was the creation of public intellectuality.⁷⁴ This term carried the meaning that the masses would grow up to be knowledgeable about their rights as individuals and be self-driven to contribute to the communal life.⁷⁵ Lessons from the past experience that 'all matters that are merely imposed upon [the people], whether it be by the Government or by any organization, cannot bear fruit unless such things are primarily desired by the people concerned' had been well learned.⁷⁶ The State (i.e. the government elites) conception of independence should stimulate the Nation's (i.e. the masses') consciousness of their 'new' status as State citizens. Transcending the moral values of the State ideology, the people should also develop their qualities as individual beings. These would provide the self-motivation and the capacity to improve their lives in co-operation with each others. Consequently, the people had the inner motivation to develop themselves in the sense of belonging to the society and the State.⁷⁷

Unity and *auto-activity* were core components of public intellectuality. 'Unity is the guiding spirit in uniting the individual with his community, in harmonizing physical and psychological abilities, in unifying the mind, the feeling and the willpower in performing things,' a government

⁶⁹ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 5.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 6.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 6-9.

⁷² 'Tugas Negara dalam Pendidikan Masyarakat', Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 247 (ANRI), 1. See also, Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 6.

⁷³ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 11.

⁷⁴ 'Public intellectuality' is my term for the *unity* and *auto-activity* principles described in the following.

⁷⁵ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 5-6.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 8.

⁷⁷ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 7.

document reads.⁷⁸ Auto-activity was self-reliance, ‘cognizance of own duties’, and self-motivated actions to achieve progress in life effectively and efficiently.⁷⁹ By promoting public intellectuality, the State elite was encouraging the masses to understand the meaning of independence. Certainly, independence meant freedom from oppression and from poverty and backwardness, but it also demanded social obligations to create a just, egalitarian and wealthy society on the basis of the collective identity, the Pancasila. Through the instrument of public intellectuality, the political literacy which the masses had increasingly attained since the 1930s was to be transformed into an ideological literacy.

This philosophical reasoning undeniably pointed out the critical contribution, which education should make to the average Indonesian’s awareness of political independence. M. Sadarjoen Siswomartojo, an educational official who chaired the Commission for Investigation on the Society Education and the State in 1953, said that the problem of independence lay first and foremost in education⁸⁰--an education which should be understood in its broadest sense, including both schooling and non-schooling practices.⁸¹ Alphabet illiteracy, which the Dutch government had long fought against for the people, was obviously only one of the so many challenges the independent Indonesian government had to face in its mission to spread public intellectuality and ideological literacy. In this sense, the aim of education was to promote ‘the literacy in mind’, in the words of Lloyd Wesley Mauldin.⁸² Siswomartojo claimed that school and non-school education were both equally important. They should be the foundation of the new social structure of Indonesia. ‘New educational foundations and systems are needed to guide people towards the new values and qualities which were in step with the ideal of independence,’ Siswomartojo wrote.⁸³ Paring the situation down to the bare essentials, the government ended up with two main strategic policies: mass education and compulsory education.

B.1 Mass education

Mass education was non-formal in nature and non-schooling in kind. It was the ‘education of multitudes of various stages of individual knowledge and development in heterogeneous social surroundings and circumstances’.⁸⁴ It was designed for all Indonesian men and women, young adults and elderly people alike, in towns and villages, businessmen, peasants, fishermen or other tradesmen. In short, mass education was meant for all Indonesian citizens who, because of age or other reasons, could not follow and had not followed any formal education.⁸⁵ As the government put it, ‘the care of the education of adults [is] beyond that provided by the schools’.⁸⁶

⁷⁸ Ibid. 11.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 12.

⁸⁰ ‘Tugas Negara dalam Pendidikan Masyarakat’, Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 247 (ANRI), 1.

⁸¹ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 3.

⁸² Lloyd Wesley Mauldin, ‘The Colonial Influences of Indonesian Education’ (Ph.D. Diss., George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1961), 271.

⁸³ ‘Tugas Negara dalam Pendidikan Masyarakat’, Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 247 (ANRI), 1-4; quote p. 1.

⁸⁴ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 41.

⁸⁵ Mauldin, ‘The Colonial Influences’, 270. By this definition, the mass education programme is not indeed part of the investigation theme of my research as I limit it to school education. Nevertheless, I cannot simply pass this programme by. The conception of mass education is inseparable from the overall picture of the imagined post-war, independent society towards which the Indonesian people and government were heading. It was, coupled

Mass education was initially a programme to combat alphabet illiteracy. In 1946 the Ministry of Education of the Indonesian Republic set up a section exclusively responsible for working on illiteracy issues. In 1947, various committees were established in the residencies. A year later, the government carried out a large-scale literacy programme campaign and also set up General Knowledge Courses. The harvest of these efforts was meagre, partly because of the military mobilization and partly because the government had not involved the people in the initiation of the program. In 1950, when Indonesia achieved political unification, the government began to re-address the programme. It was re-launched with a broader purpose called 'mass education'. This time, it learned from its mistake and involved the people right from the beginning.⁸⁷ Three ministries – the Ministries of Information, of Religion, and of Education, Instruction and Culture – were responsible for the programme.⁸⁸ The joint department formed from the three ministries and the budget spent show how seriously the government took the project. It was reported that, in 1950, the budget for the mass education programme reached 50 million Rupiahs; in 1951 Rp 130 million, and in 1952 Rp 160 million.⁸⁹ In comparison, the total income of the Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture was Rp 58.3 million in 1952 and Rp 53.5 million in 1953.⁹⁰ Some of the money for the mass education programme came from the three ministries and some from the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).⁹¹

The government established mass education committees in the provinces and the regencies as well as in sub-districts and villages.⁹² The task of the committees was 'to concentrate community leadership in aid of mass education, in accordance with national ideals and with the possibility found in the community itself'.⁹³ In 1953, there were 2,400 committees in sub-districts all over Indonesia.⁹⁴ The central Mass Education Department in Jakarta consisted of eleven sections, each responsible for different duties. They were the sections of the anti-illiteracy campaign, the courses on general knowledge, public libraries, manuscripts and periodicals, scouting movements, youth organizations, physical culture, women's affairs, teachers' instruction courses for mass educational purposes, general affairs, and publications.⁹⁵

Mass education was a five-year programme and was projected to last for ten years. Although activities had commenced in many places as early as 1950, the programme was only officially raised to the national level in January 1951. Technical reasons had been the stumbling block. The government target was that by 1961 illiteracy would have been conquered and all Indonesians would be able to

with the compulsory education programme, one of the two sides of socio-cultural revolution in the 1950s. In this sub-section, I shall explore the general aspects of the Mass Education programme.

⁸⁶ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 11.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 10.

⁸⁸ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 30.

⁸⁹ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 47.

⁹⁰ 'Undang-Undang No. 50 Tahun 1954 tentang Penetapan Bagian X (Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan) dari Anggaran Republik Indonesia untuk Tahun-Tahun Dinas 1952 dan 1953', Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 143 (ANRI).

⁹¹ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 47.

⁹² Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 31.

⁹³ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 127.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 14.

⁹⁵ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 11.

read and write. In all sub-districts there would be at least one public library and most villages would have public reading centres (*Taman Pustaka Rakyat*). It was also expected that active, lively youth organizations, scouting movements, women organizations and physical culture associations would be in place down to the village level. People would practise their new knowledge in co-operative societies.⁹⁶ The 1953 Annual Report of the Mass Education Department shows that, at the end of 1953, there were 71,260 anti-illiteracy courses all over Indonesia with a total of 2,440,343 participants/students and 67,563 instructors/teachers. In 1951 when the programme began, there had been 21,853 courses with a total of 899,963 participants/students and 19,983 instructors/teachers.⁹⁷

In principle, the mass education program was intended to ‘chang[e] the very mentality of the people,’ from the disposition of the (colonial) slave to that of self-respecting citizens and moral individuals, who were ‘aware of their responsibility towards and of their place in the history of the people and the country’.⁹⁸ The goal was to ‘broaden and intensify the national consciousness of the State; the understanding of the international position of Indonesia; political education for citizens who would cherish democratic principles; and the forces of progress and of the remedying of deficiencies in all fields’.⁹⁹ The ideological mission of the mass education programme required an elaborate five-year curriculum (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3: A five-year Mass Education program, 1950

Year	Program
First year	1. To plant the meaning and intensify the national consciousness 2. To plant the meaning and intensify consciousness of the State (<i>kesadaran bernegara</i>) based on the Five Principles, the Pancasila
Second year	1. To give instruction in civil rights and duties 2. To give instruction in the Constitution and the principles of democracy and the way to apply these democratic principles
Third year	To give guidance to the principles of ‘Movements’ and ‘Party-Politics’
Fourth year	1. To give instruction in the field of economies and to promote the national enterprise in the economic reconstruction 2. To give guidance in the daily life
Fifth year	1. To give meaning to the connection and relation between the various nations to plant consciousness of the position of Indonesia in the world brotherhood 2. To stimulate progress and fill all the deficiencies in every field

Source: Department of Information, *Rentjana Mass Education* (Jakarta: Department of Information, 1950), 61-2.

In practice, the programme seemed much less related to theoretical comprehension of the State ideology than to daily issues. Several photographs show mass education activities relating to the daily life of the people; for example, several men, possibly farmers, using mattocks to cultivate a piece of land;¹⁰⁰ a man was lifting a basket out of a fishpond, while some other men looked on during a fishery course;¹⁰¹ villagers gathered next to a rice-field paying attention to a man, probably an

⁹⁶ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 12-3.

⁹⁷ Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, 1953: *Annual Report of the Mass Education Department* (Jakarta: Percetakan “Endang”, 1954), appendix table, no page.

⁹⁸ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 41; Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 11.

⁹⁹ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 44.

¹⁰⁰ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 25.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* 76.

information official;¹⁰² a group of women learning to sew;¹⁰³ several other women guiding small children playing an outdoor game;¹⁰⁴ boys in the uniform tidily lining up in rows during a scouting activity programme;¹⁰⁵ some other boys playing ping-pong.¹⁰⁶ There are more pictures showing these non-school activities. The only undertaking which indicated an academic programme was captured in the photographs of a group of eight adults who were learning to read the alphabet. They were sitting at desks and looked busy writing. In the background, a small blackboard and the Red and White flag (black and white in the photograph) are attached to the wall.¹⁰⁷ Another picture shows several more adults sitting behind their desks. Their attention seems to be focused on someone standing in front of the class: namely the teacher, who is pointing to the characters of the Latin alphabet written on the blackboard.¹⁰⁸ More pictures show women learning the alphabet.¹⁰⁹

This photograph-based description of the mass education activities gives an impression that this programme, although ideological in purpose, did not actually amount to indoctrination. It does not seem to be very doctrinal if it is compared with the ways in which Soeharto's New Order elaborated the values of Pancasila and forced them on the people.¹¹⁰ Only during the first year were the learning materials truly designed to raise awareness of the State ideology. In the other years, the programmes dealt with the practical issues of the daily life, such as what democratic principles should mean in everyday social relations, how to improve life skills for economic reconstruction and so on. One important point is that for the five years of the programme, the design of the learning materials involved the direct participation of the students themselves. So the approach was learning by doing. By taking this fact, the mass education programme would have indeed stimulated and encouraged the people's collective spirit to achieve progress. The people were deliberately being encouraged to realize their ideological position. They were not just a mass of people living in a territory, but were citizens of an independent State, a Nation! They came to realize what it meant to be Indonesians and the rights and responsibilities that this entailed.¹¹¹

B.2 Compulsory education

Local administrations enthusiastically welcomed the mass education programme, perhaps as the result of the government strategy to involve them from the beginning of the programme. In June 1950,

¹⁰² Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 33.

¹⁰³ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 94.

¹⁰⁴ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 26.

¹⁰⁵ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 188.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 182.

¹⁰⁷ Department of Information: *Rentjana Mass Education*, 16.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 22.

¹⁰⁹ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 84-7- 9, 91.

¹¹⁰ This New Order style was a method known as *Penataran P4* or the P4 Refresher Course. P4 stands for *Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*, or guidance for the internalization and execution of Pancasila. According to this standard interpretation, the Pancasila consists of 36 core points of values. Through different sorts of refresher courses, technically all Indonesian citizens had to comprehend the 36 core values, mostly by memorizing them. I remember as a new college student in 1992, I followed a refresher course designed for new university entrants. A successful pass grade in the P4 Refresher Course was a prerequisite for full admission to higher education.

¹¹¹ In the rest of this chapter, I shall focus on the formal education—the schooling kind of education—and the training of its teachers.

the Association of Teachers for Illiteracy Eradication convened in Malang, East Java. It released a statement asking the government to make education compulsory for all illiterate Indonesians and to make a stint of teaching service compulsory for all educated Indonesians.¹¹² In August 1953, the Association of Surabaya Muslim Teachers played the same tune when it asked for more government subsidies because their schools, they said, had participated in the anti-illiteracy movement.¹¹³ In exactly the same period, the Inspectorate of Mass Education of Central Sumatra urged the government in Jakarta to draw up a compulsory educational act.¹¹⁴ This idea was shared in September 1953 by the Inspectorate of Mass Education of the Regency of Pesisir Selatan and Kerinci in western Sumatra. In its statement, the educational inspectorate of the Pesisir Selatan and Kerinci Regency also complained about the high price of some sports equipment like rackets for tennis, the nets and the balls for football, volleyball. 'Public enthusiasm for sports is widely catching on in Pesisir Selatan and Kerinci. The luxury category of sports equipment makes it hard for us to afford them,' the motion reads.¹¹⁵ In December 1956, the Transitional Local Parliament of Bandung tabled a motion urging the central government to expand the education in West Java.¹¹⁶ In this it was supported by the regency government of Merangin in Central Sumatra. 'Education is vital to the welfare of the people, not only in Bandung but also all over Indonesia,' the motion sent in January 1957 reads.¹¹⁷

The enthusiasm of local administrations as representative bodies of the people is the most salient indication of the growing self-reliance and of self-motivated actions. Collective spirit and a desire for education worked with a snowball effect. One critical idea in this is that adult people began to realize that illiteracy should be done away with to prepare the way for economic welfare. For adult people themselves, the mass education program also vitally contained what was known as the 'after-care unit', which ensured that the people's ability in reading and writing was maintained after they had finished their literacy courses. This effort included the foundation of public libraries in villages, the publication of popular magazines and so on.¹¹⁸ While limited and simple in many ways, the after-care programme was designed to be non-school in kind. The motion cited implicitly identifies the kind of education which the people wanted for their children, certainly not the one they were receiving. In this step, the emerging public intellectuality began to reveal the greatest impact of all. Not only were the Indonesian masses maturing to be self-reliant, self-confident and collectively engaged, they also wanted their children to be better prepared for their future lives. The masses began to desire an

¹¹² 'Resolusi Gerakan P.B.H. [Pemberantasan Buta Huruf] Indonesia', Arsip Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 40 (ANRI)

¹¹³ 'Resolusi Persatuan Guru Islam N.O. [Nahdatul Oelama?] Surabaya', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1126 (ANRI).

¹¹⁴ 'Resolusi Konperensi Dinas ke-3 Inspeksi Pendidikan Masyarakat Propinsi Sumatra Tengah', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1133 (ANRI).

¹¹⁵ 'Resolusi Inspeksi Pendidikan Masyarakat Kabupaten Pesisir Selatan dan Kerinci', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1133 (ANRI).

¹¹⁶ 'Resolusi No. 29 Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Peralihan Kota-Besar Bandung', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1133 (ANRI).

¹¹⁷ 'Letter No. 46/XIV/4-dpd from the government of the Regency of Merangin, January 15, 1947', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1133 (ANRI).

¹¹⁸ Department of Mass Education, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 15; Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture, *Mass Education in Indonesia*, 20-1.

education for their children which, as expressed in the motions cited, should be enshrined in formal schooling and should be compulsory.

When the government officially implemented¹¹⁹ the ten-year educational plan at the national level in 1951,¹²⁰ it was distracted from school education by several factors. Foremost of this was the mass education programme consumed vast amount of effort and resources as it basically covered all layers of the Indonesian population. Secondly, enormous strategic issues delayed the implementation of any progressive ideas which would have encouraged innovation in school education. Among these issues, the shortage of teachers and lack of school buildings were the most critical. I shall deal with this in the next sections. Thirdly, there was no school education law which was effectively binding throughout the entire territory of the unitary Indonesia (the USRI). Following the dissolution of United Indonesia (the RUSI), the legal basis on which Jakarta could make educational policies to bind the Archipelago was the Announcement of the Joint Commission of the RUSI and the Indonesian Republic Departments of Education which was issued on June 30, 1950. Its principal point was that the Republican educational system would become the only educational system in Indonesia, commencing from the 1950/1951 School Year.¹²¹ It did not provide a detailed regulation of policy making.

Local educational administrations questioned any legal basis Jakarta had to impose policies. It has been said that the Association of Teachers for Illiteracy Eradication in East Java and the Inspectorates of Mass Education of Central Sumatra and of Pesisir Selatan and Kerinci Regency urged that a compulsory education act be passed.¹²² On September 30, 1953, the Local Parliament of Central Java also pressed the central government to pass an educational act which was binding throughout the territory of unitary Indonesia. 'Many educational and school problems which are now arising have become much more complicated to solve because there is no legal basis to take actions,' the motion of the Parliament reads. 'For example, the status of many teachers in Central Java is uncertain because of uncertainty about regulation to which they should be adjusted in the unitary Indonesian system.'¹²³

Although there was no educational law which bound the whole Archipelago during the early turbulent years following the dissolution of the RUSI, there was indeed the Fundamentals of Education and Instruction Act No. 4/1950.¹²⁴ But, as formerly touched upon in passing, this Act was only legally binding in the (former) Republican territory of Java and Sumatra. It was not effective in the rest of the territories then under USRI jurisdiction, which covered the pre-war Netherlands Indies, with the exception of West Papua. Consequently, partly because of the pressure placed on it by local

¹¹⁹ By 'national level', I mean the entire territory of Indonesia in 1951. L.W. Mauldin says the ten-year educational plan, designed by Dr Gani, had taken effect as of April 8, 1947 (Mauldin, 'The Colonial Influences', 281). I assume Mauldin must have referred to 'Indonesia' covering the Indonesian Republic territory during the revolutionary wars. For this statement, Mauldin has referred to *Mass Education* published by Kementerian Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan in 1951 (pp. 58-9). However, my crosscheck on the referred source has not resulted in confirmation on the date Mauldin mentioned as the initiation of the ten-year educational plan.

¹²⁰ Mauldin, 'The Colonial Influences', 281.

¹²¹ 'Pengumuman Bersama Kementerian P.P.K. R.I.S. dan P.P.K. R.I. 30 Djuni 1950', Arsip PMRI Yogya No. 62 (ANRI).

¹²² See again 'Resolusi Gerakan P.B.H. Indonesia', Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 40; 'Resolusi Inspeksi Pendidikan Masjarakat Kabupaten Pesisir Selatan dan Kerinci', Kabinet Presiden No. 1133.

¹²³ 'Keputusan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Propinsi Djawa Tengah No. U 140/28/15, 30 September 1953', Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1086 (ANRI).

¹²⁴ 'Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950 tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Disekolah', Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105 (ANRI).

administrations in the wake of the dissolution of the RUSI, under Act No. 12/1954 the USRI government in Jakarta declared that the Fundamentals of Education and Instruction Act No. 4/1950 was provisionally binding the Archipelago beginning September 18, 1954.¹²⁵ The government argued that Act No. 4/1950 had unofficially become the *de facto* basis for Jakarta policies ever since the Announcement of the Joint Commission had been released in June 1950.¹²⁶ My archives do not indicate whether or how far the public of the unitary Indonesia in 1954 responded to the effectuation of this educational Act No. 4/1950. As discussed earlier, in 1950 the PSII and the Masjumi reacted hostilely to some articles in the Act.¹²⁷ But for the time being, the problem concerning the legal basis of a national policy seemed to be temporarily solved.

Under the ratified act, the goal of school education was ‘the forming of capable persons of a high moral character, democratic citizens with a sense of responsibility for the welfare of society and the country as a whole’.¹²⁸ It was believed that children were mentally ready for primary education when they reached the age of six. By the age of eight, their mental capacity had developed to a higher level so that they were fully prepared to commence primary education. So, when the children’s mental state for primary education was ready varied in the range of age of six and eight years. Therefore, the educational Act declared that children of the age of six years deserved the right to a school education, whereas all those from the age of eight years were obliged to go to school, for six years at least.¹²⁹ Hence, school education was compulsory for children between the age of eight and fourteen years.¹³⁰ The legal definition of school education included kindergarten, primary, secondary, and tertiary education as well as special education for children with special needs.¹³¹ The school which children between eight and fourteen years of age were obliged to attend was the six-year primary school, shown in Table 8.2, which had officially become the only type of primary school since the 1950/1951 school year.¹³² The educational Act also recognized religious schools as part of the compulsory

¹²⁵ ‘Undang-Undang No. 12 Tahun 1954 tentang Pernyataan Berlakunya Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950 dari Republik Indonesia Dahulu tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran Disekolah untuk Seluruh Indonesia’, Arsip Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105 (ANRI).

¹²⁶ Explanatory addendum to Undang-Undang No. 12 Tahun 1954, Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 105, 3.

¹²⁷ See again ‘Statement PSII’, and ‘Statement Masjumi’, Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 270.

¹²⁸ Article 3 Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950. For the English translation of Article 3, here I have quoted M. Hutasoit’s in *Compulsory Education in Indonesia* (Paris: UNESCO, 1954), 40. This publication by Hutasoit, first appearing in a condensed version presented to the UNESCO conference in Bombay in 1952 (see M. Hutasoit, *Summary of a Study on Free Compulsory Primary Education in Indonesia* [Djakarta: Ministry of Education, Instruction and Cultural Affairs, 1952]), contains rich data of a primary nature concerning the years from 1950 to 1952, and sometimes also a prediction of the situation in 1953. I shall use this 1954 publication by Hutasoit as one of my primary sources for this chapter, especially when dealing with the years 1950 to 1952. When writing this book in 1952, M. Hutasoit was head of the courses department of the Indonesian ministry of education, instruction and cultural affairs.

¹²⁹ Article 10, Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950.

¹³⁰ Explanatory addendum to Article 10 of Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950. According to the explanatory addendum to Article 10, the legal limit of age for compulsory education was 8 to 14 years. Some people and other documents mistakenly referred to the age range of 6 to 12 years. This apparently indicates to the limit when children were legally stated to *deserve* (rather than *be obliged to*) primary education.

¹³¹ Articles 6 and 7, Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950.

¹³² See again ‘Putusan Menteri Pendidikan No. 5122/B’, Kabinet PMRI Yogya No. 12.

education programme as long as the Department of Religion, under whose aegis the schools operated, declared them to be equivalent to the six-year primary school of the general type.¹³³

Compelled by the education act, the government aimed to provide a 'minimum education of six years' primary schooling for the whole population'.¹³⁴ Primary education was made compulsory because it was the basis for an enlightened populace.¹³⁵ In reality, this initiative could only gradually be introduced. Until 1953, the government maintained the three- and the four-year primary schooling of the pre-war type, by modifying some aspects like the curriculum.¹³⁶ This was a policy inherited from the Republican administration. During the years of revolution from 1945 to 1949, the Republican government somehow managed to meet the vastly growing needs for primary education despite having to contend with enormous scarcity of resources. To deal with the emergency situation necessitated by the military mobilization, the government organized primary schooling in the form of temporary courses, called *Kursus Pengantar ke Kewajiban Belajar* (KPKB, 'introductory courses to compulsory education').¹³⁷ After being adopted as a common policy throughout Indonesia in 1950, the KPKB soon developed into a number and systems of administration. The plan was to upgrade the KPKB to a full standard of six-year *Sekolah Rakjat* after it had completed its fourth year.¹³⁸ A report says that in 1950 as many as 16,000 KPKBs were transformed into *Sekolah Rakjat*,¹³⁹ implying they had commenced operation in 1946. By 1952, an average of fifteen to thirty KPKBs were operating in the regencies.¹⁴⁰ Commencing on July 1, 1953, the government transformed all of the 4000 KPKBs existing at the time into *Sekolah Rakjat*.¹⁴¹ The initiation of the KPKB courses marked a new step in the programme of compulsory education. The KPKB courses were embryo *Sekolah Rakjat*, which all Indonesian children between eight and fourteen years of age had to attend for their primary education. Although it disseminated enthusiasm for public schooling, the KPKB also posed the government the challenge of providing enough teachers and educational facilities. Because of the domino impact it had on other aspects of the educational sector at the time, the KPKB is worth noting as a monument of the educational development in early independent Indonesia.

The discussion so far implies a critical fact: the compulsory education programme, as inherited from the educational policy of the Republic, was implemented throughout Indonesia before the Fundamentals of Education and Instruction Act No. 4/1950 – also of the Republic – officially took effect throughout the entire jurisdiction of unitary Indonesia. Although the Act was only binding in the Archipelago beginning from 1954, the data cited here show that *de facto* the compulsory education programme had been worked on since 1950. Even if its legality is questionable, all this proves the

¹³³ Article 10, Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950.

¹³⁴ Hutasoit, *Compulsory Education*, 41.

¹³⁵ Mauldin, *The Colonial Influences*, 282.

¹³⁶ Hutasoit, *Compulsory Education*, 97-100.

¹³⁷ 'Putusan Menteri Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia No. 5033/F', Arsip PMRI Yogya No. 12 (ANRI).

¹³⁸ Hutasoit, *Compulsory Education*, 97.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* 83.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 98.

¹⁴¹ 'Pendidikan, Pengajaran dan Kebudayaan 17 Agustus 1952-17 Agustus 1953', Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 258 (ANRI), 2. The statement in the document insinuates the closing of the KPKB courses on July 1, 1953 as it says 'all KPKBs were transformed to be *Sekolah Rakjat*'. It is not explicitly clear when the KPKB was terminated.

lively dynamics of educational progress in the young unitary Republic. In a conference organized by the UNESCO in Bombay in 1952, M. Hutasoit, the head of the courses department and then the secretary-general of the Indonesian Ministry of Education, elaborated on the KPKB courses and pointed out their significance to the initiation of the compulsory education programme.¹⁴² At that stage, the educational administration and supervision, the availability of teachers, adjustment of curricula, accessibility to educational materials, buildings and equipment continued to be highly critical issues.¹⁴³

Hutasoit clearly showed the stiff challenges facing the full implementation of the compulsory education programme and the problem of further schooling – following the six-year primary education – was already predictable. Here I need to deal with the issue of further schooling because in turn it influenced the accessibility of compulsory primary education. Hutasoit wrote that most children who finished primary school, although too young for employment, did not enjoy any further formal education because the capacity of secondary schools was limited.¹⁴⁴ The Information Department of the Education Ministry called on the government and parents alike to take active initiatives to finding solutions to the problem. ‘Our children are growing up with a desire for schooling and it is always pleasing to see this,’ a statement of the Information Department reads. ‘However, while the number of primary school leavers is increasing, the number of secondary school is simply too small to admit all of them.’¹⁴⁵ In the 1952/1953 school year, the total number of primary schools was 26,073 as compared to 1,707 junior secondary schools (general and vocational, public and private, excluding courses). These primary schools had a capacity of 5,946,802 places compared to 233,633 places at junior secondary schools. So, on average there was only one junior secondary school for every fifteen primary schools. Calculated against the school capacity, this meant only one in twenty-five primary school students could hope to be admitted to junior secondary school.¹⁴⁶ Unless effective measures were taken, the Information Department stated, the children and the parents would soon face an intractable situation. It was suggested that the parents and local administrative authorities at the *desa* and the sub-district levels could afford their own secondary education by making use of any available resources, for example, by making use of primary school buildings for afternoon courses at secondary level.¹⁴⁷ Of course, this creative suggestion did not solve the entire problem as schooling was more than just a building. But the point of the Information Department seems to have been that, while the government was terribly limited in its financial capacity and human resources, the people and local authorities should undertake to work hand in hand to arrange for secondary education themselves. Apparently the compulsory education programme caused consequences which could not be limited to the issues of the six-year primary education alone.

The government education budget was indeed severely crippled. In 1952 and 1953, for example, the government income for educational resources reached an estimate of Rp 58,355,200 and

¹⁴² See again Hutasoit, *Summary of a Study*.

¹⁴³ Hutasoit, *Compulsory Education*, 41-54

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 55

¹⁴⁵ ‘Nasib Anak-Anak Tamatan S.R.’, Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 277 (ANRI).

¹⁴⁶ ‘Daftar Angka-Angka tentang Djumlah Sekolah dan Banjarknja Muridnja’, Arsip Kabinet Presiden No. 1131 (ANRI). Detailed calculation of the ratio is mine.

¹⁴⁷ ‘Nasib Anak-Anak Tamatan S.R.’, Arsip Muhammad Yamin No. 277 (ANRI).

Rp 53,535,500 successively. In the meantime, educational expenditure came to a total of Rp 912,489,300 and Rp 752,032,100 respectively. Out of this amount, approximately 5,1 per cent in 1952 and 16,8 per cent in 1953 went to the Instruction Department, under which the management of primary schools fell. The allocation for general secondary schools was 5.4 per cent in 1952 and 6.9 per cent in 1953. For vocational secondary schools of various kinds with the exception of teacher training (secondary technical school, commercial school and domestic science school for girls), the allocation was 5.6 per cent and 6.9 per cent of the total expenditure in 1952 and 1953. Teacher training school received 13.9 per cent and 18.1 per cent of the total expenditure in 1952 and 1953. The budget of the teacher training school was the largest of all the different types of schools. It was in fact the second largest of all the expenditure items in 1952—coming after the expenditure of school facilities and buildings (32.8%)—and emerged as the largest of all in 1953.¹⁴⁸ The budget question certainly issued a serious challenge to the development of school education. In the words of Hutasoit, the government faced two main problems: extension on a large scale and the raising of the educational level in all the schools.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, the compulsory education and the mass education programme had been set in motion. It does not seem wide of the mark to suggest that the atmosphere of learning began to leak a tangible imprint on the daily lives of the people. While adults warmed enthusiastically to non-formal education, children between eight and fourteen years of age—with the full support of their parents—went to school. The aim of the government was to work on the two different sides of education, but to achieve the structural development of the society in the long-term, it could not allow itself to be distracted from improving the quality of schooling education. As Hutasoit put it, ‘stabilization [of the society] will only be reached when all citizens have been given the opportunity of receiving primary schooling’.¹⁵⁰ The educational expenditure in 1952 and 1953 clearly shows that, along with the compulsory education programme, the training of teachers and the educational facilities and school buildings received a priority in financing. The following chapter will focus on these issues.

Conclusion

The implosion of the colonial society in the first half of the 1940s resulted in veritable waves of confusion in the subsequent efforts to establish the educational and teacher training system in the years which followed. This chapter has explored the havoc but also the re-institutionalization of the system during the second phase of the series of waves resulting from the breaking of the colonial political dam, approximately covering the years from 1950 to 1958. The political unification of Indonesia in 1950 led to the centralization of educational policy making which enforced the uniformity of the school system throughout the Archipelago. The first point to be noted is that, in the 1930s to the 1940s approximately, political consciousness had already grown to a considerable extent among Indonesian school teachers and students of the teacher training schools. The uniformity of the system in 1950 signified the switch in political consciousness to ideological literacy. The government elite set up public educational programmes with a two-fold purpose: to stimulate the awareness of the

¹⁴⁸ See again ‘Undang-Undang No. 50 Tahun 1954 tentang Penetapan Anggaran’, Sekretaris Kabinet-Undang-Undang No. 143. Calculation was based on related expenditure posts on pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁹ Hutasoit, *Compulsory Education*, 40

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 55. italics in original.

masses as citizens of an independent State and to achieve socio-economic welfare as it had been idealized by the Proclamation of Independence. Through education, the masses were to be made knowledgeable about the position that they were now no longer a mere crowd of people who lived in scattered islands. Now they were members of the Nation and the State of Indonesia with all the civil rights and the obligations that entailed. Hence the political unification in 1950 thus marked the creation of public intellectuality.

However, more than it was a political or ideological question the provision of education in the 1950s was a problem of the government capacity. While the masses were gradually permeated with a desire for schooling, the shortage of teachers and lack of school buildings proved a tremendous hindrance to the implementation of any progressive ideas about educational reform. As the previous sections have revealed, the government made enormous strides in managing to overcome the problems, for example, by giving priority in the budget to the teacher training and the construction of new school buildings. Yet, this could not prevent it from having to run different sorts of schools and programmes, which were very much similar to the pre-war system. The following chapter will show that the teacher training system of the 1950s remained extremely plural in terms of the professional quality of the teachers it delivered. Although the ideological mainstream was to have an educational system which should be Indonesian in character, the government had no alternative but to adopt the available, and perhaps the only workable, model of the colonial system. Consequently, the standardization of quality education could not be achieved however politically desirable and desired it was. The history of Indonesian public education and teacher training in the 1950s was a paradoxical story on the government side and a confused feeling of hope and despair on the side of the people.***AS