

PANCASILA AS THE SOLE FOUNDATION

Sjafruddin Prawiranegara

Editors' Introduction

The debate in Indonesian religious circles regarding "Pancasila as the *azas tunggal* [sole foundation or principle]" came to the fore in August 1982 when President Suharto stated that "all social-political forces, particularly the political parties, should accept the state ideology as their *azas tunggal*." He reassured religious organizations two months later, however, that they would continue to enjoy "rights and an honorable place in the Pancasila-based state," and that Pancasila was neither a religion nor a substitute for religion.

A major item on the agenda for the March 1983 general session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) was the drafting of national policy guidelines (GBHN--Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara). Incorporated in these guidelines was an MPR resolution that the two political parties and Golkar now adopt Pancasila as their sole foundation.* All the MPR explicitly declared with regard to social organizations (*ormas, organisasi masyarakat*), however, was that a law concerning them must be promulgated.

This, then, became a major matter of debate. One of the most thoughtful statements against the adoption by religious organizations of Pancasila as their sole basis came in an open letter to the President from Sjafruddin Prawiranegara SH, dated July 17, 1983, which presents in detail many of the arguments put forward by those organizations.

In the early years of independence, Sjafruddin had been a member of the progressive wing of the Masjumi Party and served as the Republic's minister of finance (1946-47) and minister of welfare (1948). He became president and acting prime minister of the Republic's Emergency Government formed on Sumatra after the Dutch captured Yogyakarta in December 1948. In 1950 he was again appointed minister of finance, but later, increasingly opposed to Sukarno's policies, he joined the PRRI rebellion in 1958 and was prime minister of the rebel government. He surrendered in 1961 and was kept in close confinement until 1966. He has been an outspoken critic of the Suharto government in behalf of Muslim interests.

The following translation of Sjafruddin's letter is based on the version appearing in a collection of reactions from religious and other organizations concerning the proposed law.** (The footnotes incorporated in the translation appeared in the original.)

* Ketetapan MPR No. II/1983 tentang GBHN Bab IV.

** *Perihal: Pancasila Sebagai Azas Tunggal* (Jakarta: DDII, Jl. Kramat Raya no. 45, n.d. [1983?]), pp. 3-14.

His Excellency
The President of the Republic
of Indonesia

26 Ramadhan 1403H
Jakarta, July 7, 1983M

With all respect

Assalamu'alaikum w.w.

In connection with the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia--after the MPR/DPR [People's Consultative Congress and the House of Representatives] proclaimed that the Pancasila was to become the *azas tunggal*, the sole foundation for all political parties, including the Golkar--to extend enforcement of this principle to all types of social organizations in Indonesia, and also in view of the anxiety and unrest thereby aroused among the majority of the Muslim community, I feel compelled, in order to maintain a feeling of unity and justice in the Indonesian nation, to convey my opinion on the question of this "sole foundation" to you, in the sincere hope that you will be willing to order the cessation of these efforts to enforce the Pancasila as the sole foundation of all social organizations.

In order to render this "sole foundation" issue quite clear for us all, we may start by asking a question which at first sight does not need to be put because the answer is quite clear. However, precisely because, in my opinion, those who wish to enforce the Pancasila as the sole foundation do not properly understand what the real meaning of the Pancasila is, it is necessary for us to study this issue first.

I. *What Is the Pancasila?*

The answer usually given is: The Pancasila is the State Philosophy, the philosophy that is the basis of the 1945 Constitution, that constitutes the basis of law for the Republic of Indonesia.¹

But, if we look for further information on the Pancasila in the 1945 Constitution, either in its body or in the explanatory commentary, we do not even once encounter the word "pancasila" let alone an elucidation of it. Yet what is actually binding on us as citizens, whether as ordinary people, or as civil servants, or as civilian or military officers of the state not in the civil

1. See for example, the special Publication of the Ministry of Information of the RI, dated February 19, 1959, entitled "Kembali Kepada Undang-Undang Dasar 1945" [Return to the 1945 Constitution].

service, is the Constitution and all laws and ordinances based on this Constitution, such that they should not contain any provisions in contravention of the Constitution.

So where can we find an elucidation of this Pancasila, which is said to be the basis of the 1945 Constitution?

As we all know, elucidations of the Pancasila can be found only in the speeches that preceded the establishment of the 1945 Constitution, specifically in the speech of Bung Karno closing a session of the "Body to Investigate Efforts for Preparing [Indonesian] Independence" the BPUPKI (in Japanese, the "Dokuritsu Zyunbi Tyoosakai") on June 1, 1945, which subsequently has usually been referred to as "The Birth of Pancasila Address." Bung Karno's address of June 1, 1945 was then reformulated by a Committee of Nine on June 22, 1945, and ratified in subsequent sessions of the BPUPKI.

Soekarno himself emphatically rejected the belief that he was the "creator" of the Pancasila. In his inaugural address when he accepted the honorary degree of Doctor Honoris Causa from Gajah Mada University, he stated: "Do not say that I am the formulator of the Pancasila teaching. I am only the discoverer [excavator] of the Pancasila teaching."²

But nevertheless, that closing address, which summarized all the speeches preceding it at the BPUPKI sessions held from May 29 through June 1, 1945, is the most important source for understanding the Pancasila philosophy.³

According to Bung Karno the Pancasila is the "*philosofische grondslag*" of Indonesian Independence. This filosofische grondslag means foundation, philosophy, the most profound thought, the spirit, and the deepest desire, upon which to build the eternal, indestructible mansion of Independent Indonesia.

"What is our 'Weltanschauung' for building the Independent Indonesian state? Is it national-socialism? Is it historical materialism? Is it the San Min Cu I, as stated by Dr. Sun Yat Sen?

"Brothers, we have had sessions for three days, many ideas have been presented--all kinds--but how true are the words of Dr. Soekiman, of Ki Bagoes Hadikoesoemo, that we must seek agreement, seek a consensus of our opinions. We are together seeking unity of "philosofische grondslag," we are seeking a single 'Weltanschauung' on which we all agree. I say again "agree." Something to which Brother Yamin agrees, to which Ki Bagoes agrees, to which Ki Hadjar agrees, to which Brother Sanoesi agrees, to which Brother Abikoesno agrees, to which Brother Liem Koen Hian agrees, in short: to which we all agree.

"For the Muslim group, this is the best place to protect religion. We all, I too, are Muslims--pardon, a thousand pardons, my Islam is far from perfect--but if you were to open my breast and look into my heart you would surely find that it is no other than a true Islamic heart. And Bung Karno's Islamic heart wishes to defend Islam through consensus, through a meeting of minds. By

2. See H. Endang Saifuddin Anshari, "Piagam Jakarta 22 Juni 1945 [The Jakarta Charter of June 22, 1945], under paragraph 1: The Shaping of Soekarno's Pancasila," p. 21.

3. Moh. Roem: "Tiga Peristiwa Bersejarah" [Three Historic Events], pp. 30-31.

the way of consensus we improve everything including the welfare of religion, that is by discussions and consultations in a People's Representative Assembly.

"Whatever is not yet satisfactory, we will discuss further in consultation. The Representative Body, that is the place for us to present Islamic demands. It is there that we should propose to the people's leaders whatever we think is needed for improvement. If we are indeed a Muslim people, let us work as hard as we can. So that the majority of seats in the People's Representative Body that we are establishing are held by Muslim representatives. If indeed Muslims form a majority of the Indonesian people, and if indeed Islam is truly alive in the ranks of the people, let us leaders mobilize the entire population to send as many Muslim representatives as possible to this representative council.

"In the representative council, let our Muslim brothers and our Christian brothers work as hard as possible. If, for example, Christians wish every single letter in the ordinances of the Indonesian state to conform with the Bible, let them do their utmost to ensure that a majority of the delegates entering the Indonesian representative council are Christians. That is just--[that is] "fair play."

Bung Karno's explanation concerning the basis of the "Weltanschauung" or the "philosophische grondslag," that was to become the foundation of Independent Indonesia (meaning the basis for the Constitution of the Indonesian Republic) was summarized in the following words:

"Brothers! The 'Foundations of the State' I have already proposed. They are five in number. Are they the Panca Dharma? No! The term Panca Dharma would not be appropriate here. Dharma means Duty, whereas we are speaking of *foundation*. . . .

"Its name should not be Panca Dharma, but--I name it on the advice of a friend who is a linguist--rather *Pancasila*. Sila means *basis* or *foundation*, and on this five-fold foundation we will build the Indonesian State, everlasting and eternal." (Loud applause.)⁴

In Bung Karno's speech, the five principles were named in the following order:

1. Indonesian Nationalism
2. Internationalism or humanitarianism
3. Consultation--or democracy
4. Social welfare
5. Belief in God

As we all know, in the preamble to the Constitution which was subsequently drawn up, the Pancasila--*without its name being mentioned*--was formulated as follows:

Formulation June 22, 1945

- Belief in God, with the obligation for its adherents of abiding by the *shari'a* [laws] of Islam
- Humanitarianism, righteous and civilized

4. Bung Karno's speech of June 1, 1945, appears inter alia in "20 Tahun Merdeka" [Twenty Years of Independence] R.I. Department of Information edition, 1965.

- Unity of Indonesia
- Democracy [*kerakyataan*] guided by wisdom in the consultations of [the people's] representatives
- Social Justice for all the people of Indonesia

Formulation of August 18, 1945

- Belief in One Almighty God
- Humanitarianism, righteous and civilized
- Unity of Indonesia, and
- Democracy guided by wisdom in the consultations of representatives, together with realization of
- Social justice for all the people of Indonesia

II. *Pancasila was not intended to become the foundation of citizens' organizations, whether of a political character, or of a social or other character*

From the excerpts I have taken from Bung Karno's address, it is clear that the Pancasila was intended to be the Foundation of the State, and the basis for the Constitution. This means that the Pancasila principles have been incorporated [*verwerkt*] in, have been realized through, the articles of the 1945 Constitution. Anybody who agrees with the 1945 Constitution--and everybody who regards himself as a citizen of the Republic of Indonesia must agree with the 1945 Constitution--implicitly and automatically recognizes and is committed to the Pancasila. This means that whichever religion, belief, or ideology an individual or group of citizens espouses, that person [or group] is committed to live and work in a harmonious and peaceful manner within and outside the Republic of Indonesia. Or, to borrow Bung Karno's words: "The Indonesian state that we are founding must be a 'gotong-royong' [mutual assistance] state."

This idea of gotong-royong implies that each person joining in this gotong-royong preserves his own identity and personality. The Muslims remain Muslim, the Christians remain Christian, the Buddhists remain Buddhist, the Hindus remain Hindu, and so on.

But if Christians are no longer permitted to form organizations based on Christian principles, whether Protestant or Catholic, and if Muslims cannot establish organizations based upon Islamic principles, and the same is the case for other citizens espousing other religions or ideologies, who are forbidden to found organizations based upon their respective faiths or ideologies, but all citizens are allowed only to have organizations based upon the Pancasila, then Indonesia, this fertile and prosperous country, with its many hills and valleys, must, as it were, be transformed into a barren Sahara desert, consisting of only stones and undifferentiated particles of sand [*yang zatnya sama*].

From a Pancasila State as conceived by the "Founding Fathers" of our beloved Republic of Indonesia, a democratic Republic--Indonesia will become a national-socialist i.e. fascist state just as bad and brutal as a communist state.

If Pancasila, rather than being the foundation of the state has to be turned into the basis of human life, then this means that the religions revealed by Almighty God (or so perceived) have to be exchanged for an ideology, which does not call itself a religion, but in its behavior seems to wish to replace existing religions.

Just consider: formerly there was no "Pancasila Morality" because problems of morality were left up to the individual religions. Then a committee was established consisting of people regarded as "smart"--not a single ulama of good standing in the Muslim community was included--and this committee of smart people drafted a kind of holy writ filled with moral prescriptions that had to be studied and practiced by all our citizens, yet not all these prescriptions could be swallowed by the Muslims, for many of them contained tenets in conflict with Islamic teachings.

Now that a "Pancasila Morality" has been drawn up, there is certain to appear "Pancasila Law," "Pancasila Economy," etc.

Indeed, as you yourself, Mr. President, have pointed out in your address on the occasion of the "Nuzulul Qur'an" commemoration on Monday June 27 last, the Pancasila is not a religion and cannot ever replace religion. This is certainly true. However, even if the Pancasila is not a religion, with the power that lies in your hands and with the support of the People's Representative Council--which more reflects the sovereignty of the President than that of the people--the Pancasila is de facto put into effect and is being enforced as a comprehensive religion, that touches on all aspects of the lives of those human beings who are Indonesian citizens.

In this connection I may be permitted to refer to the editorial in KOMPAS of July 4, 1983, which appeared under the heading, "Pengarapan Undang-Undang Keormasan" [The Implementation of the Law on Social Organizations] and reads:

"If the issue is viewed solely from the standpoint of practical politics, the government, with the support of majorities in the representative bodies and the surfeit of power it possesses, can as it were enforce anything it pleases, and the community will acquiesce, at least formally, and for so long as the power structure supporting it remains effective.

"Still, because what is to be achieved and preserved is essentially a political infrastructure and political culture which is to unify the nation and the state, mere formal acquiescence, without the process of dialogue, cannot suffice.

"A statesmanlike political approach will at the same time strive for implanting strong roots and building a firm structure, so that not mere formal acquiescence and enforcement are achieved but rather a form of dialogue that is nationally oriented, so that, even though it may take some time, a national consensus will ultimately be attained."

There is a Dutch proverb, that says "Beter ten Halve gekeerd dan ten hele gedwaald" which can be translated as "It is better to turn back halfway than to err the whole way."

In your address celebrating the Nuzulul Qur'an commemoration, to which I referred earlier, Mr. President, you yourself pointed out: "Pancasila and religion are not in opposition to each other and must not be made to oppose each other."

If this were true, why must the Islamic basis of the one remaining Islamic political party, the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan be replaced by the Pancasila? And why does Minister of Youth and Sports Abdul Ghafur try with all his might to replace the Islamic basis of the Islamic Students League (HMI) by the Pancasila? After all, the Islamic basis of the Islamic political parties and social

organizations has long existed and been recognized as not in conflict, but rather in accord, with the 1945 Constitution. Why only now has the Islamic foundation to be replaced by the Pancasila? What crime has the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), or the HMI, or any other Muslim organization committed?

Because the HMI in its recent Medan congress refused to change its foundation, arguing that no Law on Social Organizations yet exists mandating such a change, the Government has now begun to draw up such a law. And because the People's Representative Council more often expresses "His Master's Voice" [sic] than giving voice to its own feelings, it will not be difficult to produce the law described by the government.

But actually it is not just the HMI, but the Indonesian Muslim community in general (which still loves its faith, although the majority are not yet brave enough to express their true feelings) that rejects replacing the Islamic foundation by the Pancasila foundation, not only because this would be contrary to Islamic teachings, but also because it would be contrary to the 1945 Constitution. They are afraid to express their true opinions for fear that they will lose their positions, their offices, or their funding, or are afraid to be considered "confrontational dissidents"--feelings similar to the misgivings expressed recently by Abdurrachman Wahid in KOMPAS--with all the related risks: interrogation, detention, and suchlike by various civilian and military instruments of the state.

If I have steeled myself to write this letter, it is not with the intention of seeking a confrontation with you, the President, but only to exercise my rights and duties, as laid down in Article 27, paragraph (1) of our Constitution.

Replacing an Islamic foundation by a Pancasila foundation conflicts with a Constitution which is based upon the Pancasila, and thus is in contravention with the Pancasila itself. That is, the original Pancasila, which formed the basis of the 1945 Constitution. What is plain is that to exchange this basis contravenes the freedom of religion and worship guaranteed by Article 29, paragraph (2) of the Constitution. Because, according to Islamic teachings, the establishment of an Islamic association whose membership consists of Muslims who want to practice Islamic teachings together--that is an association which is based upon Islam--is in itself an act of worship which is blessed by Allah. For, according to the teachings of Allah, all Believers are brothers. And therefore it is very good for them to establish organizations consisting of Muslims, in whatever field.

This does not mean that Muslims are not allowed to become members of, or to found, organizations whose membership is not exclusively Islamic. Nor does it imply that Muslim associations cannot admit non-Muslims as extraordinary members, as long as they accept its Islamic foundation, though such cases will necessarily be very rare.

If Muslims are no longer allowed to establish Islamic associations--whether political organizations or social organizations--then Islam will come to be regarded as a private matter, which is completely contrary to Islamic teachings. The Islamic religion is not merely a private matter, but is also, and primarily, a matter of the "Ummat" [Community]. The "sholat" [act of worship], for example, may be performed individually, but communal prayers are mandatory, i.e., where a number of Muslims wish to perform the required prayers, namely the five daily prayers. Also payment of the "zakat" [religious tax] also indicates the existence of a community, with the purpose of bridging the gap between

the rich and the poor, although those receiving the zakat do not have to be Muslims, but can be any poor person in need of help.

To put it briefly, if the Indonesian Muslim community is to be prohibited from establishing and maintaining Islamic associations, whether in the political field or in other social fields, this is not only in contravention of the 1945 Constitution--and thus in contravention of the Pancasila itself, but, in practice means an attempt to kill Islam--through the Pancasila! For the Pancasila, being a creation of men, can be interpreted and applied according to the wishes and thoughts of men, namely those men who hold power, the power-holders controlling the Armed Forces! And in the long run, the teachings of religion--particularly the Islamic religion will--so I fear, and tens of millions of Indonesian Muslims share my fear--be suffocated by Pancasila Morality, Pancasila Economy, Pancasila Law, and all other such Pancasila offspring, the results of which we can already observe: alcoholism and narcotics, promiscuous sex and the resulting proliferation of venereal disease in society, particularly among teenagers, rampant criminality and corruption, alongside measures to combat them, which on the one hand are completely ineffective, and on the other hand show symptoms of no longer being under the control of [the] law.

And it is very sad that Islam, up to now, has been able to do little or nothing to help improve the situation, because those Muslim leaders who still want to carry out the order of Allah, "amal ma'ruf, nahi mungkar," urging people to act well and behave correctly, and forbidding them from doing wrong and acting evilly, are continually mistrusted and prevented from proselytizing.

And the condition of society will become even worse if the Government succeeds, formally at least, in enforcing the imposition of the Pancasila as the sole foundation for all social organizations.

If this matter of the sole foundation is also to apply to all social organizations, the situation for the Christians, Protestant and Catholic, will not be as bad as for the Muslims. Because they have their priests and clergymen, who are the leaders of the organization of the Christians known as the "Church." The mosque is not the same as the Church. A mosque is a place of worship, managed by a committee, whose members are not sacral officials such as priests or clergymen. But a Church is an organization whose members consist of people who share a belief in the Christian religion, and it is led by priests or clergymen within a hierarchy. Every Church has at least one, but usually several, even possibly thousands of churches spread throughout the world, as for instance the Roman Catholic Church. Thus their "Church" is a fortress for the followers of a specific Christian denomination.

If the Muslim social organizations are banned, then the Mosques constitute a very fragile fortress, because their committees can be captured by Golkar minions who profess to be Muslims but are more obedient to the President and to other superiors than they are to Allah, His Prophet, and His Holy Scriptures.

I cannot assess the position of the Buddhist and Hindu communities, but they also have their religious leaders, similar to the Christian priests and clergymen, and they too cannot easily be interfered with by the Pancasila. The weakness, but also the strength of Islam, lies in the fact that its Ulama and Kyai are not like Christian priests and clergymen. Because of this it appears that Islam can easily be subdued and dominated by temporal rulers. But make no mistake! Islam ultimately is protected by the True God.

Because of that, rather than fighting Islam, distrusting and interfering with the ulama and the da'i [preachers] who remain faithful to Allah, His

Prophet, and His Holy Scriptures, it would be better to treat them as friendly allies in the development efforts.

If Allah so wishes, we will be able, together with the ulama and da'i, to combat alcoholism and narcotics, and all the vices besetting our society. They do not seek rank or payment from the authorities. They hope only that justice be upheld and that they receive the blessing of Allah, and, ultimately a place at His side when they have to leave this mortal world at His ordaining.

If earlier Indonesia could only achieve independence thanks to the Grace of Allah and the Muslims, now too Indonesia can only be saved with the help of Allah and of devout Muslims. Making Pancasila the sole foundation for all social organizations may at first glance appear to be the way to bring about national unity and social improvement. But believe me, you will only achieve the opposite.

I hope that you, Mr. President, are aware of the dangers threatening our country and people, if the Sole Foundation plan should be implemented.

And I hope that, after you have read this letter of mine, you will agree at the very least to halt the enforcement of Pancasila as the "sole foundation," in accordance with the recommendation offered by Mr. Hardi in KOMPAS of last July 4 [reproduced on pp. 19-23 of the pamphlet].

But it would be still better if the application of the Sole Foundation idea was also to be revoked for the political parties, particularly the PPP, and that all citizens be allowed to establish any organizations whatsoever, so long as the aim of these organizations is to work for the benefit of Indonesian society, and in pursuit of their objectives they refrain from all illegal actions, specifically the use of force. This would be in accordance with Article 28 of the Constitution which guarantees the principles of freedom of association and assembly and of the expression of opinion in speech and writing, as was laid out by Bung Karno in his address at the end of the BPUPKI's session on June 1, 1945, and also in accordance with the promises of the New Order at the beginning of its career--namely your promises to implement the 1945 Constitution in a pure and principled manner.

May Allah show you and your assistants the true path, and at the same time, in the hope that Allah will accept our fasting and our other good deeds and worship, I wish a Happy Idulfitri in this year of 1403 H for you and your family, and please forgive me if this letter of mine contains any words that do not please you. My aim is none other than to point out what is just and fair according to my own convictions.

Wabillahi taufiq wal hidayah
Wassalam

Sjafruddin Prawiranegara.

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- 5. The Chairman and members of the State Finance Control Board**
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