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INTELLECTUAL RESPONSES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
IKATAN CENDEKIAWAN MUSLIM INDONESIA (ICMI)
1990-1995

Fuadi Mardatillah

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Arts and Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts

Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University
Montreal
1997



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ABSTRACT

Author : Fuadi Mardatillah

Title of Thesis : The Intellectual Responses to the Establishment of
Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, 1990-1995

Department : Institute of Islamic Studies

Degree : Master of Arts

Following the creation of Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (ICMI, Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association) on December 6, 1990, an event which had shaken the Indonesian political scene, discussion of the relation and affinity between Islam and the state once again came to the fore. The controversy surrounding ICMI's establishment revolved around two basic questions, namely, whether it was a political maneuver by the New Order government, or a true manifestation of the Muslim community's aspirations. The resulting situation prompted a large number of responses from people of various backgrounds. Support, opposition and neutrality towards ICMI arose during its five year existence (1990-1995). These responses took cognizance of the hidden motives behind the New Order's political support of the organization, as well as the government's new appreciation and accommodation of Islam and Muslim demands.

The present thesis will thus note, evaluate and analyze these responses in light of the specific context surrounding ICMI's establishment, as well as the numerous analyses extended by various political observers. The thesis will also seek to explain why ICMI became a phenomenon welcomed by most Indonesian Muslims.

RÉSUMÉ

Auteur	: Fuadi Mardatillah
Titre du mémoire	: Les réponses intellectuelles à l'établissement du Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia.
Département	: Institut des Études Islamiques
Diplôme	: Maîtrise ès Arts

Depuis la création, le 6 décembre 1990, du Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (ICMI, Association Intellectuelle Musulmane Indonésienne), un évènement qui a bouleversé la scène politique indonésienne, les discussions portant sur les relations et les affinités entre l'Islam et l'état sont à nouveau mises de l'avant. La controverse entourant la création du ICMI s'est développée à partir de deux questions fondamentales, c'est-à-dire si c'était une manœuvre orchestrée par le gouvernement de l'Ordre Nouveau ou encore une manifestation authentique des aspirations de la communauté musulmane. Le résultat de cette situation a suscité un nombre important de réponses diverses de la part d'individus issus de divers milieux. Le soutien, l'opposition et la neutralité à l'égard de l'ICMI a surgi pendant ses cinq années d'existence. De ces réponses, ont pu être perçus des motifs cachés derrière le soutien politique de l'organisation par l'Ordre Nouveau de même que les considérations et les compromis du gouvernement à l'égard de l'Islam et des revendications musulmanes.

Ce présent mémoire va donc noter, évaluer et analyser ces réponses en considérant le contexte spécifique entourant la création du ICMI, de même que les nombreuses analyses élaborées par les observateurs politiques. Ce mémoire va aussi tenter

d'expliquer pourquoi le ICMI est devenu un phénomène bien accueilli par la plupart des musulmans indonésiens.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alḥamdulillah, my boundless thanks go to the Omniscient and the Omnipotent God who is the Creator of all beings. Without the guidance, help, power and health continuously bestowed upon me by Him, this thesis would never have existed. Greetings and praise are also due to the Holy Prophets, who were selected by the Lord for the guidance of humankind, especially the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad (pbuh), his successors and the guardians of the humane school of Islam.

In principle, it is true that every work of scholarship is actually the product of many people's efforts, whether they had been directly or indirectly involved in the process. My thesis has of course benefited from the generosity of many people, whose assistance, criticism, advice and moral support have made it a reality. Alas, it would be impossible for me to mention everyone by name.

However, I would like express my deep gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Professor Howard M. Federspiel, who has offered helpful materials for my study, and supervised and criticized my thesis with patience and erudition. My sincere thanks also go to my academic advisor, Professor Eric L. Ormsby, who has kindly given me academic advice during my two years of study at the Institute. Further, I would like to thank Drs. H. Abdul Fattah, the former rector of IAIN Arraniry (Banda Aceh, Indonesia), who generously provided me with material and spiritual support. I also wish to extend my thanks to Dr. H. Safwan Idris, MA, the present rector of IAIN Arraniry.

Special thanks are also due to Professor A. Uner Turgay, Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, who is very generous with his time, academic

advice and close attention. My best friends Bang Iwan Basri and Qusyain Ali, Amirul Hadi, Hamdiah Lathif, Syarwan Ahmad and my roommate Suprayetno Wagiman and Iskandar Arnel, must also be mentioned here for the great support they offered me.

I am also indebted to the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs (Mora) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), in particular to its staff Wendy Allen, Joanna Gacek, Lorry Novak, and Suzy Riccardelli, for the scholarship I received to study at McGill University. My thanks also go to Salwa Ferahan and Wayne St. Thomas of the Islamic Studies Library for their help. Special thanks go to my friends: Yasmine Badr, Reem Meshal, Asaad Shaker and Paula Jolin, who have greatly helped me in editing my thesis.

Finally, this thesis could not have been completed without the consistent moral support of my loving wife, Mursyidah Manaf, her love, patience, encouragement, and willingness to look after our four beloved children: Faḥḥul Izzatillāh; Muḥammad Alṭaf Waliyul Islam; Muḥammad Rauṣanfikra Mujāhidillāh; and Birrul Aufā Inayātillāh, during my two years of study in Montreal, Canada.

Montreal, May, 1997

FM

TRANSLITERATION

The system of transliteration of Arabic words and names applied in this thesis is that used by the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. Indoneian terms are written according to Ejaan Baru Yang Disempurnakan (EYD), but personal names and the titles of books and articles are rendered according to the original spellings.

ب = b	ذ = dh	ط = ṭ	ل = l
ت = t	ر = r	ظ = ṣ	م = m
ث = th	ز = z	ع = ʿ	ن = n
ج = j	س = s	غ = gh	و = w
ح = ḥ	ش = sh	ف = f	ه = h
خ = kh	ص = ṣ	ق = q	ء = ʾ
د = d	ض = ḍ	ك = k	ي = y

Short vowels : َ = a, fatḥah; ِ = i, kasrah; ُ = u, damma

Long vowels : َ, ِ, ُ = ā; ِ = ī; ُ = u

Diphthongs : َ = ay; ُ = au

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Introduction

The Muslim consciousness of the universal scope of their religion, of Islam as a link between thought and action, has reached a point of crisis. This is particularly true in Muslim Intellectual thinking which has not promoted coherent practice and interpretation of clearly enunciated principles of religion. Moreover, the historical and political events that had led to the decline of Muslim consciousness of Islam as an ideology were accompanied by an intellectual crisis signified by the failure of Muslim Intellectuals to revive and reinterpret the ideological thought of the Qur'ān. This failure may be due to the unique structure of the Qur'ān, which is not revealed in the form of a ready-made theory and does not contain thematically organized ideas, methodologies and concepts. Nonetheless, it is through the Qur'ān's unique structure that Islam has become a dynamic entity, engendering a variety of interpretations in both its theoretical and practical levels.

Consequently, one can infer that the most unique characteristic of Islam is its dynamism and ability to adapt to the vagaries of time and space. Indeed, the main Islamic textual source, the Qur'ān, offers its interpreters a plethora of interpretations, which not only ensure the continuing vitality and adaptability of Islam, but tackle individual and social problems as well. Hence, this dynamic principle can be regarded as a major element in the continuing popularity and dissemination of Islam. Another aspect of Islam's dynamism is the revivalist movement gripping many parts of the Muslim world. This phenomenon rose as a counter measure to the dissemination of what some people regarded as alien values. Indeed, many revivalists wanted to purge Islam of

these alien values, to restore the faith to its pristine purity and to reinforce religion in people's lives, including matters relating to rulership and governance.

In the case of Indonesia, the dynamism and role of Islam become major issues in the interaction between the State and Islam (Muslims). Moreover, the discussion of Islam's role in the state affairs has become an extremely delicate and controversial issue. This was recently revealed when an Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI) was founded. Since its establishment, on December 6, 1990, ICMI has become the subject of heated topic of debates among Indonesian politicians and intellectuals alike. These debates were partly fueled by the fact that ICMI is the only major Islamic organization to be established during and highly supported by President Soeharto's New Order regime. Hence given its connection to President Soeharto, it is now commonly said that nearly all political events occurring in Indonesia at present are in some ways connected to ICMI, even though the main purpose of its formation, as acclaimed by its members and stipulated in its statutes, is far from political. Consequently, one can argue that the establishment of this Muslim organization and the government support it enjoys, is a new phenomenon in the history of Islamic movements in Indonesia, particularly during the New Order government. Indeed, ICMI is the first organization in the history of Indonesian Islam in which Muslim Intellectuals, of various backgrounds, are not only united under the banner of a single organization, but enjoy the support and blessing of the government as well.

In Freidrich Hegel's perspective, "idea" underlies every reality created by human decision, after which actions are stipulated. Accordingly, one will have to assume that the establishment of ICMI must have been based on certain ideas present in the minds of

Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals for a long time. Assuming this, the writer, in chapter one, will examine the historical reckoning and analysis that the Muslim Intellectuals have undertaken as they strove to establish a single formal organization, and to set a pattern of interaction with the government, whose attitude and policies towards Islam have been crucial to the struggle of Muslim Intellectuals, particularly since the New Order's ascendancy to power.

Although the establishment of ICMI is not the final form of the struggle of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals, the rise and fall of Muslim Intellectuals in their historical struggle to establish an organization has for the moment succeeded in gaining government support. Nevertheless, the support and blessing of the Indonesian government bestowed on Muslim Intellectuals was not the only factor contributing to the establishment of ICMI. Related to this assumption, in chapter two, the writer will discuss some contextual backgrounds and a variety of factors related to the genesis of ICMI.

In chapter three, the writer will deal with the reactions and responses that ICMI has engendered during its short existence (1990-1995). As such, this chapter will analyze these various responses and will classify them into three categories: those in support of ICMI, those opposed to it, and those holding a neutral position. Finally, based on this survey, the writer will attempt to draw a number conclusions evaluating the ICMI phenomenon in contemporary Indonesian Muslim society.

Chapter One

Indonesian Islam Under The New Order : The Paradigmatic Transformation of the Muslim Intellectuals' Modes of Struggle

Soon after the occurrence of the Communist's bloody, abortive coup attempt on September 30, 1965,¹ in which six prominent generals² of the Indonesian army were assassinated, a new ruling elite began to take control of the Indonesian government which exhibited a "new mental outlook."³ The emergence of this new ruling elite came at a time of great political upheaval, characterized by widespread social and political

¹ For further information on the attempt to overthrow the Indonesian legal government committed by PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia or Indonesian Communist Party) during Soekarno's Guided Democracy era, see for example, the following references: Arnold C. Brackman, *The Communist Collapse in Indonesia* (New York: W.W Norton & Co, 1969); Michael van Langenberg, *The September 30th Movement, The Contradictions*, Sydney University, Department of Indonesian and Malayan Studies, B.A. Honor Thesis, 1967; Harold Crouch, "Another Look at the Indonesian Coup" *Indonesia*, no. 15, (April, 1973), pp.1-26; Donald Hindley, "Political Power and the October 1965 Coup in Indonesia," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XXVI, no. 2 (February, 1967), pp. 237-249; Daniel S. Lev, "Indonesia 1965: The Year of the Coup," *Asian Survey*, vol. VI, no. 2 (February, 1965), pp. 103-110. Other interpretations of the coup attempt are found in Benedict Anderson and Ruth McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1971). For the Indonesian Armed Forces' version, see Nugroho Notosussanto and Ismael Saleh, *The Coup Attempt of the September 30th Movement in Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Pembimbing Masa, 1968).

² For information on the six assassinated generals of the Indonesian army, see, for example, Bernard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*, trans. by P.S Falla (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1971), p. 228; See also Nawaz B. Mody, *Indonesia Under Soeharto*, (New York: APT Book Inc., 1987), pp. 6-8.

³ The term "new mental outlook" was used to depict the new perspective applied by the emerging New Order government led by General Soeharto in his attempt to restore and rescue the country by correcting all the errors and distortions of the 1945 Constitution (UUD 45) and the Pancasila, which were committed by Soekarno Regime. See for example, Miftah Wirahadikusumah, *The Rise and Development of the Indonesian New Order regime*, unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, the University of Hawaii, 1990, p.12.

killings.⁴ General Soeharto⁵ emerged as “the new man of prowess,”⁶ who dramatically changed the context of the Indonesian political discourse, and channeled political power into the hands of the military which soon monopolized central political control and decision-making.⁷ This new outlook, which was then popularly called the “New Order” was in juxtaposition to the proceeding Soekarno period, known as the Old-Order era.⁸

Following this governmental takeover, the long range task of the new elite was to gather all legal powers into its hands and to focus them on remedying⁹ the many

⁴ Utrecht maintained that “...during the chaos which followed the coup the surviving part of the military leadership took the opportunity to butcher their arch-enemies, the Communists. About 500,000 ...communists, peasants, workers, schoolteachers, youth and women were mercilessly killed by the Army’s crack troops, RPKAD, and ...Moslem youths incited by landowners, businessmen and anti-Communist military like General Nasution and Sukendro. About 250,000 other innocent persons were arrested. Still the military is detaining without trial about 100,000 political prisoners in various prisons and concentration camps.” Ernst Utrecht, “Military Elite,” in Malcolm Caldwell, (Ed.), *Ten Years’ Military Terror in Indonesia*, (Nottingham: The Russell Press, Ltd., 1975), p. 43-44.

⁵ General Soeharto was born on June 8, 1921 at Kemusu, Argomulyo, Jogjakarta and began his career in the military service. He graduated from the Military Cadres School KNIL (*Koninkrijk Nederlandsch-Indische Leger or Royal Netherland’s East Indies Army*) in 1940. On May 1, 1963, Soeharto was appointed commander of the Jakarta -based Army Strategic Reserve Command (*Kostrad*). Following the communists’s aborted coup, Soeharto was chosen by Soekarno to receive the March 11 order which is popularly known as *Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*, and reckoned a remarkable success in restoring order and security. This success led to his promotion as a four-star general of the Indonesian army on July 1, 1966. He was then appointed acting President on February 22, 1967 and become President on March 27, 1968. For more information on Soeharto’s career, see O.G Roeder and Mahidin Mahmud, *Who’s Who in Indonesia*, (Singapore: Gunung Agung, 1980), pp.1-4.

⁶ N.G Schulte Nordholt, *State-Citizen Relations in Soeharto’s Indonesia*, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies: Occasional Paper no.26, (Townsville, Australia: James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987), p. 38.

⁷ See. Howard M. Federspiel, “The Indonesian Armed forces in Transition to Power, 1965-1966,” *Military Review*, p. 68.

⁸ See Miftah Wirahadikusuma, *Ibid*.

⁹ Many scholars maintained that the first important political strategy implemented by General Soeharto when he successfully seized power was his search for constitutional and

ills besetting the nation. These ills included political instability, economic collapse, and misuse of state doctrines such as the Pancasila concept and UUD 1945.¹⁰ The New Order publicly described itself as:

(a) An order of the state and nation which is based on the implementation of the Pancasila and the 1945 constitution in a pure and consistent manner; (b) an order that wishes to realize the ideals of independence, that is, a just and prosperous Indonesian society based on the Pancasila; (c) an order which wishes to establish the system of the state and society based on the constitution, democracy and law; (d) an order of constitution and order of development.¹¹

Prof. H.M. Federspiel believes that the most prominent characteristic of the New Order regime is its consistency with regard to its political orientation, as well as its steadfast methods in translating this orientation into action. According to him, there are five main characteristics that should be taken into account when describing the New Order's political system. *First*, it is a military-controlled political system, in which the former agency lays great stress on state internal security and domestic peace. *Second*, it is a political system that relies on the military for its development and maintenance. *Third*, it places the country's economic development in the hands of a group of respected technocrats. *Fourth*, the system has actively aimed for agricultural development leading to a food surplus and prosperous rural communities. *Fifth*, it insists on the recognition of a national philosophy called Pancasila (the five principles)

social legitimacy. For further information, see for example, N.G Schulte Nordholt, *State-Citizen Relations in Soeharto's Indonesia*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰ See Douglas Edwards Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 23-25.

¹¹ Faisal Ismail, *Islam, Politics and Ideology in Indonesia: A Study of the Process of Muslim Acceptance of the Pancasila*, Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Montreal: McGill University, 1995, p.115.

as the sole legitimate basis for all mass organizations and public activities in the country.¹²

Not surprisingly, state hegemony¹³ over civil society was energetically promoted by the New Order regime in order to safeguard the country's political order, stability, and national security. Liddle asserts that the New Order's State hegemony was applied through the idea of "bureaucratic populism", in which "hierarchy and deference" are legitimized as necessities of the State ideology *Pancasila*.¹⁴

At this point, however, one should mention (without plunging into a protracted essay on the New Order's political model), that several theoretical models have been applied to the New Order regime in order to describe and analyze its political nature. The nature of this regime had been described by Karl Jackson, for instance, as an example of a bureaucratic polity, in which the organization of the state and the control of particular offices are the key points of study.¹⁵ Dwight Y. King writes that many of

¹² Howard M. Federspiel, "Muslim Intellectuals and Indonesia's National Development," *Asian Survey*, vol. XXX, no. 3, March 1991, pp. 232-233.

¹³ Michael van Langenberg states in his article that in the New Order's state-system, which is a major facet of the political arena, the process of establishing state hegemony over civil society, private realms, and public spheres was constructed by using a substantial body of ideological formulations as its underpinnings. This state hegemony was "based on the notion: order, stability, and national security; inherent dangers within the body politic and civil society; material progress and modernization; constitutionalism and fetishism of law; sacral national philosophy and a corporate nationalism". "The New Order State: Language, Ideology, Hegemony" in Arief Budiman (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no. 22, (Glen Waverley, Australia: Aristoc Press, 1990), pp. 122-123. See also his notes no. 4, 5, 6.

¹⁴ See R. William Liddle, 'Soeharto's Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institution', *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 1985, 58 (1), pp. 68-90. These concepts were based on *Pancasila*'s philosophical values derived from the fourth principle of Pancasila: *Kerakyatan Yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmah Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan* [democracy guided by inner wisdom of deliberations of representatives].

the scholars who have examined Indonesian politics under the New Order have come to the conclusion that it fits the *neopatrimonial* model.¹⁶ The neo-patrimonial model addresses the issue of "patrons" and "clients" and how they affect the structure of government and society.

As for his own account, Dwight Y. King suggests another political model, the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian model, first described by Juan Linz.¹⁷ He states that:

The bureaucratic-authoritarian model postulates a distinct, modern, relatively stable pattern of political domination that emerges under certain historical, environmental, and political conditions and which has, by virtue of its structure and process, a remarkable capacity to maintain itself and control various potentially destabilizing pressures produced during modernization. ...Bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes deliberately cultivate a multiple legitimacy base--a calculated mixture of traditional, charismatic, legal and substantive--rational and technical efficiency principles.¹⁸

Whatever the model may be, one cannot help but notice that political patronage came to be a central theme in the New Order. Indeed, it is perceived as the cement

¹⁵ Bureaucratic polity refers to "the degree to which national decision-making is insulated from social and political forces outside the highest elite echelons of the capital city," See Karl D. Jackson, "Bureaucratic Polity: A theoretical Framework for Analysis of Power and Communications in Indonesia," Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pey, (eds.), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 3-22.

¹⁶ In his explanation, Dwight Y. King states that the neopatrimonial model accentuates "legitimacy, actual operating modes and administrative arrangements" which are in favor of giving incentives and rewards. See Dwight Y. King, "Indonesia's New Order as a Bureaucratic Polity, a Neopatrimonial Regime or a Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regime: What Differences Does It Make?, " in Benedict O'G Anderson and Audrey Kahin, (eds.), *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate*, Interim Reports series, no. 62, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, 1982), p.107.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.109, and for further reading on the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian model, see note 15 above.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.110.

which unites the political base of the regime; foreign loans are used for procuring and maintaining military and bureaucratic support through funds which supplement meager incomes.¹⁹

Since the early days of the New Order, the rise of military influence has been accompanied by firm policies that have had a negative impact on the fulfillment of Muslim political demands. This is unfortunate, all the more because it does not appear that the two groups were necessarily opposed to one another at the beginning of the New Order period. In fact there was a cooperative and candid relationship between Muslims and ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia or Indonesian Armed Forces), particularly, in their campaign to eradicate the Communist movement in Indonesia. Several organizations (in which Muslims formed a majority), such as KAMI²⁰ (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia or Action Front of Indonesian University Students), KAPPI (Kesatuan Aksi Pemuda Pelajar Indonesia or Action front of Indonesia Youths and students) and KAP Gestapu/PKI (Kesatuan Aksi Penggayaan Gestapu / PKI or Action Front for destroying the Gestapu / PKI) which were then

¹⁹ See Harold Crouch, "General and Business in Indonesia," *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 48:4 (1975-76), pp. 519-540, pp. 529-30; R. Robinson, "Culture, Politics and Economics in the Political History of the New Order," *Indonesia*, vol. 31 (April 1981), pp. 1-29. And also see, Julie Southwood and Patrick Flanagan, *Indonesia: Law, Propaganda, and Terror*, (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 58-60.

²⁰ For further information on KAMI, see, for example, Rosihan Anwar, "The Birth of KAMI," *Quadrant* (March-April 1967), pp. 55-60; Baladas Ghoshal, "Students and Politics in Indonesia: The Birth of KAMI," *China Report*, vol. 6, no. 5, (September-October 1970), pp. 39-47. Some of the Muslim leaders who played an important role in destroying the communist revolt were M. Zamroni, M. Husni Thamrin and H.M. Subchan Z E, those who led the KAMI, KAPPI and KAP Gestapu/PKI, respectively as cited in note no.14 of Faisal Ismail's unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, *Islam in Indonesian Politics*, McGill University, 1996, p.113.

collectively called the *Angkatan 66* (66 generations),²¹ worked closely with the military. Nevertheless, the good relation that existed between Muslims and the military government under the New Order regime was steadily eroded as a result of several harsh political actions taken against Islamic leaders and organizations. The first of these actions was the denial of the Muslim request to revive the Masyumi party.²² This decision was taken by government at the insistence of the military general officers corps. This army reaction was clearly outlined in a letter from General Soeharto, dated January 6, 1967, which stated that legally, constitutionally, and psychologically the Army had decided, after long deliberation, not to accept a rehabilitated Masyumi.²³ The rationale for this decision was that the revival of this party could not be permitted because many of its former members and leaders had participated in the rebellion and fought against the army. In truth, some Masyumi leaders, such as Syafruddin Prawiranegara, Mohammad Natsir and Burhanuddin Harahap, had indeed participated in the rebellion headed by the PRRI (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia or Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) in the late 1950's. Such

²¹ See Yozar Anwar, *Angkatan 66: Sebuah Catatan Harian Mahasiswa* [66 Generation: a Student Diary], (Jakarta: 1980).

²² See Affan Gaffar, "Politik Akomodasi: Islam dan Negara di Indonesia" (Accommodation Politics: Islam and State in Indonesia) in M. Imam Aziz et al, (eds.), *Agama, Demokrasi dan Keadilan* [Religion, Democracy and Justice], (Jakarta: Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993), pp. 102-103.

²³ See Nasir Tamara, "Islam Under the New Order: A Political History," *Prisma: The Indonesian Indicator*, 49 (June 1990), p. 11.

participation formed the main objection to Masyumi's revival.²⁴

In addition, the Army was very apprehensive and suspicious of the notion of an Islamic state and the ideological conflict that this notion triggers amongst Indonesian leaders.²⁵ This is not surprising considering the lively debates that had taken place since the early days of independence concerning the relationship between the State and Islam and the place of Islamic ideology in the Indonesian state.²⁶ Regarding this, Masyumi was seen as the carrier of Islamic ideology which the military wanted to exclude from political consideration.

Also, the initiative to re-establish the PII (Partai Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Islamic Party), which was first established by Muhammadiyah leaders in 1938, as well as the effort of Mohammad Hatta--the first Indonesian Vice President, former revolutionary leader and prominent Indonesian nationalist--to establish the PDII (Partai Demokrasi Islam Indonesia or Indonesia Islamic Democratic Party) was stopped by the government, even though it did not give clear reasons for its action.²⁷ However, the reason for the refusing the revival of Masyumi, as issued by the

²⁴ See Mohammad Kamal Hassan, *Contemporary Muslim Religio-Political Thought in Indonesia: The Response to New Order Modernization*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1975), p. 64.

²⁵ Allan A. Samson, "Islam Indonesia Sejak Orde Baru" [Indonesian Islam during the New Order] in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, Yasmin Hussain, (eds.), *Islam di Asian Tenggara: Perkembangan Kontemporer* [Islam in Southeast Asia: The Contemporary Development], (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi-Sosial, LP3ES, 1990), p. 71.

²⁶ Zifirdaus Adnan, "Islamic Religion: Yes, Islamic (Political) Ideology: No!, Islam and the State in Indonesia" in Arief Budiman, (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, p. 441.

²⁷ Mohammad Hatta, *Bung Hatta's Answers*, interviews with Z. Yasni (Singapore: Gunung Agung, 1981), p.159.

government on December 21, 1966, was perceived to be very similar to the reason for banning the PKI, since both organizations were accused of contravening Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.²⁸

Presumably, both efforts were seen to be a mere reorganization of Masyumi followers under a different name but with a similar outlook and purpose. At the same time, another trend was emerging, that of political party simplification as put forward by the New Order government and approved by the Provisional Senate (Majlis). This simplification called for reducing the number of existing political parties to three by combining groups with similar political viewpoints and banning the creation of new parties. Under this plan, there was no room for establishing or reviving political organizations.²⁹ However, because of general Muslim dissatisfaction with the existing political parties and because the government hoped to gain Muslim support, the government hinted at the possibility of establishing another Islamic party.

In 1968, Muslim leaders tried to take the modest step of establishing a new Islamic party that would organize Muslim political activists, especially those who did not join the several Muslim parties already in existence, i.e., the NU (Nahdhatul Ulama or Renaissance of the Religious Scholars), PSII (Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia or the Indonesian Islam Union Party) and Perti (Persatuan Tarbiyatul Islamiyah or the Union of Islamic Education), on the grounds that existing parties did not represent all Muslim

²⁸ M. Sirajuddin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam: The Case of Muhammadiyah in Indonesia's New Order*, (Ph.D Dissertation, University of California, 1991), p. 51.

²⁹ Mohammad Hatta, p. 161.

factions and views.³⁰ Consequently, some moderate Islamic political leaders like E.Z. Muttaqien, Mrs. Syamsuridjal, Faqih Usman, Agus Sudono, Anwar Haryono, and Marzuki Yatim formed a committee, the goal of which was the creation of a new Islamic party. Later on, this committee successfully gave birth to a new Islamic party on February 20, 1968, which was popularly called PARMUSI³¹ (Partai Muslimin Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim's Party), with H. Djarnawi Hadikusumo as its temporary General-Chairman and Lukman Harun as its Secretary-General, both of whom were Muhammadiyah leaders.³² This party became the unifier of the Muslim ranks in the political arena; soon after its creation, all existing Islamic mass organizations joined the party.³³ However, the government did not allow the leaders of the old Masyumi to have any connection with this new Islamic party, even though some Masyumi circles had fully expected Parmusi to replace Masyumi in outlook, if not in name.³⁴ Due to this decision, many former Masyumi members were highly disappointed, recognizing that they were to be permanently excluded from legitimate political activities.

³⁰ Affan Gaffar, "Politik Akomodasi," p.102.

³¹ For more information on the foundation of Parmusi, see K.E.Ward, *The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia*, (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970).

³² See Faisal Ismail, *Islam in Indonesian Politics*, p. 131.

³³ The Islamic mass organizations which joined Parmusi were *Muhammadiyah*, *Jamiatul Wasliyah*, *Gabungan Serikat Buruh Islam Indonesia (GASBIINDO)*, *Persatuan Islam (PERSIS)*, *Nahdlatul Wathan*, *Matla'ul Anwar*, *Serikat Nelayan Islam Indonesia (SNII)*, *Kongres Buruh Islam Merdeka (KBIM)*, *Persatuan Umat Islam (PUT)*, *Al-Itihadiyah*, *Persatuan Guru Agama Islam RI (PGAIR)*, *Himpunan Seni Budaya Islam (HSBI)*, *Persatuan Islam Tionghoa (PITI)*, *Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah* and *Wanita Islam*. See Rasyid Ridla Soelaiman, *Cacatan Kecil Jejak Putera Pesantren: Profil Ismail Hasan Meutareum, SH, Ketua Umum DPP PPP* [Tracing the Note of a Pesantren Student: the Profile of Ismail Hasan Meutareum, SH, the General Chairman of PPP], (Jakarta: NIAS, 1994), p. 40.

In a meeting with Prawoto Mangkusasmito, one of the top leaders of Masyumi, General Soeharto announced that no ex-Masyumi leader would be permitted to assume a leading position in the new party.³⁵ The government's determination in this stance was reinforced by its interference in the appointment of Mohammad Roem, a prominent and influential Masyumi leader, who had been elected as Parmusi's chairman, at Parmusi's first congress held in Malang from November 4-7, 1968. Upon the government's insistence, the organizers reluctantly agreed to replace Roem on the leadership slate.

This caused considerable turmoil at the congress meeting as delegates scrambled to find a last-minute replacement. After considerable political in-fighting, the congress decided to reappoint Djarnawi Hadikusumo and Lukman Harun as the party's chairman and secretary, respectively.³⁶ However, during the following years, neither could retain the government's support because neither proved capable of establishing rapport with government leaders. As a result, the government tried to replace them with Jaelani Naro and Imran Kadir as the party chairman and secretary, but they were not accepted by Hadikusumo and Harun. Not surprisingly, a great deal of confusion and side-taking ensued within the party, a result which might have been the aim of the government all along, in order to cause the party to become progressively weak and inefficient. Ultimately, the government rejected both Hadikusumo and Naro as the party's leaders.

³⁴ See B. J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), p. 152; also Tamara, p. 11.

³⁵ Agus Basri, Siti Nurbaiti, and Ardian Taufiq Gesturi, "Pasang Surut Hubungan Islam-Beringin" [The Rise and Fall the Relation between Islam and Beringin], *Tempo*, 21 September 1991, pp. 23-24.

³⁶ Faisal Ismail, *Islam in Indonesian Politics*, p. 132.

Moreover, through its decision no.77/1970 of November 20, 1970, the government decided to appoint H.M.S Mintareja, a politically moderate leader from Muhammadiyah, as Parmusi's new Chairman.³⁷ Mintareja was seen by the government as more compatible with its own interests.

Such political action, taken in the early days of the New Order's ascension to power, set the tone for the New Order's attitude towards Islam. It illustrated the government's resolve to maintain strict control over political Islam, at a time when Muslim political activists attempted to regain their political position after losing most of their strength in the previous era of Guided Democracy. This resulted in political tension between Muslims and the New Order Government. That Muslim party activists were not acceptable to the government, may be seen in its appointments of people it approved of position to policy positions. As a result, not a single forum working on behalf of Muslims succeeded in gaining access to a political decision-making position. Considering the sizable population Muslim parties represented, this failure to draw on Muslim activists shows strong government aversion.

Muhammad Kamal Hassan asserts that as early as 1968, "Muslim leaders and political parties became...aware...that they were not to be accepted as partners...and that a politically powerful Islam was to have no place in the new political system of Pancasila democracy."³⁸ Another observer, Ahmaddan Martha, the West Java HMI

³⁷ Rusli Karim, *Perjalanan Partai Politik di Indonesia: Sebuah Potret Pasang Surut* [The Journey of Indonesian Political Parties: A Picture of Its Fall], (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 1983), p. 158.

³⁸ Muhammad Kamal Hassan, *Muslim Intellectual Response to "New Order" Modernization in Indonesia*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1982), p. 44.

leader, "lamented...that the formation of a political party had required the promulgation of a presidential decision, which he felt would produce a moral commitment between the party and the government."³⁹ Similarly, Ajip Rosyidi, a senior Indonesian journalist, argued that "the party had been set up to serve the interests of the government rather than to fulfill the needs of the Islamic community."⁴⁰

The government, nevertheless, persisted in this course. Two years after the first general election under the New Order (1971), the government implemented a new policy of political restructuring that forced all Islamic political parties into a single party. The PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or The Development Unity Party) came into existence on January 5, 1973, the result of the amalgamation of four Islamic parties, namely the NU, PSII, Perti, and Parmusi. Given the government's efforts to push political Islam to the sidelines, the move may be seen as a deliberate, forceful fusion to create a state of perpetual conflict within the party itself, thereby hindering party efficiency and limiting its appeal to potential supporters.

Before this amalgamation effort, the government had also implemented the "floating mass" policy, through which political parties were not allowed to carry out activities at the village level, hence denying political parties the right to reach a very important electoral group and limiting their campaign to the urban population. This was particularly disadvantageous to NU and Perti which enjoyed wide audiences among the rural population. This strategy seemed to aim at separating many Muslims from the

³⁹ See K.E. Ward, *Foundation*, p. 40.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Islamic political parties, thereby avoiding the direct political participation of people at the grass-roots level, except during a very limited period during the days of the election campaigns.⁴¹ This strategy also served to weed out Muslim society from the Islamic political party, hence severing the Islamic emotional ties.⁴² The government, however, stated that the implementation of this *floating mass* policy was connected to its effort to promote a new Indonesian *civic polity*.⁴³ Under this concept, ideological conflict among the people was to be overcome and national development plans stressed.

In a number of further developments, the conflicts and tensions between Islam and the New Order Government continued. For example, in the 1977 general election campaign, the issues of corruption, violence, intimidation, and abuse of official power

⁴¹ Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics under Soeharto: Order, Development and Pressure for Change*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 103.

⁴² Douglas E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia*, p. 29.

⁴³ The reason given by the New Order government for refusing to recognize an Islamic ideology as *civic polity* is merely that such a policy would consequently promote societal supremacy over the state, causing the state to lose its power to control the civil society. According to the government, this societal supremacy should be prevented from becoming a reality in order to avoid the emergence of a perpetual ideological conflict that might destroy and obstruct national development as had been planned by the New Order government. Henceforth, the *floating mass* policy was the only alternative to correct this tendency. As a result, the government would automatically be empowered and would create a *bureaucratic polity* that would place a great emphasis on the autonomy of the government (the state), free from societal constraints. This authoritative power would be useful in safeguarding the undertakings of the government's development programs. It is worth noting that many Western scholars regarded negatively the New Order's bureaucratic polity *vis a vis* civic polity, because it centralized power in the hands of the elite of bureaucracy and excluded societal interests. Nevertheless, since Indonesian society that had long been trapped in ideological-political conflict, the New Order's efforts to diminish it could be seen as a very positive development. According to Daniel Bell, any nation trapped in ideological conflict will never accomplish very much. As such, the program of economic development launched by New Order through depoliticizing the Indonesian community can be regarded as the right policy. For further reading about the success of Western countries in their economic development as a result of the end of ideological conflicts, see, Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, (New York: The Free Press, [revised edition], 1962), pp. 393-407.

by the government and the government party (Golkar)⁴⁴ were adopted by the PPP as a campaign strategy. The government, however, believed that this campaign was grossly inaccurate and crossed the normal boundaries of political discourse. It charged the PPP with harming national unity.⁴⁵ On its part, the government accused the PPP of receiving financial aid from Libya, and implied PPP involvement in an anti-government terrorist movement known as the Komando Jihad.⁴⁶ After the election, the PPP charged that some of its 2-3 million votes in East Java were lost because of manipulation and malpractice in the electoral stations.⁴⁷ In relation to the 1977 general election, W. Liddle observed that the events of this general election show deep division between the government and Islam, since each tried to destroy the credibility of the other.⁴⁸ During the same period, an indoctrination program was begun by government called the *P4* (Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila, or Ekaprasetia Pancakarsa, or The

⁴⁴ Golkar is an organization which was established on October 20, 1964 by the military with the aim of counterbalancing the strength of the PKI and its affiliates by marshaling the forces of the Islamic groups, students, intellectuals and other anti-Communist groups. Since the New Order came to power, Golkar has become the government party and has always won the general election with a wide majority. For further information on Golkar, see for example, David Reeve, *Golkar of Indonesia: An Alternative to the Party System*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985). And also his article, "The Corporatist State: the Case of Golkar" in Arief Budiman (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no. 22, pp. 151-176.

⁴⁵ M. Sirajudin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam: the Case of Muhammadiyah in Indonesia's New Order*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1991), p. 96.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Deliar Noer, "Contemporary Political Dimension of Islam," in M.B. Hooker, (ed.), *Islam in Southeast Asia*, (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), p. 194.

⁴⁸ R. William Liddle, "Indonesian 1977: the New Order's Second Parliamentary Election," *Asian Survey*, vol.18, no. 2, (February 1978), pp. 180-181.

Guidance For the Internalization and Actualization of Pancasila)⁴⁹ which emphasized the importance of Pancasila as the foundation of the state. This was widely seen as an effort to counterbalance the Islamic ideology promoted by the Islamic-based political parties and Muslim political activists.⁵⁰ Similarly, the government's proposal to give *Aliran Kepercayaan*,⁵¹ or the mystical groups of Java, official status was opposed by Muslim leaders, who saw the latter as nominal Muslims; any attempt to create a "new religion" or offer special protective status that would harm Muslim *dakwah* efforts was

⁴⁹ Through enactment No:II/MPR/1978, the proposal of P4 was legally approved by MPR as a national guide for the internalization and actualization of Pancasila. Since then, every civil servant must take a P4 upgrading course (*penataran*). And since 1980, every university student is also required to take that P4 upgrading course. For further explanation on P4, see, for example, Drs. John Surjadi Hartanto, *Memahami UUD 45, P4, GBHN 1993-1998, WASKAT* [Understanding UUD45, P4, GBHN 1993-1998, WASKAT], (Surabaya: Penerbit Indah, 1994), pp. 51-66.

According to Michel Morfit, the government has an explicit intention in applying the P4 course and stressing the need for all civil servants to undergo P4, which is used as a means to explain the government Development Plan. It hopes that through such a P4 course, "they (those who undergo the P4 course) will become motivated to implement and administer those programs with greater commitment and enthusiasm." See Michel Morfit, "Pancasila: the Indonesian State Ideology According to the New Order Government," in *Asian Survey*, vol. 21, no. 8, (August 1981), p. 845. On the other hand, Watson insisted that in applying P4 there was a "tactical maneuver adopted by government to deal with mounting criticism. ... P4 with its call to self-restraint and its appeal to work for the good of society. At its best, is only to be seen as an attempt to prick the conscience of public officials, rather than a grandiose scheme for moral regeneration." See C.W. Watson, "P4: The Resurrection of a National Ideology in Indonesia," in his *State and Society in Indonesia: Three Papers*, (Canterbury: Center of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Kent, 1987), p. 48.

⁵⁰ Leo Suryadinata, *Military Ascendancy and Political Culture: A Study of Indonesia's Golkar*, (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1989), p. 105.

⁵¹ In the past, the "Aliran Kepercayaan" (a Javanese mystical belief that actually emanated from "animism" and "dynamism") has always been trying to acquire a formal legal status from the government, and has demanded equality with other government-recognized religions. Hence, when the government tried to legalize it, making it equal with the *Aliran Kepercayaan*, Muslims protested. In this regard, see, for example, Drs. Abd. Mutholib Ilyas and Drs. Abd. Ghofur Imam, *Kepercayaan & Kebatinan di Indonesia* [Mystical Belief and Spiritualism in Indonesia], (Surabaya: CV.Amin Surabaya, 1988); See also Wayan Supartha, (ed.), *Memahami Aliran Kepercayaan* [Understanding the Mystical Belief], (Denpasar, Bali: Penerbit Bali Pos, 1994).

viewed as undermining future Muslim political effort.⁵² However, Muslims lost on this one, as GBHN (Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara, or Broad Outlines of State Policies) was officially recognized through Enactment no. IV/MPR/MPR/1978.⁵³

Thus, a review of past actions demonstrates that the New Order allowed political Islamic activity to take place only on its own terms. Muslim political strength has been systematically sapped by government regulations and interference leading to a long-range political loss and atrophy.⁵⁴ Outside the political arena, the New Order government also struck at certain institutions of the Muslim community it found objectionable. There are three clear examples demonstrating the extent of the government's regulation. The first is the government's monopoly over the administration of the pilgrimage (*hajj*). This policy was seen by some observers like Deliar Noer⁵⁵ and Francois Raillon, as a continuation of Snouck Hurgronje's views on the regulation of important Muslim institutions that could involve promotion of

⁵² See Faisal Ismail, *Islam in Indonesian Politics*, pp. 163-168.

⁵³ Team Pembinaan Penatar dan Badan Penataran Pegawai Republik Indonesia, *Undang-Undang Dasar, Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila dan Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara* [Constitution, Internalization of Pancasila, and State General Guideline], (Jakarta: Sekretariat Team Pembinaan Penatar dan Bahan Penataran Pegawai Republik Indonesia, 1978). In order to appease the Muslims, the government argues that the official recognition of *Aliran Kepercayaan* is merely an attempt to include it as part of the Indonesian culture and has nothing to do with religion, and hence was placed under the guidance of the Education and Culture Department, p. 77.

⁵⁴ Howard M. Federspiel, *Muslim Intellectuals and National Development in Indonesia*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc. Commack) , p. 79.

⁵⁵ For more details about the government's monopoly of the *Hajj* administration in both Soekarno and the early Soeharto years, see Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia*, Monograph Series no. 58, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1978), p. 64.

undesirable political attitudes.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, the validity of this political reasoning for the present situation in Indonesia needs further proof.⁵⁷ The government defends its monopoly by stating that operating such a system allows some funds to be used to build many mosques and other religious institutions throughout the country.⁵⁸

Second, the government is in control of a large number of Islamic schools (from madrasah to IAIN), and "together with other government bodies, it supervises the propagation of the faith (*dakwah*) and Friday sermons. It also filters foreign aid donated to Muslims from the Middle East."⁵⁹ Certainly, there are legitimate government interests here. For example, in education, the government is called for the orderly education of the country's youth,⁶⁰ especially in religious education which sometimes

⁵⁶ Francois Raillon, "The New Order and Islam, Or the Imbrolio of Faith and Politics" in *Indonesia*, no.57, (April 1993), p. 205. It was also published in French version in *Archipel*, 30 (1985), pp. 229-261.

⁵⁷ In the colonial era, the pilgrimage taken by Indonesian Muslims not only had a ritual significance, but was used for making contact with Muslims from other countries and for gaining new ideas from the various sources in the Holy Land. This attitude influenced their way of thinking after they returned to Indonesia. Actually, during the Dutch colonialization period, many of those who led the rebellion against the Dutch were *Hajjs*. Deliar Noer maintained that "the *Hajj* was always viewed with suspicion by the Dutch. This attitude justified sending Snouck Hurgronje to Mecca in the 1880s. His task had been to investigate the activities of pilgrims as well as to find out what the influences they were exposed to in the Holy Land." See Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam*, p.64 and see especially Chapter Four. The political content of the *Hajj* is, however, no longer relevant to the present Indonesia, because of the changed conditions. See also, Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 757.

⁵⁸ Deliar Noer, *Administration*, *Ibid*.

⁵⁹ Francois Raillon, "The New Order and Islam," *Ibid*.

⁶⁰ The government administrative policy towards the religious education system has, in fact, increased the productive capacities of its graduates. Noer states that "the Ministry of Religion, especially since the appointment of Abdul Mukti Ali as minister, has introduced

engender radical or fundamentalist tendencies that may affect national security. Moreover, the government's overseeing of *dakwah* and Friday sermons was implemented only for a limited time when many preachers used those devices for raising political issues which attacked the government.

The third manifestation of state control over Islam is the establishment of the *Ulama's* Council of Indonesia (Majlis Ulama Indonesia, MUI). This institution is regarded as the government's instrument for influencing the Muslim perception of its policy and demonstrating their compatibility with standard Islamic doctrines.⁶¹ This policy of co-optation is reasonable if we see the important role played by the ulama in Indonesian society in engineering the social transformation, and forming public opinion and acceptance, especially in cases related to religious values.⁶² With regard to the significant role played by the ulama, the former minister of religious affairs, Alamsyah Ratuprawiranegara, maintained that the "ulama should understand government programs and should not always take the role of opposition (to the government), but that they should work to make government programs successful for the sake of the Muslim community."⁶³

instruction in handicrafts and various other economically productive skills into the curriculum of the religious school in order that students receive systematic training in these subjects." See, Noer, *Administration of Islam*, p. 41.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² For further reading on the role of the Ulama in Indonesia, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Indonesia's Ulama and Politics: Caught Between Legitimizing the Status Quo and Searching for Alternatives," *Prisma*, no. 49 (June 1990), pp. 52-82. See also Fachry Ali, "Pasang Surut Peran Politik Ulama, Sebuah Kerangka Hipotesis Struktural" [The Rise and Fall of the Ulama's Political Role, a Structural Hypothesis], *Prisma*, no. 4, 1984.

⁶³ Noer, *Administration of Islam*, p. 72.

Consequently, this political attitude caused some prominent Muslim Intellectuals to look for alternatives beyond the political arena in order to allow Islam an important role in society. Certainly, many Muslim activists wished for a political role and hoped to compete electorally through a Muslim political party. There are at the same time many Muslims leaders who believe that this issue is no longer relevant and that Muslims are better off not competing politically.⁶⁴

Bearing in mind the New Order's uncompromising attitude towards political Islam, Muslim intellectuals directed their efforts towards the socio-cultural sphere. This involved a flexible and pragmatic philosophy,⁶⁵ wherein Muslim Intellectuals would henceforth promote national development in accordance with government policies; particularly since several government spokesmen called upon Muslim Intellectuals to "support the government's policy of economic development, take a leading role in activism to set an example, and develop Islamic institutions compatible with national development."⁶⁶

Moving on from the thoughts expressed above, three further points should be emphasized when describing the relationship between Islam and the national state in Indonesia. *The first* is the existence of a wide variety of opinions among devout Muslims as to what an "Islamic state" is and what its historical roots are. It is essential to comprehend these opinions if we are to appreciate the political diversity emanating

⁶⁴ Howard M. Federspiel, *Muslim Intellectual..*, p. 79.

⁶⁵ See Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics under Soeharto: Order, Development and Pressure for Change*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 129.

⁶⁶ Howard M. Federspiel, "Muslim Intellectuals and Indonesia's National Development, in *Asian Survey*, vol. XXX, no. 3, March 1991, p. 237.

from the various Islamic groups. *The second* is the way in which Islam manifests itself as an ideology,⁶⁷ and is shaped by concrete socio-cultural and political demands in a given historical condition. Throughout Islamic history, different situations have given rise to different ideological responses. The expression of Islamic ideology will not be equally applicable to every situation, if there is a significant change in the socio-political setting confronted by Muslims. *The third* point is the importance of Pancasila, the avowed state ideology of Indonesia, which has not always been interpreted or expressed in the same way. It can be argued that the greater religious emphasis of the New Order's interpretation is a key factor contributing to the present relatively amiable relationship between Islam and the state, allowing for the ideological demands of the Islamic groups to be, to a certain degree, accommodated.

During the 1980s, an intellectual debate concerning the relationship between Islam, the nation-state, and Pancasila, became the main concern of Muslim Intellectuals. It was valued because it identified the commitment of Muslim Intellectuals and underlined their loyalty and support of government policies. It also clarified the position of Islam in the Pancasila State. This is understandable considering that during the 1980s, the Soeharto government and military forces were still suspicious of Muslim ideological demands, and the idea of establishing an Islamic state forced Soeharto both to become wary of ideologically-oriented political movements and to reduce, as much

⁶⁷ *Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary* defines "ideology" as "The ideas or kinds of thinking characteristic of an individual or group: specifically, the ideas and objectives that influence a whole group or national culture, shaping especially their political and social procedure." (*Webster Comprehensive Dictionary*, Ferguson Publishing Company, Chicago, 1984, p. 627). But here, ideology means placing Islam not merely as a religion, but also as a corpus containing ideas and concepts through which state politics can be administered.

as possible, the power of the Islamic political entity, which was perceived as a threat to Pancasila as the sole basis of Indonesian state ideology.⁶⁸ The actions of the government mentioned here were as a result of various Muslim political events which occurred in the 1980s and which were considered fundamentalist in nature and, therefore, posing a serious threat to national stability.⁶⁹

Not surprisingly, a number of Muslim Intellectuals at the time became immersed in creative and critical discussions on the understanding of Islam's essential teachings with respect to politics, and how this discourse could be related to the Indonesian nation-state and Pancasila, in particular. A case in point is Nurcholis Madjid's declaration, in a series of succinct remarks concerning the reciprocal relationship between Islam and the nation-state. He holds that the values of the state and government, from an Islamic perspective, lie in their function as mere instruments and entities providing the space and time for performing and developing human piety towards God (*taqwa*). He bases his entire argument on ethical values, and seems to suggest that, if one completely performs the ethical values that spring from *Taqwa* and *Tauhid*, these values will necessarily result in or reflect a democratic attitude.⁷⁰ To support his assertion, Madjid portrays the Prophet SAW and his companion (Umar Ibn al-Khattab, ra) as the best exemplars of an ethical society, one that is highly influenced

⁶⁸ M. Syafii Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia: Sebuah Kajian Politik tentang Cendekiawan Muslim Orde Baru* [The Thought and Action of Indonesian Islam: a Political Analysis of Muslim Intellectuals in the New Order Era], (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995), p.185.

⁶⁹ Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s*, (Boulder, San Fransisco: Westview Press, 1994), p. 173.

⁷⁰ M. Syafii Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi*, p. 186.

and inspired by religious values. Madjid asserts that, in such a society, both the Prophet and Umar Ibn al-Khattab were able to implement the principles of *shura* (consultation) in both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities.⁷¹

Furthermore, Nurcholis Madjid further argues that what is referred to as an "Islamic State" has never actually existed in Islamic history, as witnessed by the burial of the Prophet which took place a full three days after his death; such a delay, he points out, indicates the confusion that occurred after the Prophet's death, the poor handling of the transfer of power and the difficulty with the issue of succession. This not only proves that the succession process was ill-defined, but also that state affairs were not an integral part of Islamic dictums. Madjid concludes that the idea of an Islamic state is just an apologetic notion that was often brought forward by Muslim political activists.⁷² Given this historical fact, Nurcholis Madjid tries to shift Muslim political thought away from focus on the ideal of an Islamic state, which, he states, does not exist in the ideal texts (Qur'ān and Ḥadith).

Citing the Quranic verse: "...*wa ja'alnākum shu'ūban wa qabā'ila lita'ārafu*...(and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may despise each other...),"⁷³ Nurcholis Madjid contends that the sense of nationalism is a phenomena that can not be denied amongst the ties binding the human family. It is true in nature and, therefore, it would not be inappropriate to base the state on the spirit of nationalism. The most

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² See, *Tempo*, December 29, 1984.

⁷³ QS. 49:13.

important point that every Muslim must take into account is how human beings can become acquainted without falling prey to chauvinistic and fascist ideologies. Accordingly, Muslims must not require the state or the government to be based on the *Shari'a*: since any national state is acceptable, whatever the form of the state may be, as long as its values and practices are in accord with Islamic teachings.⁷⁴

Parallel to Nurcholis Madjid's opinion, Abdurrahman Wahid asserts that the idea of an Islamic state merely refers to the Law; indeed, the most important element of any state is the code of ethics which it fosters. He also adds that Islam has never known a definitive concept of the state. Succession, for instance, is a core issue for which Islam does not have a consistent method concerning its application. Similarly, Wahid states that Islamic governments have occasionally implemented the methods of *istikhlāf* (choosing a caliph or a deputy), *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) or *ahl-u 'l-halli wa 'l-aqdi* (the decision making body / people). He concludes, therefore, that Islam has no real concept of state.⁷⁵ In addition, he agrees that certain national horizons, within which certain political needs exist and which are supported by certain national ideologies, can be deemed acceptable in the light of Islamic perspective.⁷⁶

According to this viewpoint, Wahid seems to oppose the notion of the Islamic state that still exists in the minds of many Muslim political activists in Indonesia to the present day. His ideas might have also been stated to show the New Order government

⁷⁴ *Majalah Nuansa*, December 1984, p. 31.

⁷⁵ See, Abdurrahman Wahid's article, "Merumuskan Hubungan Ideology Nasional dan Agama" [The Formulation of the Relationship between the National Ideology and Religion], *Majalah Aula*, May 1985.

⁷⁶ Abdurrahman Wahid, "Islam dan Masyarakat Bangsa" [Islam and Nation Society], *Majalah Pesantren*, no. 3, vol. VI, 1989, pp. 10-11.

that not all Muslim spokesmen support the idea of an Islamic state; a notion that has always frightened the government.

Opposition to the idea of the Islamic state also emerged from the transformist thinker,⁷⁷ Dawam Rahardjo, whose concept, based on Qur'anic references, illustrates the model of an ideal society but not that of an ideal state. He contends that for an ideal society to exist, power must be used to ensure the implementation of Islamic values. 'Power' here is interpreted as the method of arriving at political decisions through the concepts of *shūra* (consensus) and *ta'awun* (cooperation), which require the societal support of the *ummah*, as well as freedom which is needed for the advancement of the individual and his attainment of devoutness (*taqwa*).⁷⁸ Moreover, based on this reasoning, he opposes the theory of an Islamic state, particularly the *khilafat*⁷⁹ system advocated by Abul 'ala al-Maududi.⁸⁰

Focusing on the relationship between Pancasila and Islam, some prominent Muslim Intellectuals have proposed a very sympathetic compromise, declaring that

⁷⁷ The term "transformist" proposes the idea that every segment of the doctrinal belief (i.e. *tauhid*) should be transformed into the daily life practices of the believer. With regards to this notion, he offers a new theological understanding called *transformative theology*. For further discussion on such a transformative theology, see M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Ummat Islam dan Pembaharuan Teologi" [Muslim Society and Transformative Theology], in Bosco Carvallo and Dasrizal, (eds.), *Aspirasi Ummat Islam* [Muslim Society's Aspiration], (Jakarta: Leppenas, 1993), pp. 118-119.

⁷⁸ M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Critical Islamic View of the State," *Mizan*, no. 2, vol. VIII, 1990, pp. 47-55.

⁷⁹ For an account of the issue of the *khilafat* nature, see Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁸⁰ M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Mencari Bentuk Negara Yang Emansipatoris" [Looking for Emansipatorist Type of State], *Nuansa*, December 1984, p. 77.

Pancasila is a concept that does not transgress Islamic teachings, in any way, and that it is even influenced by Islamic values.⁸¹ From the plethora of views expressed by Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals concerning the concept of the state in light of the Islamic perspective, one may conclude that their discourse is crucial in the Muslim Intellectuals' changing paradigm, whose broad aim is to diminish the historical rift between Muslims and the New Order government. Moreover, Muslim acceptance of Pancasila as the sole basis of the state illustrates that Muslim societies can no longer insist upon the notion of an Islamic state system as a supreme national authority. Not surprisingly, debates surrounding the social impact of development became the characteristic feature of Indonesian Muslims discourse during the 1980's which offered religious faith as a means of coping with economic hardship, and which may also be viewed as an attempt to weave religious principles into the technological era. While this movement stemmed from the Muslim Intellectuals' need to find a niche that would be acceptable to the state, pressure from within the Indonesian society was coincidentally forging new interest in religion.

Finally, the development of Muslim Intellectual thought during the 1980's can be clearly regarded, as having had a fruitful impact on Islam by ensuring its survival, success and adaptation to the New Order system. The intellectual boom experienced by Muslims has also enriched the forum for Islamic thought in Indonesia. Pioneered by a number of Muslim Intellectuals, who strove to escape from cultural stagnation and

⁸¹ For a variety of arguments on how some prominent Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals, such as Nurcholis Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, Dawam Rahardjo, M.Syafi'i Ma'arif look upon Pancasila, see for example, M.Syafii Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi..*, pp. 194-210.

political alienation, the Muslim community was driven to reformulate its ideological position in a creative effort to respond to the fundamental problems encountered by the Indonesian community in general. This engendered several currents of thought which represent different modes of understanding Islam. These modes reflect the effort exerted by Muslim Intellectuals to understand and re-interpret Islam in light of modern methods of scholarship, such as Nurcholis Madjid's notion of Islam as an "inclusive theology" and Dawam Rahardjo's articulation of Islam as a "transformative theology." Furthermore, Amien Rais speaks of the "Horizon of Islam," while Kuntowijoyo, through the "Islamic paradigm," promotes an understanding of Islam in its practical entity. Similarly, A. Syafi'i Maarif's "cultural Islamization" proposes a socio-cultural realm for Islam. These understandings of Islam have considerably influenced the government's view of Islam, in their promotion of Islam as a peaceful religion that is a necessary complement to modernity, and an integral and indispensable means by which to avoid the stressful psychological impacts caused by the modernization process.⁸²

To sum up, the very strict government attitude towards Muslims, especially political Islam, in the early years of New Order has considerably changed due to the success of the regime in curbing political Islam, the current sophisticated understanding of Islam among the Muslim community and the success of the state in promoting Pancasila as the sole basis for the Indonesian nation-state. Above all, the acceptance of Pancasila has suspended the Muslims' alleged demand for the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia, the most traumatic threat to the government.

⁸² M. Syafii Anwar, "Islam Bureaucracy and Social Political Convergence in the New Order," *Mizan*, Jakarta, vol. V, no. 2, (1992), p. 63.

Chapter Two

The Establishment of Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (The Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals' Association)

It is God, the Gracious, who has taught man the Qur'ān.
He has created man: He taught him speech and
intelligence.⁸³

“What is to be done?”⁸⁴ and “where shall we begin?”⁸⁵ may be regarded as two historico-essential and perpetual questions which the enlightened Muslim intellectual must answer in light of the very nature of the spirit and thought of true Islam. These questions may also reflect the principle of *eupraxophy*,⁸⁶ and, if kept in mind by Muslim Intellectuals throughout the world, may help elevate Muslims from various states of backwardness.

Accordingly, one may venture to maintain, without seeming farfetched, that the founding of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (henceforth called: ICMI)

⁸³ QS. LV:1-4.

⁸⁴ These questions formed the title of an article by Dr. Ali Shari'ati addressed to Muslim intellectuals all over the world, but more particularly to Iranian Muslim Intellectuals. For the entire article, see Farhang Rajee (ed.), *Dr. Ali Shari'ati: What Is To Be Done, The Enlightened Thinker and an Islamic Renaissance*, (Houston, Texas: The Institute for Research and Islamic Studies, 1986), pp. 29-70.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ This term was first coined by Paul Kurtz, one of America's foremost expositors of the Humanist philosophy. It is derived from the Greek root: *eu* meaning *good*, *praxis* meaning *practice* and *sophia* meaning *philosophical and scientific wisdom*. Hence, *eupraxophy* means *good conduct and wisdom in living*. Eupraxophy draws upon the disciplines of science, philosophy and ethics. For further details see, Paul Kurtz, *Living Without Religion: Eupraxophy*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1994).

may, in one way or another, be characterized as an intellectual attempt at answering the two questions posed above. It will also be argued that the establishment of ICMI, aimed at deriving solutions as to what should be done and where to begin, thus benefiting both the Muslim community of Indonesia, and hopefully the entire Indonesian nation as well.

The Indonesian archipelago possesses abundant natural resources in terms of agrarian lands, tropical forests, oceanic resources, immense oil and natural gas reserves as well as numerous mineral deposits. It also possesses a massive work force, but it does not share a balanced ratio between skilled manpower and material / natural resources. In addition, the Indonesian economic infrastructure is not as underdeveloped as that of the sub-Saharan African countries for instance, such as Somalia or Uganda. Moreover, Islam, claiming the adherence of most of Indonesia's populace, can foster conditions which are conducive to the emergence of a solid cultural ethos which incorporates concepts of egalitarianism, virtuous living and a high degree of social solidarity and tolerance. Indeed, if such potentials are well coordinated, developed and integrated within an amicable political climate embracing all Indonesian citizens, I anticipate that Indonesia will emerge as a strong and unique Islamic nation. Under these circumstances, modernization would not only be feasible,⁸⁷ but quite tenable. Furthermore, the ideals of justice and social welfare could coalesce to strike a balance between spiritual and

⁸⁷ According to Ernest Gellner, there are no significant doctrinal conflicts between Islam and modernity. Hence, the values of Islam can be used as a conducive tools towards the modernization of Muslim countries. Accordingly, one must argues that in the Indonesian Muslim context, Islam poses no threat to modernity and can be used as a complimentary vehicle to national development. See Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 5.

material ends.⁸⁸

Bearing the above in mind, it will become clear that among the most important duties of a Muslim Intellectual towards his/her society is to arrive at a state of self-understanding and self-consciousness as to what should be done. This would naturally reflect Islamic values, both orthodox and orthoprax.⁸⁹ According to H.K. Silvert, there are at least two principle functions to be derived from that so-called ideology. First, that it is structurally identified as a vehicle for substantiating the solidarity by which individuals are bound together in a society. Second, behaviorally, it enables people to undergo a maturing process, to attain a self identity, to establish certain codes of conduct and to recognize the links between self-role and self-perception.⁹⁰

Parallel to this contextual notion, it can be hoped that ICMI would, to some degree, be able to direct the intellectual duties and responsibilities of scholars towards an advancement of Qur'anic patterns of thought; patterns which would enable Muslims to live by a set of precepts, and engage in action springing from mature self-perception and determining both identity and purpose.⁹¹

⁸⁸ The ultimate happiness, commonly cited as a prayer in Islam as *fi addunya ḥasanah wa fil ākhirati ḥasanah*, is akin to the Indonesian national ideal, cited in the opening words of UUD 45, and also commonly cited by Indonesian leaders, especially President Soeharto, at any given opportunity. See, for example, Sambutan President Pada Peringatan Isra' Mi'raj Nabi Muhammad SAW, 22 February 1990, in *Mimbar BP-7, Media Pembudayaan P-4*, [the P-4 Culturazation Media], no. 43 / III, 1990, pp. 2-4.

⁸⁹ Mahmoud H. Farghall, *The Theory of Modernization in the Qur'an and Some Implications for the Arab World*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Microfilm International, 1982), p. 7.

⁹⁰ H.K. Silvert, (ed.), *Discussion at Bellagio, The Political Alternatives of Development*, (USA: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1964), p. 96.

⁹¹ Mahmoud H. Farghall, *The Theory of Modernization, Ibid*, p. 7.

A. Historical Background

The journey of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual has, historically, encompassed a great deal of effort to create a Muslim Intellectual association in Indonesia. Needless to say, political change has caused considerable difficulty, particularly the change from the “Old Order” to the New Order. In 1964, Persami (Persatuan Sarjana Muslim Indonesia or the Indonesian Muslim Scholars Association) created by a number of Muslim scholars, signified the first attempt at a unification of Indonesian Muslim scholars in which H. Mohammad Subhan Z.E. (the N.U General Chairman at that time) and H. Mohammad Sanusi (a member of the Muhammadiyah’s central organizing committee) were elected as Persami’s General Chairman and General Secretary respectively.⁹² However, three years after its establishment (1967), Persami experienced an internal conflict between the members of PMII (Persatuan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia or the Union of Muslim Students of Indonesia, a subsidiary of NU) and the members of HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or the Islamic University Students’ Association). A year later, the PMII members left Persami to create a new intellectual association (1968) promoted at the NU conference by Subhan and his friends. This new intellectual association was named ISII (Ikatan Sarjana Islam Indonesia or the Affiliation of Indonesian Muslim Scholars). Unfortunately, Subhan had little time for ISII due to his active involvement in NU. And, as such, ISII remained inactive and insignificant during Subhan’s life and eventually collapsed after his death during the pilgrimage to Mecca in

⁹² M.Syafi’i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*, p. 251.

1970.⁹³ In the meantime, Persami's leadership had passed on to Bintoro Tjokroamidjojo until 1974, when it collapsed after its general secretary, Soedjoko Prasodjo, passed away and Bintoro resigned from Persami's leadership.⁹⁴

In 1984, through the sponsorship of MUI (Majlis Ulama Indonesia or the Council of Indonesian Ulama), a number of non-governmental organizations and some activists from the Islamic universities, orchestrated the first Indonesian Muslim Intellectual gathering was organized in Jakarta--with "the Islamic Perspective in National Development" as its theme. This gathering was attended by Muslim Intellectual delegations from various provinces, and two important resolutions were adopted during it. The first called for the formation of consultative groups of Muslim Intellectuals in a number of provincial capital cities as well as Jakarta, to function as an aid to MUI in the implementation of its programs. The second called for such an organization to aid other religious institutions. The latter resolution entailed the creation of various centers of study for problem solving in matters related to economics, alms giving, religion and society, technology and scientific advancement.⁹⁵

Subsequent Muslim Intellectual meetings were held, providing both a platform and a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas, and discussion topics and thoughts related to a plethora of social problems, as well as to strengthen the bonds of solidarity among Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals. Among those meetings were the ones held on March

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 253, and also see *Tempo*, December 8, 1990.

⁹⁵ A. Rifai Hasan and Sri Marhaeni, "Sejarah Forum Komunikasi Pembangunan Indonesia" [The History of the Indonesian Forum for Development and Communication], Sekretariat FKPI, 1986.

8-9, 1986 in Ciawi, Bogor and on May 7-8, 1986 in Cibogo. During the latter meeting, Muslim Intellectuals agreed to form the FKPI (Forum Komunikasi Pembangunan Indonesia or Communication Forum for Indonesian Development) in which General Ahmad Tirtosudiro was elected as its first Chairman.⁹⁶ Moreover, at this meeting, the motion to establish a formal umbrella organization for the unification of Muslim Intellectuals was raised again. Alas, nothing materialized from these discussions, because Muslim Intellectuals were apparently still worried that the government would not approve of the creation of such an organization.⁹⁷ This was not the end of the matter, however, as the question of a formal Muslim Intellectual organization and its efficacy emerged again in FKPI's first workshop in July 25-27, 1986 in Ciawi, Bogor. Moreover, another attempt at forming a Muslim Intellectual association was championed by Mohd. Imaduddin Abdur Rahim, at a meeting in Kaliurang, Jogjakarta, in 1989. This gathering was, however, disbanded by the police for a number of vague reasons;⁹⁸ apparently the government was not yet ready for a Muslim organization to come into being at the time.

From the aforementioned, it is evident that the drive to found a formal association was one of the deepest historical ideals persisting within the minds of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals. The establishment of this organization is inextricably connected to the need for self actualization as a historical agent for both the

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ See, *Tempo*, December 8, 1990, *Cendekiawan Muslim: Melangkah dari Malang* [Muslim Intellectuals: Coming from Malang].

improvement and the development of society,⁹⁹ as well as the desire to play a noticeable role in disseminating Islamic values either in the social or political realms.

It is of course understandable that exerting and applying intellectual responsibilities is much easier as a group than as an individual; this has been defined and characterized in the Holy Book, *Al-qur'an al-karīm*, under the term *ulil-albāb*, i.e., men of understanding or wisdom.¹⁰⁰ In Ali Shari'ati's terms, the intellectual is called *Raushanfikir*¹⁰¹ (the enlightened thinker), a term not only implying a quest for the truth, which might be applied to the scientist, but also suggests an active involvement in society and a genuine effort to solve the problems besetting it.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Bruce Robbin, (ed.), *Intellectuals: Aesthetic, Politics, Academics*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ The term *ulil albāb* appears sixteen times in the Qur'an and denotes various meanings, depending on the context in which they appear. *Ulil albāb* intended as "men who have received *ḥikmah* (wisdom)" is found in verse. 2:269; as "men capable of discerning a lesson or moral advantage from past historical parables" is found in 12:111; as "men critical of various discourses" in 39:18; as "men who endeavor to seek knowledge" in 3:7; as "men who fear only God" in 2:97; 65:10; 5:100; 13:21; as "men who fulfill their promise to Allah, remain patient (*ṣabar*), give alms (*zakat*, *infaq*, *ṣadaqah*) and refuse the bad things with the good things" in 13:20-22; as "men who deliberately think about the God's creatures in the sky and on the earth" in 3:190; as "men capable of taking a lesson from revelation" in 38:29; 40:54; 3:7; as "men who can stand alone in defense of the truth" in. 5:100; as "men who work hard to propagate the message of Allah in their society and teach monotheism (*tauḥīd*)" in 14:52.

¹⁰¹ This Persian word is sometimes considered an ambiguous concept. It stems from an Arabic root: *Munawwar al-fikr* (see Jalal Al-e-Ahmad, *Dar Khedmat va Khīyānat-e Raushanfekran*, Teheran: Ravaq, 1358/1979). This term is usually translated into English as "intellectual." However Dr. Ali Shari'ati advocates this term to denote two different meanings; the first signifies an intellectual or enlightened individual, while the second refers to the "social-prophet." (see Ali Shari'ati, "Raushanfikir va Mas'uliyat-e 'U" in *Collected Works*, vol. 20, pp. 49-148). Another explanation of this term can be found in Abdul Hadi W.M., "Antara Raushan Dhamir dan Raushan Fikir," *Jurnal Ulumul Qur'an*, vol. II, no. 2, 1989, pp. 26-32.

¹⁰² Jalaluddin Rahmad, "Ali Syari'ati: Panggilan Untuk Ulil Albab" (Ali Syari'ati: the Calling for Ulil Albab), in *Ideologi Kaum Intellektual* [The Intellectuals' Ideology], (Bandung: Mizan, 1988), p.15.

It follows, therefore, that the Muslim community would greet the establishment of a formal institution unifying almost all Muslim intellectual factions with hopeful projections. Such an association was, of course, ICMI which was eventually founded during the Muslim Intellectuals' National Symposium, wherein "To Establish the Twenty-First Century's Society," was the theme. This symposium was held on December 6-8, 1990, in Malang, East Java.¹⁰³

Chronologically, the notion of establishing a Muslim Intellectual association, which eventually gave rise to ICMI, was formerly initiated within the framework of creating a national Muslim Intellectual symposium through which individuals from various backgrounds and political affiliations could meet in one forum. This proposal was first put forward by five students from Brawijaya University, namely, Erik Salman, Muhammad Zaenuri, Ali Mudakir, Awang Surya, and Mohammad Iqbal, during their routine discussion at *Unit Kegiatan Kerohanian Islam* (UKKI), Brawijaya University. In those discussions, the students talked about the golden age of Islam in which Muslim Intellectuals (such as Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, etc) played an important role in the advancement of science and civilization. Noting the absence of greatness among Muslim Intellectuals of this era, Erik Salman stated his wish that Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals would become prominent in their own father-land (Indonesia).¹⁰⁴

Reportedly, these five Brawijaya University students--as was acknowledged by Brawijaya University's rector, Drs. Z.A Ahmady, MPA, who affirmed that the idea to

¹⁰³ M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran*, p. 254.

¹⁰⁴ *Prospek*, December 8, 1990.

organize a national symposium for Muslim Intellectuals truly originated in the minds of these students--went to consult with the rector of their University on the feasibility of organizing a national symposium for all Muslim Intellectuals. They also approached DR. Ir. Ika Rochdjatun and Malang's Muhammadiyah University Rector, Drs. A. Malik Fajar, MSc. for advice. The meeting with the Brawijaya University Rector, authorized the students, who had acted as initiators, to make a formal proposal for such a symposium together with the committee who would be responsible for organizing the symposium. After its completion, the proposal was, nevertheless, rejected by the Rector on the grounds that its projected cost were too high. The students, however, remained hopeful seeking ways to raise support from various groups and persons to ensure that the symposium would eventually take place. To overcome the financial and other problems facing them, Salman and Iqbal proceeded to Jakarta where they met prominent Muslim Intellectuals like Dr. Imaduddin Abdurrahim and Dawam Raharjo. This meeting proved very fruitful and the students were encouraged to persevere.¹⁰⁵

In a further development, on August 23, 1990, the initiators (i.e., the students), together with some prominent Muslim intellectuals, such as, Imaduddin Abdurrahim, Dawam Rahardjo, and M. Syafi'i Anwar, met with B. J. Habibie and asked his availability to assume the position of chairman of the long-awaited Muslim Intellectual organization whose emergence they anticipated. Habibie replied that as an individual he

¹⁰⁵ See, *Berita Buana*, December 3,4,5, 1990. There were many publications recording the establishment process of ICMI, from its first plan until its inauguration in the Muslim Intellectual symposium, when the opening and closing ceremony were conducted by President Soeharto and Vice President Soedharmono, SH respectively. These publications were collected in a book encompassing 234 articles which were published in 29 leading newspapers, especially in Java, from December 1990 up to April 1991. This book was entitled: *ICMI Dalam Sorotan Pers, Desember 1990-April 1991* [ICMI under the Spotlight of Press, December 1990-April 1991], (Jakarta: Sekretariat Pusat Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia, 1991).

would be delighted to accept, but as a minister he has to ask for the President's approval first. Habibie also wanted to ensure that his nomination for the position of general chairman was supported by other prominent Muslim Intellectuals from various groups and backgrounds and that he was, indeed, the only nominee.¹⁰⁶ Soon afterwards, a draft of the letter containing the nomination of Habibie as chairman of the organization was written and Dawam Rahardjo also wrote a formal acknowledgment and compiled a list of a number of prominent Muslim Intellectual figures, who would secure support for Habibie's nomination.

Moreover, in a meeting held at Habibie's home on September 27, 1990, Habibie declared that his request to become chairman of the Muslim Intellectual organization had been approved by President Soeharto, and that the latter would be available to inaugurate the symposium. At this time, Habibie also suggested that the name of the organization should be *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*, abbreviated to ICMI.¹⁰⁷

In the process of organizing the symposium, a small meeting was held on September 28, 1990 to form a committee incorporating not only the Brawijaya University activists but also some national-level Muslim Intellectuals such as Dr. Ir. Wardiman Djojonegoro, Drs. A. Makmur Makka, MA, Dr. Marwah Daud Ibrahim, Drs. Komaruddin, MA, and Ir. Tasmian among others. In this meeting, they decided upon a date for the symposium on December 6-8, 1990, and on a new theme, changing it from "*Sumbangsih Cendekiawan Muslim Menuju Era Tinggal Landas*" (The Muslim

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Intellectuals' Contribution to the Taking off Era) to "*Simposium Nasional Cendekiawan Muslim: Membangun Masyarakat Abad XXI*" (The Muslim Intellectual's National Symposium: The Development of a Society for the XXI Century). By October 12, the structure of that committee was agreed upon and the Brawijaya University Rector was appointed as Chief Executive of the Committee. In the course of the meeting, they also agreed on the formation of three work-teams, namely: (1) the team responsible for designing the organizational guide-line with Dawam Rahardjo as its head; (2) the team responsible for arranging the organizational statutes, led by Dr. Muslim Nasution; and (3) the team responsible for proposing the workplan headed by Dr. Sri Bintang Pamungkas. At this stage, the embryo of ICMI took further shape, even though it had not, as yet, been formally inaugurated.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, on September 29, following Habibie's suggestion, the initiators met with Vice President Soedharmono, SH who readily approved of the plan to establish a Muslim Intellectual association. He also mentioned that he would be available to close the ceremony, and impressed upon them the need to stress the fact that the government had not been involved in establishing the organization.¹⁰⁹

Other meetings were conducted to consolidate preparations for the founding of ICMI and the orchestration of the symposium. On October 26, 1990, the three work-teams submitted a report to MUI containing the plan to establish the ICMI. The next meeting was held in the BPPT offices (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi or

¹⁰⁸ M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran*, p. 258.

¹⁰⁹ See, *Berita Buana*, December 4, 1990, as also can be founded in *ICMI dalam Sorotan Pers*, p. 139.

Research and Application of Technology Board) on November 19, 1990; and in order to achieve the required conceptual maturity, another meeting was held at PPSK, Jogjakarta (Pusat Pengkajian Strategis dan Kebijakan or Center for Strategy and Policy Studies), the institution led by Dr. Amien Rais. Still another meeting took place in Tawangmangu, Solo attended by at least 22 Muslim Intellectuals, aimed at formulating ideas for their contribution proposal to the arrangement of the 1993's GBHN (Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara or General State's Guideline), and the contribution towards the second long-term sustainable Indonesian development period from 1993-2018. During this meeting, the work program and organizational structure of ICMI as an intellectual organization was discussed. The team responsible for arranging the organizational statutes had numerous meetings with the members of the team. A discussion later took place between Habibie and the three teams in Habibie's residence. Finally, after ensuring that everything was ready, with regards to both the preparation for the symposium's agenda and the establishment of ICMI, one last meeting was held in MUI's office, attended by the chairman of MUI, K.H. Hasan Basri, the Religious Affairs Minister, Munawir Sjadzali, the Information Minister, Harmoko and Habibie, the Research and Technology Minister.¹¹⁰

On the surface, the processes involved seemed to entail no obstructions either to the symposium or to the Muslim Intellectual drive to establish the ICMI. Consequently, the whole agenda including the symposium, the establishment of ICMI and the appointment of Habibie as its chairman, took place successfully on December 6-8, 1990.

¹¹⁰ M.Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran*, p. 258.

By reciting *Bismillāhirrahmānirrahīm* (in the name of Allah, the most Graceful and Merciful) and beating the *bedug* (the Indonesian mosque drum that is traditionally used to call people to prayer) President Soeharto opened the symposium and delivered its keynote address. And on the last day, Soedharmono, SH., the Vice President at the time, closed the symposium. Another important fact to be noted here is that many persons attending the symposium were directly involved in the government, either at the central or provincial level, as well as officials from the ruling elite and some ex-official holders. Among the official dignitaries from within the ruling cabinet to attend were State Secretary Minister, Moerdiono, SH; the Highest ABRI's Commander, General Try Sutrisno; the Minister of Information Affairs, H. Harmoko; the Minister of Transportation, Ir. Azwar Anas; the Minister of Religious Affairs, H. Munawir Syadzali, MA; the Minister of Education and Culture, Fuad Hassan; and the former Minister of Public Welfare, Alamsyah Ratu Prawiranegara. Consequently, the symposium, which successfully gave birth to ICMI, reflected unprecedented government support and endorsement.¹¹¹

This historic watershed in the history of the Muslim community in Indonesia, demands further reflection. Why, for instance, was Habibie, from among the many prominent Muslim Intellectual figures hailing from a variety of academic, philosophic, organizational and socio-political backgrounds,¹¹² asked to preside, as leader, over other

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

¹¹² While the classification of ICMI's membership can be elaborated in more detail, Ramage's classification is acceptable. Ramage divides the membership into three groups: 1. Muslim theologians and scholars, 2. Islamic activists and 3. Government bureaucrats. See Douglas Edward Ramage, *Ideological Discourse in the Indonesian New Order: State Ideology and the Beliefs of State, 1985-1993*, Ph.D Dissertation, the University of South Carolina, 1993,

Muslim Intellectuals, when, in fact, he had not previously demonstrated any appreciable attachment to Islamic ideals and political leadership values? Most Indonesians recognize Habibie as a brilliant minister of science and technology who distinguished himself in his career, and aided the technological development of the country and the bureaucratic realm of the government.¹¹³

Thus, his nomination reflects a change in the basic conception of the contemporary Indonesian Muslim community with respect to the criterion of leadership.¹¹⁴ Contrary to the past practices, the leader of the Muslim community is not, at present, required to demonstrate a broad and erudite mastery of religious sciences.¹¹⁵

pp. 175-176; Mitsuo Nakamura, *The Emergence of An Islamizing Middle Class and Dialectics of Political Islam in the New Order of Indonesia: Prelude to the Formation of the ICMI*, a paper delivered at the conference on "Islam and the Social Construction of Identities: Comparative Perspectives on Southeast Asian Muslims," University of Hawaii, August 4-6, 1993, pp. 1-2.

¹¹³ For further details on Habibie's autobiography, see for example, A. Makmur Makka, *Bachruddin Jusuf Habibie, Kisah Hidup dan Karirnya* [B.J Habibie: His Life story and career], (Jakarta: Cipta Kreatif, 1987); Toeti Aditama, *Dari Pare-Pare Lewat Aachen* [From Pare-pare through Aachen], (Jakarta: Gapura Media, 1986)

¹¹⁴ Kuntowijoyo suggests that, the new tendency of the leadership in the Indonesian Islamic community is an important indicator concerning Islamic cultural revival. In Indonesia today, the Islamic leadership has decentrally flourished as "floating leaders" through various Islamic informal organizations. Actually, there are three new tendencies: 1. The diversified leadership, meaning that the leadership of Islamic community is not merely limited to religious and political leadership, but is disseminated to other aspects of life such as science, technology, economics, culture, etc; 2. Decentralized leadership, meaning that there is no national single leader, but a leader can emerge elsewhere in the country; 3. Proliferation of leadership, meaning that the leader must not be erudite in one area only, for example, but it can be found anywhere. For further reading see, Kuntowijoyo, *Dinamika Sejarah Ummat Islam Indonesia* [The Historical Dynamics of Indonesian Muslims], (Jogjakarta: Shalahuddin Press dan Pustaka Pelajar, 1994), pp. 98-111.

¹¹⁵ According to Allan Samson, the person often esteemed as a Muslim community leader is the one who exercises significant ideological influence over his society, one who has a broad religious knowledge and long political experience. See, Allan Samson, "Conception of Politics, Power and Ideology in Contemporary Indonesian Islam," in Karl J. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye, (eds.), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 202-203.

This changing conception may be rooted in past experiences which have demonstrated that the old model of leadership, i.e. the one based on religious knowledge and political experience only, has not significantly improved the socio-political role of the Muslim community *vis-a-vis* the prevailing political trends of the New Order.

Nevertheless, whatever the substantive import of this contemporary Indonesian Muslim phenomena, the establishment of ICMI deserves to be regarded by Indonesian Muslims as both a gesture of compromise and a progressive step on the part of the New Order government. This is not, however, to suggest that criticism should be suspended regarding the direction and goals to which ICMI aspires. On the other hand, one must acknowledge that any conclusions with regards to its establishment and achievement, will require careful study over a long period of time.

B. The Organizational Purposes

A discussion of the organizational purposes, will seek to address the questions of *what is to be done?* and *where to begin?* to which the answer seems to crystallize into a single word: "organization." This means that the organization that had been formed, i.e. ICMI, demonstrates that Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals have taken a first step on the road to executing the rest of their societal task, as a consequence of their intellectual responsibility towards society.

For Muslims, the cognizance of forming an organization for the propagation of a spiritual and intellectual ideal, can be doctrinally viewed in Islamic values. First of all, the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) had said that if some of you (more than

two Muslims) go on a journey, one should be chosen as leader.¹¹⁶ In the context of ICMI, this means that the realization of its purposes can be reasonably viewed as a kind of intellectual “journey” that Muslim Intellectuals should undergo. Similarly, while the imperative to elect a leader can be translated into that of forming an organization. Furthermore, there is also a wise saying attributed to one of the closest Companions of the Prophet, Ali bin Abi Talib stating that “the truth that is not well organized will be defeated by the evil that is organized well” (*al-haqqu bi lā nizāmin yaghlibuhu al-bātilu bi nizāmin*).¹¹⁷ This saying supports the contention that organization is all-important in propagating and disseminating what is righteous in society *vis-a-vis* what is negative. Apart from that, the drive to coalesce into organizations appears to be rooted in primordial considerations stemming from the human social instinct.¹¹⁸

From this vantage point, it is genuinely and Islamically conceivable for ICMI to emerge as a manifestation or actualization of Islamic values and social human behavior

¹¹⁶ *Hadith Ṣaḥih Bukhari/Muslim*.

¹¹⁷ Quoted from Djauharuddin Abdurrahman, et al., *Peranan Ummat Islam Dalam Pembentukan dan Pembangunan Negara Berdasarkan Pancasila & UUD '45* [The Role of the Islamic Ummah in Forming and Developing the State on the basis of Pancasila and UUD'45], (Bandung: Penerbit Angkasa, 1985), p. 10.

¹¹⁸ Chris Argyris asserts that “human beings are need-fulfilling, goal-achieving unities. They create various types of strategies to fulfill their needs and to achieve their goals. One of the most important strategies is to organize themselves. There are several strategies by which human effort may be recognized. Historically, the most frequently used strategy is that which, when seen in its static form, results in a pyramidal structure usually called the formal organization.” (pp.115-116). See Chris Argyris, “Understanding Human Behavior in Organizations: One Viewpoint,” in Mason Haire, (ed.), *Modern Organization Theory: A Symposium of the Foundation for Research on Human Behavior*, (New York, London: John Wiley & Son, Inc., 1959), pp.115-154. See also Andras Angyal, *Foundation for a Science of Personality*, (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1941), especially pp. 88-123.

as well. That is why the ideal of forming one formal association has long existed in the minds of Muslim intellectuals.

In addition, if one looks at the organization's basic statutes, one will find that the purpose for ICMI's establishment is portrayed as an intellectual obligatory manifestation. Indeed, its basic statutes mention that the purpose of ICMI is "to enhance the quality of Muslim Intellectuals and their participation in the national development as a realization of the implementation of Pancasila and the UUD 45 which, indeed, is based on faith and devoutness in order to set up a peaceful life order, justice, physical and spiritual welfare on behalf of Allah, the Almighty."¹¹⁹ In more general and practical terms, the purpose of ICMI is translated as the empowerment of human resources through the introduction of the 5-K program. This program calls for: *first*, the enhancement of *Kwalitas Iman dan Taqwa* (the Faith and Devoutness Quality), *second*, the enhancement of *Kwalitas Berpikir* (the Thinking Quality), *third*, the enhancement of *Kwalitas Berkarya* (the Production Quality), *fourth*, the enhancement of *Kwalitas Bekerja* (the Workshop Quality), and *fifth*, the enhancement of *Kwalitas Hidup* (the Living Standard Quality).¹²⁰ In applying this 5-K program, ICMI leaders asserted that the "three basic purposes of the organization are: *first*, a desire to help Muslims educationally, culturally, and economically; *second*, to unify the

¹¹⁹ See, *Hasil Mukhtamar II Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Se-Indonesia* [The Result of ICMI's Second Conference], Tahun 1995, Jakarta, December 7-9, 1995, p. 27.

¹²⁰ This 5-K program has been widely promoted by ICMI's activists on all occasions from its inception to the present. See, for example, *Hasil Mukhtamar II*, p. i; and also in Habibie's interview with *Gatra Magazine*, "Mereka Yang Merangkul Saya" [They that Embraced Me], December 9, 1995; Tamsil Linrung, et al. (eds.), *ICMI: Beberapa Catatan Kritis*, [ICMI: Some Critical Notes], (Jakarta: Amanah Putra Nusantara, 1995), p. Kata Pengantar [Introduction].

Indonesian Islamic movement and to break away from historical splits (for example, “modernist” Muhammadiyah versus “traditionalist” NU) ; and *third*, to realize specific national political objectives.”¹²¹

Even though the objectives of ICMI have been clearly outlined in its basic statutes and through the statements of ICMI leaders and activists,¹²² some prominent observers have viewed its purpose in more political terms. Such observations are based on the degree of support extended by the government to ICMI, and the fact that it is led by one of Soeharto’s closest ministers: B.J Habibie. Moreover, other high governmental officials were directly involved in the organizing committee, including President Soeharto, Vice President Try Sutrisno, and two former Vice-Presidents: Umar Wirahadikusumah and Soedharmono. As such, ICMI’s formation is often seen as welding a union between Islam and the State.¹²³ Therefore, it is reasonable for certain observers to maintain that the central objective in the founding of ICMI is shrouded in political intrigue and speculation.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Quoted from D.E. Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 210. For further information explaining the existence of ICMI, see for instance, Jimly Asshiddiqie, “Tugas Kita Bukan Membuat Pernyataan” [Our Task Is Not To Make Statements], in Lukman Hakiem et al., (eds.), *Mereka Bicara Tentang ICMI: Sorotan Lima Tahun Perjalanan ICMI* [They Talk about ICMI: the Examination of ICMI’s Five Year Existence], (Jakarta: Penerbit Amanah Putra Nusantara, 1995), pp. 163-172.

¹²² For a testimonial declaring that ICMI has nothing to do with politics, see, for example, the statement delivered by Azwar Anas, “ICMI Bukan Organisasi Politik” [ICMI is not a Political Organization], *Harian Angkatan Bersenjata*, November 23, 1992; “B.J. Habibie: ICMI Dibentuk Bukan Untuk Islamisasi” [Habibie: ICMI Is Not Established for Islamization Purposes], *Harian Merdeka*, December 8, 1992.

¹²³ Prof. Dr. Franz Magnis Suseno, “Kekhawatiran Itu Bisa Dimengerti,” [Such A Worry Is Understandable], *Jurnal Ulumul Qur’an*, no. 1, vol. VI, 1995, p. 32.

C. Socio-Cultural, Political and Religious Setting

Along the five year span (1990-1995) of ICMI's lifetime, the organization's existence has engendered a variety of comments, responses and opinions which demonstrate how ICMI has attracted the mounting attention of people,¹²⁵ and how it has brought about great repercussions on the Indonesian-national discourse, especially in terms of ideology and politics.¹²⁶ Subsequently, there is almost no discussion in the contemporary Indonesian (1990's) political arena which does not allude to ICMI. However, those critics who devote their entire effort to the exposition of the political implications of ICMI policies, have, invariably, obtained a limited perspective of its activities, and neglected the numerous factors which contributed to its formation.¹²⁷

There are at least three important factors which should be taken into consideration when probing the rise of ICMI. First, the transformation of the social structure which has overtaken Indonesian Muslim society as a result of the great

¹²⁴ Opinions, analyses and speculations on the political intrigue generally maintain that the founding of ICMI was part of President Soeharto's strategy to replace the support he lost from his traditional ally, ABRI. This opinion has been openly discussed by some foreign observers like Adam Schwarz, William Liddle and Douglas E. Ramage.

¹²⁵ A large number of comments, opinions, and responses to the establishment of ICMI have come from various individuals and groups of people. They appeared in the news, editorials, articles, and interviews in both the provincial and national mass media organizations, such as daily newspapers, magazines and journals, especially during the early days of its creation. For information on these compilations, see, for example, *ICMI Dalam Sorotan*, (Jakarta: Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia, 1991); Abrar Muhammad (ed.), *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat* [ICMI and the People's Hope], (Jakarta: YPI Ruhama, 1991).

¹²⁶ Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 174.

¹²⁷ See Nakamura, *The Emergence of An Islamic*, p. 4.

educational strides made during the last two decades¹²⁸ (especially among urban Muslim society). This significant advancement in the field of education is of course closely connected to economic development¹²⁹ which was pursued as the premier policy of the New Order government throughout its twenty-five year history. Simultaneously, the New Order government is showing signs of success in attaining national security and political stability,¹³⁰ two factors which have substantially contributed to the pace of economic growth.¹³¹ Economic growth, which in turn has increased the number of educated people in Indonesian society, has led to appreciable changes in the social

¹²⁸ *Suara Mesjid*, no.196, January 1991 in Abrar Muhammad (ed.), *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat* [ICMI and People's Hope], (Jakarta: YPI Ruhama, 1991), p. 162.

¹²⁹ For an understanding of the dynamics of Indonesian economic development, see, for example, Yoon Hwan Shin, *Demystifying the Capitalist-State: Political Patronage, Bureaucratic Interests and Capitalist-in-Formation in Soeharto's Indonesia*, (Ph.D Dissertation, Yale University, 1989).

¹³⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the "security approach" implemented by the New Order to safeguard national development process, see for example, Richard Tanter, "The Totalitarian Ambition: Intelligence and Security Agencies in Indonesia," in Arief Budiman, (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no. 22, (Glen Waverly, Australia: Aristoc Press Pty. Ltd.,1990), pp. 213-288.

¹³¹ Information on Indonesia's economic developmental from 1965-1991 can be found in Hal Hill, (ed.), *Indonesia's New Order: The Dynamics of Socio-Economic Transformation*, (New South Wales, Australia: Allen & Unwin Pty. Ltd, 1994), pp. 61- 122. Consequently, the improved economic well-being of the Muslim society has provided impetus to the pursuit of education, which in turn can alter people's place in the new social structure and also nurture their thinking towards Indonesia's modern socio-political development.

Even though the New Order's non-normative and technocratic economic development, based on Walt Rostow's take-off theories, has successfully secured a rapid economic growth rate. However, it has also created a serrated economic schism between the rural and urban communities, a fact which has prompted some prominent Muslim intellectuals to become concerned and to recommend greater emphasis on the basis of the spirit of Muslim fraternity and community. For a sample of the ideas launched by Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals on Islamic economic theories and development, see for example, Howard M. Federspiel, *Muslim Intellectuals and National Development in Indonesia*, (New York: Nova Science Publisher, 1992), pp. 109-119.

pyramid.¹³² These changes have led to an increase in the number of people in the middle strata of the social pyramid which, in turn, has created a social setting conducive to an emergent Islamic intellectual consciousness.

Moreover, the increase in the number of middle-class educated Muslims¹³³ in the last decade, has stimulated significant transformations of the Muslim society's social structure,¹³⁴ in which the notion of Islamic reform,¹³⁵ launched by some

¹³² For information on the changing enrollment of tertiary-level student, in the period between 1975 to 1991, which increased by seven times, see Nakamura, *The Emergence of An Islamic*, p. 12.

¹³³ The Indonesian New Order exhibits different characteristics from Western middle classes. The Indonesian middle class is perceived as a heterogeneous blend of people--administrators, businessmen, and professionals--greatly dependent on the state and its bureaucracy. See, for example, Daniel S. Lev, "Intermediate Classes and Change in Indonesia: Some Initial Reflection," and Aswab Mahasin, "The Santri Middle Class: An Insider's View," both in Richard Tanter and Kenneth Young, (eds.), *The Politics of Middle Class Indonesia*, (Clayton: Center of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990), pp. 25-43 and 138-144, respectively. For the process through which the Muslim middle class began to increase through education, which is a realm that can not be monopolized by any group, see the interview between *Mimbar Ulama* and Arbi Sanit, "Kelas Menengah Muslim, Tidak Otonom" [the Muslim Middle Class is not Autonomous]. *Mimbar Ulama*, no. 119, X, pp. 6-13. For a detailed discussion and analysis of the Islamic revival in both the rural and urban areas, see M. Bambang Pranowo, *Creating Islamic Tradition in Rural Java*, (Clayton, Victoria: Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Monash University, 1991); Nasir Tamara, *Islam as a Political Force in Indonesia: 1965-85*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Center for International Affairs Occasional Paper, Harvard University, 1986).

¹³⁴ The social transformation caused by the growing number of educated Muslims, as a logical consequence of the New Order's economic and education development, is explained in this thesis on the basis of the social stratification made by Clifford Geertz in his monumental book, *The Religion of Java*, (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964). Geertz's work, however, confuses between social stratification and the level of religiosity among Muslims in Java. Geertz divides Javanese Muslim society into three classes, namely, the affluent *priyayi*, who favor a form of eclectic Islam mixed with indigenous Javanese customs, the religious and middle class *santri*, and the working class *abangan* whom he described as nominal Muslims. For a more detailed exposition of how the social structure has been transformed see, for example, M. Syafi'i Anwar, "Islam, Negara dan Formasi Sosial dalam Orde Baru: Mengungkap Dimensi Sosio-Historis Kelahiran dan Perkembangan ICMI" [Islam, State and Social Formation in the New Order Era: Revealing the Socio-Historic Dimension Related to ICMI's Establishment], *Ulumul Qur'an*, no. III, 1994 (supplement), pp. 1-14.

prominent Muslim Intellectuals, especially Nurcholis Madjid, portrays a shift in paradigm from “sacralized political orientation” (which empties into the rise of political demand towards the formation of an Islamic state) over to “de-sacralized or secularization views”¹³⁶ in the socio- cultural realm (which is pregnant with the socio-cultural and ethical values), easily accepted as a consequence of educational betterment.

This acceptance by educated Muslims has brought their Islamic faith into a socio-cultural reality as it springs from their beliefs. In other words, by believing that Islam must be actualized in a socio-cultural and ethical context, they placed themselves at the core of socio-cultural values, the characteristics of which guaranteeing the actualization both of “what they have” and “what they are.”¹³⁷ Consequently, this kind of consciousness sets up the Islamization of Muslim society within the context of a cultural resurgence. This came after a long period, best described as “apprehensive,” in which hostile attitudes towards Islam under the New Order, denied Islam entry to the Indonesian political and policy making arena. Accordingly, by awarding a cultural interpretation to Islamic teachings, this new intellectual orientation

¹³⁵ For a good synopsis of reformist ideas expressed by Indonesian Muslim intellectuals see, for a good example, Fakhry Ali and Bachtiar Effendi, *Merambah Jalan Baru Islam: Rekontruksi Pemikiran Islam Indonesia Masa Orde Baru* [Pioneering a New Islamic Path: The Reconstruction of Islamic Thinking in Indonesian's new Order era], (Bandung: Mizan, 1986); see also, M.Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam*, pp. 143-240.

¹³⁶ For further information on his opinion concerning secularization, see Nurcholis Madjid, “Sekali Lagi Tentang Sekularisasi” [Once Again about Secularization], in *Islam, Kemoderenan and Keindonesiaan* [Islam, Modernity and Indonesianity], (Bandung: Mizan, 1987), pp. 221- 233.

¹³⁷ See Gabriel Marcel, “Faith and Reality” in Maurice Friedman, (ed.), *The World of Existentialism: A Critical Reader*, (New Jersey and London: Humanities Paperback Library, Humanities Press International, Inc, 1991), p. 333.

fosters a meaningful dialectic and cohesive relationship between Islam (Muslims) and the State, and within the non-Muslim segments of society as well.¹³⁸ Contextually, Islam, in such a setting, is no longer perceived as a political threat, but rather as a modest platform for drawing intellectuals to their responsibilities towards society, and towards a greater contribution to the national development.

Once transformed into the paradigm of the Islamic socio-cultural ethos, which gave birth to the resurgent Muslim middle class, Islam and the New Order government embarked on a journey of mutual tolerance and cooperation. This can be seen in the amicable political hand extended to Muslims, i.e., the government became more accommodating towards the demands of the Muslim community.¹³⁹ Moreover, this new

¹³⁸ Komaruddin Hidayat, "Cak Nur dan Gus Dur," *Tempo*, May 21, 1994.

¹³⁹ The anti-Islamic image of the New Order was, according to both native and foreign observers, indicated by at least seven political actions: "(1) The Prohibition of the rehabilitation of the Masyumi Party or any other attempts at establishing an Islamic political party (1966-68); (2) The continuous political harassment and surveillance of the former participants of the Darul Islam (DI/TII) rebellions by the security authorities (until recently); (3) Incapacitation of the older Islamic political parties by their fusion into the United Development Party (PPP) and the imposition of its leadership by the government (1973 on); (4) An attempt at the removal of Islamic law from the domain of Muslim marriage and divorce by a bill of Marriage Law (1972-73); (5) Recognition of Javanese mysticism (*aliran kepercayaan*) as a legitimate cultural tradition deserving government recognition and protection (1978); (6) A series of suppressions by the use of force on Islamic extremists in the incidents of Tanjung Priok, Jakarta, Tasik Malaya, West Java, Borobodur, Central Java, Aceh, and Lampung (1982-85); (7) The legislation of a law requiring all social and political organizations to incorporate the state ideology of Pancasila as the sole foundation (*asas-tunggal*) of their organizations (1984)." Quoted from Nakamura, *The Emergence of An Islamizing*, pp. 29-30. However, after the Muslim acceptance of Pancasila as the sole basis (1985 on), some indications of an alternated attitude of the New Order towards Indonesian Muslim's demands became apparent: 1. Changes in the policies of the Department of Education and Cultural that proved advantageous to Muslims, such as the withdrawal of the prohibition to wear Muslimah fashions, 2. The birth of the regulations of the National Education System in which the role of religious subjects was recognized as well as a stipulation that students must be taught religion by a teacher of their own faith, 3. The government closed down the Catholic group's weekly *Monitor Magazine* which had published news undermining Islam, 4. The stipulation of the Islamic Court Law, 5. Through the *Yayasan Amal Bhakti Muslimin Pancasila*, President Soeharto decided to send

political orientation led to the second factor which made the establishment of ICMI possible.¹⁴⁰ Without these changes in the New Order's political attitude, ICMI would, presumably, have never existed. At this point, nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that Nakamura disagrees with those observers who claim that the sudden change of the New Order's political stance towards Islam, as marked by the establishment of ICMI, is due to the declining support of ABRI to Soeharto's presidency.¹⁴¹ Rather, he contends that the change was actually gradual, and similar to a long political-dialectic process seeking to diminish the threat of political Islam, especially the threat of extremism which was apparently regarded as a willful trigger to ideological conflict in the heterogeneous society of Indonesia. A case in point was the promulgation of the 1985 Law no.4, which forced all mass-organizations to accept Pancasila as the sole basis of their ideology. The implementation of this law produced a long conflict between the government and Muslim organizations, which actually led, in the end, to an increase in the freedom granted to Islamic organizations. After accepting Pancasila as the sole basis

and fund 1000 *da'i* (Islamic propagators) to the transmigrant areas and to build thousands of mosques throughout the country, 6. The government's approval and support for the establishment of ICMI. See Afan Gaffar, "Islam dan Politik dalam Era Orde Baru: Mencari Bentuk Artikulasi Yang Tepat" [Islam and Politics in the New Order Era: Seeking for the Appropriate Articulation], *Ulumul Qur'an*, no. 2, vol. IV, p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ See Robert W. Hefner, "Islam, State and Civil Society: ICMI and The Struggle for The Indonesian Middle Class," *Indonesia*, no. 56, (October 1993). In this article, Hefner quotes Dawam Rahardjo's opinion accentuating the point that the change in the structure of the middle class, which promoted a large number of educated Muslims to the upper echelons of business and bureaucracy, led the President to view the establishment of ICMI in a positive light (p. 26).

¹⁴¹ Abdurrahman Wahid was among those observers who believed that the changing political stance of the New Order regime towards Muslims was also caused by ABRI's declining support for Soeharto. This change was depicted by Adam Schwarz as analogous to Soekarno's concessions to the communists when he was at odds with the army officers. See, Adam

of their organizations, "the suspicions of the authorities, especially the surveillance by the intelligence force over the Islamic organizations was reduced to a great degree."¹⁴²

The endeavor to diminish political Islam, expressed through the elimination of Islamic political parties, seemed to echo Nurcholis Madjid's formula (1970): "Islam, Yes, Partai Islam, No," which proved Madjid's capacity to foretell the long-term chance for the Indonesian Islamic community to revive its role in Indonesian politics through theological changes under the banner of cultural Islam.¹⁴³ However, it is said that the suggestion concerning the potential contributions of Muslims to enrich the national culture on the grounds of Islamic teachings should only be undertaken through non-political parties, was first proposed by Munawir Syadzali in his thesis to Georgetown University in 1959.¹⁴⁴ Eventually, however, the strong government support for the establishment of ICMI was to prove that a synthesis between the government's demands and Muslim acceptance of government policies, had been reached. Parallel to the shifts and transformations occurring in the socio-cultural field, which have allowed the establishment of ICMI, the awakening, or the increase, in the religious consciousness of the educated Muslim middle class can be regarded as the third important factor leading to ICMI's establishment.

Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990's*, (Boulder, San Francisco: Westview Press, 1994), p. 176; See also Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, pp. 117, 188.

¹⁴² Nakamura, *The Emergence of an Islamic*, p. 35.

¹⁴³ On Nurcholis Madjid's notion of cultural Islam, see his book *Islam: Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan*, [Islam: Modernity and Indonesianity], (Bandung: Mizan, 1987).

¹⁴⁴ Nakamura, *The Emergence of an Islamic*, p. 36.

Similarly, the development of education (especially that of Indonesian Muslims) has led to maturity and wisdom in perception and understanding, both rationally and intuitively, of contemporary affairs. Since then, religion, which had previously been blindly adopted from parents and ancestors, is now studied and analyzed in a more logical manner.¹⁴⁵ In this context, Iqbal, a poet-philosopher of the Indian subcontinent, asserted that “religious faith is more than mere feeling. It has something like a cognitive content.”¹⁴⁶ In other words, religion is closely connected to logical reasoning in the quest for truth. The reciprocal and harmonious relationship between religion and reason is one of the most important demands that resemble Muslim religiosity.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, it is true that the function of “religion stands in a greater need of a rational foundation of its ultimate principles than even the dogma of science.”¹⁴⁸

Furthermore, numerous facts illustrate that many people in Indonesia have turned to religion for answers to a multitude of social problems engendered by modernity within the secular context.¹⁴⁹ These people believed that modernity and

¹⁴⁵ During the period 1988-1993, a plethora of aspects and disciplines have been discussed in the light of Islamic teachings, thus indicating the emergence of a new Indonesian Muslim Intellectual religiosity that delves into the rational and scientific approach to religion. For a more complete record of the various seminars, conferences and scholarly discussions that took place, see Darul Aqsha, Dick van der Meij and Johan Hendrik Meuleman, (eds.), *Islam in Indonesia: A Survey of Events and Developments From 1988 to March 1993*, (Jakarta: Seri INIS XXVI, 1995), pp. 307-383.

¹⁴⁶ Allama Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (2.ed.), (Lahore, Pakistan: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1989), p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ See QS. 17:36.

¹⁴⁸ Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁹ Bryan S. Turner delves into the issue of modernization in the Islamic world, which is often understood within the framework of Max Weber's sociology. Seen as a rationalization

secularization have not fulfilled their promises of social equality, fraternity and well-being. Rather, secularization and modernity seem to have introduced a new set of problems, including globalization of Western culture, which threatens the indigenous societal norms and values, and replaces them with new sources of socio-psychological tension and stress. For these reasons, the believers turned for solutions to the reserves of their religious doctrines,¹⁵⁰ which in Whitehead's opinion, function, as a place where general truth operates systematically within the ability to transform the character of the believers when it (religion) is sincerely and vividly apprehended.¹⁵¹

Accordingly, the increased religious resonance of Indonesian Muslims seems to have inspired many people and to have imbued them with the zeal to adopt Islam as a steady source of belief and succor in the face of rapid social changes, and perplexities engendered by modernity.¹⁵² Concerning the Indonesian Muslim rationalism and cultural revivalism context, Bill Liddle states that

process, modernization is believed to be a conversion of the paradoxical relationship between the process of rationalization itself and the problem of meaninglessness that then emerges. For further analysis on how Muslim society reacted towards modernization and globalization, see Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 78.

¹⁵⁰ In its ideological horizon, "Islam has been able to fill the gap [or at least the experience of a gap] between the promises of Westernization and/or Marxism and the actual reality of social change at an every day level. Islam has an egalitarian appeal, an ascetic world-view, a dynamic conception of social change and, through its history, provides an alternative therefore to the Western model which was imposed by colonialization. Islam through its prayer meetings and other religious institutions provided an alternative political and social platform to state institutions, expression of opposition and critical viewpoint which the government could not silence, because religion had deep popular roots in the broader community." See, *Ibid.*, p. 89. This indicates that Islam serves as an appropriate reference for solutions to the problems besetting Muslim societies, when faced with the complexities of modernity.

¹⁵¹ Alfred N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, (Lowell Lectures in Boston in 1926), (New York & Cambridge, 1926), p. 5, as cited in Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious*, p. 1.

¹⁵² Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting*, p. 173.

“younger Muslims are looking for a new understanding of their religion that gives them a more realistic set of guidelines, really a code of ethics, for private and family life and for dealing with the outside world. They want to know what are the rights and responsibilities of husbands and wives, how to raise their sons and daughters to be good Muslims and good Indonesians, how to relate to a modern banking system, whether and how to revitalize the concept of *zakat* (religious tax), and even how to deal with such exotics as test-tube babies, organ transplant and homosexuality.”¹⁵³

Moreover, the life of university campuses in any provincial capital city, especially in Java, has been much colored by Islamic activities. These include the various socio-religious topics of discussions and seminars, Qur’anic studies, *pesantren kilat* (short-term course *a la* traditional Islamic boarding school) during the fasting month of *Ramadhan*, the increase in the number of Muslim women (*Muslimah*) who adopt the *jilbab* (headscarf), the emergence of student centers for Islamic and social studies, the high attendance at mosques and various other activities that can be classified as religious activities.¹⁵⁴ Thus, all these contemporary phenomena reflect the Muslims concern for their religious heritage, either rationally or culturally and symbolically.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ R. William Liddle, “Improvising Political Cultural Exchange: Three Indonesia Cases,” in James Schiller, (ed.), *Indonesia Political Culture: Asking the Right Questions*, (Ohio State University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Athens), pp.124-129. as cited by Adam Schwarz, *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁵⁴ For further information on Islamic activities in many Indonesian university campuses, and the birth of various discussion groups and various outlooks on Islam by youths and students, see for example, *Majalah Tempo*, April 3, 1993, pp. 13-21.

¹⁵⁵ The increasing religiosity of university students has been viewed by many scholars as a result of the government policy to depoliticize students through a program called *Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus*, NKK (the Normalization of Campus Life) which was inspected by *Badan Koordinasi Kampus*, BKK (the Campus Coordination Board). This was imposed during the first appointment of Daud Yusuf as Minister of Education and Culture Department, 1978.

In addition, the increasing religiosity of Indonesian Muslims has not only extended to educated young men and women outside the bureaucratic realm, but also to Muslim bureaucrats, professionals and businessmen whose interests are highly connected to government policies.¹⁵⁶ One of the most important figures among the ruling elite to portray this increasing religiosity is President Soeharto himself. The President has, lately, become more concerned about his personal religious life and has publicized his spiritual commitment by taking his family on the pilgrimage to Mecca, in June, 1991.¹⁵⁷ Some observers have commented that this change is a testament to natural proclivities associated with the aging process.¹⁵⁸

To conclude, in addition to the socio-cultural and political transformations, it cannot be denied that the changing religious climate in Indonesian Muslim society was a contributing factor to the smooth establishment of ICMI.

¹⁵⁶ The phenomenon of bureaucrats becoming more pious is called *Islamisasi Birokrat* [The Bureaucrats' Islamization]. See M.Syafi'i Anwar, "Islam, Negara dan Formasi Sosial," p. 13.

¹⁵⁷ See, "Bukan Haji Politik" [It is not a Political Pilgrimage], *Tempo*, July 16, 1991. This article articulated an evaluation of the political considerations that affected Soeharto's pilgrimage trip. The article also accentuates that Soeharto's professions towards Islam has occurred earlier than 1990s.

¹⁵⁸ See, Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 187, and n. 23.

Chapter Three

The Responses to ICMI's Establishment and Its Analysis

A. Reflections on the Reawakening of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals

There is, in their stories, Instruction
for men endowed with understanding
It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation
of what went before it, a detailed
exposition of all things, a Guide and
a Mercy to any such as believe.¹⁵⁹

It is quite disconcerting to find that the closing years of this century have been labeled by numerous Western authorities as the era of the Islamic threat.¹⁶⁰ This notion started to appear during the post-Cold War years, when relations between Islam and the West came to occupy a central position in global affairs.¹⁶¹ The relationship between Islam and the West, has always been somewhat tainted by negative perceptions permeating the global geopolitical and cultural constellations concerning Islam. Alas, Islam is frequently portrayed as a violent monolithic entity with no local or regional differences and no goals except senseless destruction. This image is especially held by

¹⁵⁹ QS. 12:111.

¹⁶⁰ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. by Carol Volk, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 1.

¹⁶¹ See Graham E. Fuller & Ian O. Lesser, *A Sense of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West*, (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, A Randy Study, 1995), p. 13.

Islam is frequently portrayed as a violent monolithic entity with no local or regional differences and no goals except senseless destruction. This image is especially held by some of members of the Western press, observers and politicians who regard Muslims as a bomb ready to explode at any time and anywhere through its resurgence movements.¹⁶² By contrast, however, many Muslims regard this era as a time of self-assertion and development. Having ended colonialism and limited Western domination, Muslims are now seeking to promote their doctrines and values and to occupy a more prominent position within the global political and cultural realms. Needless to say, these attempts by Muslims are, more often than not, watched suspiciously by non-Muslims and even, sometimes, by Muslims themselves. Thus, the question that poses itself at this stage seems to be whether the reaction engendered by Muslims could be attributed to the dynamic uniqueness of Islam itself and some inherent qualities in it that make Muslims act the way they do, or whether this reaction stems from a hidden, ulterior motive harbored by those who attack Islam and Muslims? Or, is this clash

¹⁶² The terms "fundamentalism" and "fundamentalist" have been used extensively in the West during the 1980's to project negative images of Islam and Muslims whenever the latter came to assert their roles and apply their beliefs. The image of Muslims as barbarous and backward, frenzied and fanatic, volatile and violent, exclusivist, radical, absolutists, terrorists, anti-democratic, anti-modern and anti-Western, continues to pervade the writings and spoken remarks of many Western observers. For more details on how the West regards the Islamic revival or resurgence, see for example, Norman J. Cohen, (ed.), *The Fundamentalist Phenomena: A View From Within, a Response From Without*, (Michigan: Williams B. Eermans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1990); Patrick J. Ryan, *Islamic Fundamentalism: A Questionable Category*, (USA, 1984), pp. 437-440. However, Bruce Lawrence states that despite constant attention to Islamic resurgent movements in the early 1970s and to Islamic fundamentalism since the ascent to power of Ayatullah Khomeini in 1979, there has been remarkably little analysis of what either "resurgence" or "fundamentalism" means in the Islamic context. Both resurgence and fundamentalism have appeared as catch-words used by the Western media to capture the attention of the Western audiences. See, Bruce Lawrence, "The Fundamentalist Response to Islam's Decline: A View from the Asian Periphery," in Jill Raitt, (ed.), *Islam in the Modern World*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983), pp. 12-14.

merely an example of the Qur'anic postulate that humankind often follows its own irrational, emotional, and hasty judgment: "they have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not?"¹⁶³ Or does this clash prove that Islam will never be harmoniously accepted as part of the global village along side its Jewish and Christian brethren?¹⁶⁴ Similarly, does this clash belie an evil, destructive tendency espoused by Muslims, or an intolerant scapegoating tendency maintained by the opponents of Islam? Unfortunately, no adequate answer can be proffered to all these questions. What is clear, however, is the presence of a dichotomy between the Muslim perception of Islam as a unique, dynamic, universal and peaceful religion, on the one hand, and the perception of others towards it as a menacing threat, on the other hand.

Unfortunately, the answer to all of the above questions presents a mammoth task that certainly lies beyond the scope of this thesis. However, at this stage, one must also mention that the anti-Islamic mind-set does not only exist in the non-Islamic countries but in Muslim countries as well, and even among some Muslims. Indeed, some Muslims (whether influenced by non-Muslim ideas or not) prefer to exclude Islam from the affairs of the state and to limit its role to cultural, religious and personal affairs. This is certainly true of many Indonesian Muslims who are wary of the increasing "Islamization" of their land, and the greater role that devout Muslims are asking for in

¹⁶³ QS. 7:179

¹⁶⁴ QS. 2:120

the administration and policies of the country. Hence, the presence of a Muslim Intellectual organization that is progressive, moderate and non-violent can go a long way towards reflecting a positive , non threatening image of Islam and of becoming a devout Muslim. Indeed, such an organization is essential in terms of fostering better relations among Muslims themselves as well as between the Indonesian Muslims and non-Muslims. ICMI's success, however, in attaining this goal hinges on the policies it espouses, the attitude it maintains and its success in reflecting a positive image of Islam, that is complimentary to national development and unity.

The main purpose of the following discussion is to discern and analyze the various responses expressed by both Muslim and non-Muslim individuals towards the stirrings phenomena of Islamic resurgence in Indonesia, as symbolized by the establishment of ICMI. The establishment of this organization must be seen as a measure taken to integrate Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia, within the national political scene after a long period on the peripheries of political discourse. The best phrase to describe the political condition of Indonesian Muslims prior to the founding of ICMI is Wertheim's famous adage about the Muslim condition in Indonesia as a "majority with a minority mentality."¹⁶⁵

It has been widely reported and acclaimed by Indonesian and foreign observers alike that the existence of ICMI, as a contemporary phenomenon in the history of

¹⁶⁵ See W.F. Wertheim, "Indonesian Moslems Under Sukarno and Suharto: Majority with Minority Mentality," in B.B. Hering, (ed.), *Studies on Indonesian Islam*, (Townsville: Occasional Paper no. 19, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, James Cook University, 1989), pp. 15-35, as also cited in Robert W. Hefner, "Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class," *Indonesia*, no. 56 (October 1993), p. 27.

Indonesian Islam, does indeed merit close attention. Likewise, it is important to note that, what renders contemporary Indonesian Islam unique is the dual process of Islamization taking place. The first vehicle of Islamization pertains to the efforts of the central government to promote the Islamization of society through state-run programs and policies, and hence this method can be described as a “top-down” method of Islamization. As for the second method, which is “bottom-up,” it is primarily exercised by non-governmental organizations and individuals seeking to disseminate Islamic values and ethics in society at large.¹⁶⁶ In this process, ICMI exemplifies a symbol of the emerging Muslim Intellectual consciousness; one that is displaying maturity in its search for appropriate steps and a significant role in a society characterized by rapid social changes. In this endeavor, ICMI seeks to provide “models for reality”¹⁶⁷ based on a dynamic Islamic perspective that is both useful and acceptable to modern society.

According to Islam, human consciousness is realized through the intertwined relationship of mankind, nature, and God. Since the primary duty of the human being on earth is to fulfill his obligations as God’s vicegerent (*khalifat Allāh ‘ala al-ard*).¹⁶⁸ This implicitly means that the effort exerted by humankind, to meet all of its needs and necessities on earth, is actually a fulfillment of a universal goal. Through this activity,

¹⁶⁶ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, p. 24.

¹⁶⁷ The “Model for Reality,” as mentioned by Bassam Tibi, consists of theories, dogmas, and doctrines. In the context of the Indonesian Muslim intellectual phenomenon, one can believe that their intellectual awareness and their sense of responsibility towards society can create a certain model for reality and can develop a new society capable of asserting itself globally and stemming the tide of foreign influences. Bassam Tibi, *Islam and The Cultural Accommodation of Social Change*, trans. from German by Clare Krojzl, (Boulder, San Fransisco & Oxford: Wesview Press, 1990), p. 8f.

¹⁶⁸ QS. 2:30: “Behold, thy Lord said to the angels; ‘I will create A vicegerent on earth.’”

humankind moves closer to the goal set for it. Moreover, such action determines man's relationship with others, with nature and with God.

In the Indonesian context, the relationship between Muslim society, nature, and God is reflected in the contributions of Muslims in the development of their state and society. Moreover, such contributions are seen as an important religious duty incumbent upon Muslims as God's vicegerents:

The usage of the concept of *khalifah* to denote the role of man as God's vicegerent as well as the owner of a political authority on earth is an interesting indicator of the holistic link between the ontological and political spheres. The belief in an absolute truth, originating from the Divine Being through one chain of prophecy, implies a certain divinely ordained responsibility for man, who was not created in vain, but for a serious purpose (Qs.44:38) determined by the meta-historical covenant. As the vicegerent of Allah on earth, every human being thus partakes of the divine responsibility of trusteeship (*amānah*) on earth, which he must fulfill (Qs. 33:72).¹⁶⁹

The "state," therefore, can be logically seen as an organization of human-human relationships which is a parallel to the human-God (Allah) relationship in the form of a primordial meta-historical covenant.¹⁷⁰

Not surprisingly, the demand for such an organization was perceived by Muslims as part of their historical calling, which the state must accommodate, and as a vehicle that would serve as a prerequisite to the socio-cultural legitimization of the state's existence. Accordingly, this mutual understanding between the state and the Muslim

¹⁶⁹ Ahmet Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigm: The Impact of Islamic and Western 'Weltanschauungs' on Political Theory*, (Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1994), p. 98.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

community was expected to usher in mutual accommodation instead of mutual animosity. Furthermore, this phenomena in contemporary Indonesian politics is indicative of the ongoing relationship and discourse between the state and Islam. It also points to the sagacity of both, in defining their respective roles. This contemporary phenomena has been described as: "Akomodasi Negara Terhadap Islam" (The State Accommodation of Islam), "Konvergensi Islam dan Negara" (The Convergence between Islam and the State), or "Integrasi KeIslaman dan KeIndonesian" (The Integration of the Islamicate and Indonesianness), all of which demonstrate the amicable rapport between Islam and the Indonesian New Order government in light of their reciprocal understanding.¹⁷¹

This mutual cooperation between the state and Islam can itself be further characterized as an expression of an Islamic renaissance, incorporating various socio-political movements. Needless to say, the climate of accommodation needs to be utilized by Muslim Intellectuals, especially through ICMI as a Muslim Intellectual organization, to further the peaceful revival of Islam and to garner sympathy from every corner of Indonesian society.

B. Responses to ICMI's Establishment

The blessing bestowed by President Soeharto¹⁷² on ICMI since its inception and his

¹⁷¹ Bahtiar Effendy, "ICMI dan Artikulasi Islam Yang Melebar" [ICMI and the Extension of Islamic Articulation], in Zuli Qodir dan Lulu M. Iqbal, (eds.), *ICMI, Negara dan Demokratisasi: Catatan Kritis Kaum Muda* [ICMI, State and Democratization: Critical Notes of the Young Generation], (Jogyakarta: Kelompok Studi Lingkaran, 1995), p. ix.

¹⁷² Ramage has recorded in his Ph.D dissertation that this is the first direct support given by Soeharto to an Islamic organization since his ascension to power. See Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 177.

approval and encouragement of all programs stipulated in its basic statutes,¹⁷³ may very well constitute the most important factor, causing ICMI's fame and controversial character. At the same time, this blessing should not go unobserved, but must be analyzed in view of its ambiguous nature, and subsequent controversy.¹⁷⁴

For most Indonesian Muslims, whatever motive the government may have had, the establishment of ICMI was undeniably a most happy occasion and the most meaningful step taken by the New Order toward Muslims.¹⁷⁵ Regarding this as a reality, the establishment of ICMI can be psychologically depicted as what Kurt Lewin has explained under the term of "Field Theory."¹⁷⁶ This theory may be useful in explaining

¹⁷³ See, *Kompas*, December 11, 1990.

¹⁷⁴ Reportedly, the blessing and support displayed by Soeharto towards the foundation of ICMI has created various assumptions and rumors concerning the actual motives behind his forbearance and change of heart, especially in light of his earlier behavior towards Muslims. Among the speculations surrounding this topic, is the idea that Soeharto has lost support from his primordial allies, i.e. the military and is looking for support elsewhere. Another opinion on Soeharto's motive speaks of his wish to pacify Muslims so that they will not become a threat to his regime. Other minor opinions have suggested that his support is sincere, the result of natural tendency in old age and the spiritual and psychological need to become closer to God before one's death. This opinion, however, is not advocated by many people. So far, none of these reasons have been commonly accepted as the primary motive behind Soeharto's action. Therefore, one can suggest that a combination of all three that had led to his decision to support the establishment of ICMI.

¹⁷⁵ Many works have emerged to describe the happiness Indonesian Muslims felt at the establishment of an Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association. Among these works, one may cite "Perhelatan Besar Ulil Albab" [the Intellectuals' Big Meeting], in *Majalah Prospek*, no. 12, December 15, 1990; "Terpilihnya Orang Dekat Pak Harto" [The Election of Pak Harto's Close Ally], *Editor*, no. 14, December 15, 1990; "Menunggu Kiprah ICMI" [Waiting for ICMI's Actualization], in *Panji Masyarakat*, no. 669, December 21, 1990.

¹⁷⁶ This "field-theory" bears "striking parallelism between the properties of the 'electromagnetic-field' in physics and what Lewin intended to show in the 'psychological-field' which led him to the constant use of a terminology taken from physics" (p. 366). This theory is "concerned with understanding the totality of a concrete reality in its special and temporal modalities and always refused to return to laboratory studies in the style of experimental psychology." (p. 367) Bearing that in mind, the "psychological phenomena originate from a 'field,' not determined by the separate properties of the person or of its

and understanding the circumstances surrounding the formation of ICMI. "Field Theory" describes how the psychological milieu leads to and enforces certain attitudes which are unconsciously performed by a certain group of people. Accordingly, the broad Muslim acceptance of ICMI's formation is an example of such a manifestation originating in the Muslim society's psychological condition, especially that of Muslim Intellectuals. In this context, the *umma*'s socio-psychological condition can be said to have emanated from the external burdens which had previously plagued them, such as the politico-economic marginalization, educational backwardness and the various social diseases resulting from rapid advent of modernity. Through this organization, Muslim Intellectuals are now hoping to unite towards a general vision and understanding of what being an "intellectual" actually means and entails in terms of duties towards themselves, as individuals and their people, as social interest. Additionally, it is hoped that a general mission in political, social and cultural integration among the Muslim Intellectuals will take place thus enhancing their public participation.¹⁷⁷

The relief felt by Muslims, however, seemed to engender a certain anxiety and trepidation in other social factions that regarded the improved social and political

environment, but by the mutual relations existing among all facts deriving from the condition of the individual at that particular moment and from the structure of its environment. The psychological phenomena are determined by the 'field' itself, that is, from the totality of all existing facts which are conceived as mutually interdependent." (p. 367) For further detailed discussion on this field theory, see Yvan Simonis, "Two ways of Approaching Concrete Reality: 'Group Dynamics' and Levi-Strauss' Structuralism," in Ino Rossi, (ed.), *The Unconscious in Culture: the Structuralism of Claude Levi-Strauss in Perspective*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc, 1974), pp. 363-388.

¹⁷⁷ See M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Visi dan Misi Kehadiran ICMI: Sebuah Pengantar" [Vision and Mission behind ICMI's Existence: an Introduction], in Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi, (ed.), *ICMI: Antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi* [ICMI: Between the Status Quo and Democratization], (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), pp. 25-43.

condition of Muslims as a threat to their existence. This was one reason why ICMI's establishment caused considerable attention and close scrutiny.¹⁷⁸

It is no exaggeration to say that "ICMI's creation has had a profound impact on the political and ideological discourse of the 1990's."¹⁷⁹ This "profound impact" is reflected in the plethora of responses, critiques and hopes that have been voiced.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, these responses represent nearly all levels of Indonesian society, especially educated Muslim and non-Muslim Indonesian elite, university students, socio-political analysts, religious scholars, *ulama*, civil servants and bureaucrats, as well as foreign observers.¹⁸¹ The majority of responses expressed from 1990 to 1995, were published in various Indonesian daily newspapers, magazines, and journals in the form of articles, interviews, and editorials as well as in some books. These responses can be roughly classified into three categories: those in favor of ICMI, those that oppose ICMI and

¹⁷⁸ With regards to some opinions depicting fear and anxiety see, for example, Prof. Dr. Franz Magnis Suseno, "Kekhawatiran Itu Dapat Dimengerti" [That anxiety is understandable], *Ulumul Quran*, no. 1, vol. VI, 1995, pp. 32-39. See also, Ardian Taufik Gesuri dan Marcelino X. Magno, "Ketika Islam Masuk Wilayah Kekuasaan" [When Islam Enters the Power Arena], *Forum Keadilan*, no. 18 / IV (December 18, 1995), pp. 100-102.

¹⁷⁹ Quoted from D.E. Ramage, "Pancasila Discourse in Soeharto's Late New Order," in David Bourchier and John Legge, (eds.), *Democracy in Indonesia: 1950's and 1990's*, Monash Papers on Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, (Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Aristoc Press, 1994), p.160.

¹⁸⁰ For information related to these responses, critiques and hopes as exposed in magazines and newspapers in the early days of ICMI's formation, see the compilation edited by Abrar Muhammad, (ed.) *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat, Kumpulan Tulisan Dalam Mass Media Cetak Tentang ICMI* [ICMI and the People's Hope, The Collecting Articles concerning ICMI as Printed in Mass Media], (Jakarta: YPI Ruhama, 1991); see also, *ICMI Dalam Sorotan*.

¹⁸¹ In order to glean the differences among the various responses, see for example, Abrar Muhammad, (ed.) *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat, ICMI Dalam Sorotan*; Mahmud F. Rakasima, Ahmad Muzani, Tamsil Linrung, (eds.), *ICMI Di Mata Pemuda, Mahasiswa, Da'i dan Kaum Dhu'afa* [ICMI in the Eyes of Youths, University Students, Islamic Propagators and the Grassroots People], (Jakarta: Penerbit Amanah Putra, 1995).

those that seem to be neutral to it. In the following analyses, the writer will, therefore, examine these responses in more detail, locating the mainstream line of thought behind each of the three categories.

Before tackling these numerous responses, however, one substantial question remains: what exactly is the spirit dwelling in the soul of these opinions that engenders the position(s) they adopt? As commonly acknowledged, any interpretation revealed by people is often loaded with unconscious individual biases stemming from their own cultural and socio-political backgrounds, which seldom separate the vested interests of the observer from his conclusions about a given reality. Hence, with the increased complexity of interrelated variables contributing to the rise of ICMI, a similar complexity and diversity can be detected in the number of interpretations and reactions to it. These repercussions were undoubtedly inspired by individual beliefs, biases and distorted views.¹⁸² This human element is important to note, even though it is difficult to detect the real motives that inspire people. With regards to philosophical hermeneutics, it is possible to maintain that we do live in a fragmented socio-cultural setting, and that whatever notion we may formulate in response to any reality is inevitably characterized as an interpretation containing both historical and subjective relativity.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Lloyd S. Etheredge, "Personality Effects on American Foreign Policy," in *American Political Science Review*, June 1978, pp. 434-451. Etheredge adopts and elaborates this theme in terms of personal motivations, individual behavior patterns and human insecurities.

¹⁸³ See Jean Grondin, *Sources of Hermeneutics*, (Albany, New York: State University of New York, 1995), p.1.

Bearing the above in mind, the following study does not pretend to be able to detect the real motives behind any of the responses expressed. Rather, the aim of this study is to illustrate the various responses which specifically surround the formation of ICMI, in order to demonstrate the extent of the latter's impact upon Indonesia's cultural and socio-political scene.

1. Favorable Responses: Indonesian Islamic Revivalism ¹⁸⁴

The responses expressing support and sympathy to the establishment and existence of ICMI, have been offered by people from various social backgrounds.¹⁸⁵ These opinions generally declare that ICMI's formation illustrates an effort on the part of the Muslim Intellectuals to integrate Muslims within national discourse and to afford them a greater role in the development of the country.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, such a move seeks to establish an accommodating link between the aspirations and interests of Muslims

¹⁸⁴ This subtitle was used to emphasize the ongoing process of Islamization that is presently enveloping Indonesia. This process has been described by numerous observers, both foreign and local, as the *raison d'être* behind the establishment of ICMI.

¹⁸⁵ In outlining the various responses to the establishment and existence of ICMI, the writer will not delve into the various backgrounds of the respondents. Rather, he will simply offer the content of their responses. The reason for this being the prophetic ḥadīth stating: "do not look to the persons who say words, but look upon what they say."

¹⁸⁶ Frans Magnis Suseno, a leading Indonesian philosopher and a pious Catholic, has acknowledged that Islam had previously been marginalized in Indonesia. He also declared that ICMI should be accepted without prejudice, and given the chance to bring Islam into the political realm, thus setting a new political balance and space for Muslim contribution in national development. See Frans. M. Suseno, "Kekhawatiran Itu Bisa Dimengerti" [Such a Worry is understandable], *Ulumul Qur'an*, no. 1, vol. VI, 1995, pp. 32-39.

and those of the government.¹⁸⁷ Needless to say, such a move also highlights a certain maturity and awareness on the part of both groups as well as a new phase in their relationship which has passed through stages of harmony, tension and now accommodation.¹⁸⁸ Likewise, the proponents of this opinion seem to regard the formation of ICMI as a further step in the government's changing political stance towards Muslims since the 1980's.¹⁸⁹ Hence, they often cite the government's previous uncooperative attitude in opposition to its present policy of accommodation towards Muslims. This may be a logical consequence of the changing political approach of Muslim Intellectuals and politicians who have abandoned their theological-ideological orientations in exchange for a more pragmatic and realistic approach.¹⁹⁰ Their new approach seek to promote Islam in the socio-cultural realms which contributes to

¹⁸⁷ See Afan Gaffar, "ICMI: Politik Aliran?" [ICMI: Stream Politics], in Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi, (ed.), *ICMI: Antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi* [ICMI: Between the Status-Quo and Democratization], (Bandung; Penerbit Mizan, 1995), pp. 120-122.

¹⁸⁸ Syafi'i Anwar, "Islam: Bureaucracy and Social Political Convergence in the New Order," *Mizan*, no. 2, vol. V, 1992, p. 66.

¹⁸⁹ Some government policies (prior to ICMI's formation) may be regarded as somewhat accommodative of Muslims interests (without relaxing the tight grip on Muslim political activities). Cases in point include the abolition of the prohibition against wearing the Muslim headscarf (*jilbab*) in public schools; inserting more Islamic elements into the curriculum of the national educational system; and giving more authority to Islamic courts. These policies were regarded by Muslims as ingratiating gestures undertaken by the New Order government. Hence, the formation of ICMI can also be regarded as yet another government policy that bows to Muslim demands.

¹⁹⁰ Afan Gaffar, "ICMI: Politik Aliran?," p. 121; Also consult another comprehensive and analytical discussion on the transformation of Indonesian Muslim political thought, namely, Bahtiar Effendy's work. See Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam and the State: the Transformation of Islamic Political Ideas and Practices in Indonesia*, unpublished Ph.D dissertation submitted to Ohio State University, 1994.

engender the Islamic socio-cultural revival through the peaceful means.¹⁹¹ As such, the presence of ICMI can, sociologically speaking, be attributed to the changing social structure in which *santri*-Muslims have entered into the national mainstream. This rendered the Islamization process possible in the middle and upper levels of society, and provided space for the articulation of Muslims voices.¹⁹²

According to this stance, ICMI can serve as a vehicle for a growing dialogue between the government and Muslims. It is also an accelerator and catalyst of change in diminishing dichotomy, which previously separated the *ummat* from the state. Thus, the presence of ICMI can be said to have stimulated people (especially Muslims) to move closer towards the state in terms of their contributions and attention to the state's business.¹⁹³ Based on this, the establishment of ICMI must be considered a 'must' in engendering a new, more accommodating, political atmosphere. Indeed, ICMI is the most suitable vehicle for improving the status of Muslims and soliciting their

¹⁹¹ According to Dr. Bahtiar Effendy, the establishment of ICMI is naturally acceptable, considering the long process of historical transformations of Islamic thinking accelerated by the increasing level of educational success achieved by a large number of Muslims of the middle class. Example of such transformation include: (1). the reformulating of politico-theological principles; (2). the redefinition of Islamic socio-political ideals; and (3). the reconstruction of the form of the Islamic political approach. See Bahtiar Effendy, "ICMI dan Artikulasi Islam Yang Melebar" [ICMI and the Extension of Islamic Articulation], in Zuli Qodir dan Lulu M. Iqbal, (eds.), *ICMI, Negara dan Demokratisasi: Catatan Kritis Kaum Muda* [ICMI, State and Democratization: Critical Notes of the Young Generation], (Jogyakarta: Kelompok Studi Lingkaran, 1995), p. xii.

¹⁹² Taufik Abdullah, "ICMI Belum Menjadi Organisasi Yang Serakah" [ICMI Is Not Yet Rapacious], in Lukman Hakiem, Tamsil Linrung, Mahmud F. Rakasima, (eds.), *Mereka Bicara Tentang ICMI, Sorotan Lima Tahun Perjalanan ICMI* [They Speak about ICMI, Five Years of Reflection], (Jakarta: Amanah Putra Nusantara, 1995), p. 263-264.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 264-265.

involvement in national policy making.¹⁹⁴

Moreover, parallel to the notion of demarginalizing Muslim society in various aspects of life, it is natural if the dominant responses given by the members of ICMI is to enhance the quality of Muslim society, especially in the areas of education and economy. To achieve this, ICMI, as an intellectual organization, which gathers Muslim Intellectuals into a potent force,¹⁹⁵ must bring about plausible alternatives to solving the problems of human resource empowerment.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, as reformers of the contemporary Muslim generation,¹⁹⁷ the intellectuals must channel their energies and conceptual thought into developing and fashioning a modern Indonesian society with religious underpinnings which can contribute to the development of the nation's ethical system.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ Abrar Muhammad (ed.), *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat*, p. 102.

¹⁹⁵ Afan Gaffar, political expert and observer of Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta, describes ICMI's main goal as the unification of Muslim Intellectuals. This unification, however, must be further exploited and used for the betterment of society. It should lead to a more comprehensive and appropriate political agenda that furthers the aims and aspirations of Muslims without alienating any other Muslim or non-Muslim groups. See Afan Gaffar, "Islam dan Politik dalam Era Orde Baru, Mencari Bentuk Artikulasi yang Tepat" [Islam and Politics, Searching for the Accurate Articulation], in *Ulumul Qur'an*, no. 2, vol. IV, 1993, pp. 18-25.

¹⁹⁶ Adi Sasono, "ICMI Itu Dari Menteri Sampai Sri Bintang, Kok" [It is ICMI from Minister to Bintang], in Lukman Hakiem, Tamsil Linrung, Mahmud F. Rakasima, (eds.), *Mereka Bicara Tentang ICMI*, p. 25.

¹⁹⁷ See Ade Armando, "Citra Kaum Pembaharu Islam dalam Propaganda Media Dakwah" [The Image of Islamic Reformists in Media Dakwah's Propagation], *Ulumul Qur'an*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1993.

¹⁹⁸ Abdul Harris Nasution believed that ICMI's establishment highlights the resurgence of Muslims. He also emphasized its potential as an instrument for channeling Muslim Intellectual aspirations after long years of neglect. See for example, Mahmud F. Rakasima and Tamsil Linrung, (eds.), *Wawancara Habibie* [Habibie's Interview], (Jakarta: Penerbit Amanah Putra Nusantara, 1995), pp. xvii-xxiii.

Another feature of the ongoing growth of intellectual awareness among contemporary educated Muslims, may be interpreted from their decision to elect Habibie,¹⁹⁹ a technocrat, as ICMI's president. To some observers, this phenomena signifies the changing pattern of criterion for Islamic leadership; the leader chosen is he who is regarded as the most capable for proposing and defining the contemporary Muslim socio-political role and contribution to the New Order regime. The old style of leadership among Indonesian Muslims, was always characterized by a charismatic personality whose influence on society stemmed from his broad religious knowledge and long experience in practical politics.²⁰⁰ However, such a paradigm is no longer appropriate to present political demands.

During the 1980's, a multitude of Islamic movements began springing up in a wide-range of areas of concern throughout the country. Concomitantly, many small Islamic organizations were born as an aggregate of Muslims concerned about certain socio-religious problems. However, as a result of this proliferation of organizations, a correspondingly large number of Muslim leaders started to appear on the scene, all of whom were not organized under one banner. They were not united under a central

¹⁹⁹ Arbi Sanit describes the emergence of Habibie as the national leader of Muslim Intellectuals as the most salient proof concerning the changing pattern of Islamic leadership in contemporary Indonesia. He hopes that a leadership led by technocrats will lead to a transformation of the leadership style, in which mutual cooperation between the leader and followers can create a moral and ethical relationship based not only on power but also on mutual necessities, aspirations, and normative values. In this new type of leadership, Arbi adds, the followers can seek new leaders and programs, without being tied to a single person or agenda. Consequently, ICMI's leadership led by a technocrat will hopefully embark on this new type of relationship between the Muslim society and its leader. See Arbi Sanit, "Dari Teknologi ke Politisi dan Negarawan" [From technology to Politician and Statesman], in Mahmud F. Rakasima and Tamsil Linrung, (eds.), *Wawancara Habibie*, pp. xxv-xxxiv.

²⁰⁰ See note no. 31, chapter 2.

hierarchical scheme and there was often minimal contact between the various groups.²⁰¹ As a result, it was extremely difficult to coordinate among these groups and to have them cooperate and work together, a situation which was not beneficial to the Muslim community as a whole. On the other hand, this rapid outburst of Islamic movements can also be seen as a positive phenomenon since it indicates a growing sense of religiosity. These movements, however, were not enthusiastically received by the government which was wary of their activities, agendas and leaders. Indeed, the government made it abundantly clear that it would not tolerate any organization or leader that does not abide by its guidelines.²⁰²

Given the above context, the establishment of ICMI can be perceived as beneficial to both Muslim interests,²⁰³ in terms of unifying the scattered organizations,

²⁰¹ An integralistic interpretation was offered to explain the change in the structure of the Islamic movement and leadership in Indonesia during the 1980's. This integralistic interpretation took cognizance of the material, social, conceptual and ideal aspects affecting contemporary society. According to this explanation, it was believed that a combination of all these aspects has led to a revolution in the organization of Islamic movements, from hierarchical structures containing a central bureau directing all branches, to a heterarchical structure with no central bureau. Hence, every organization, was deemed to have an equal status *vis-a-vis* the others. For further information on the changing structure of Islamic movements, see for example, Armahedi Mahzar, "Dari Reformisme ke Transformisme Islam: Refleksi Integralis tentang Angkatan 80-an" [From Reformism to Transformism Islam: Integralistic Reflections on 80's Generation], in Muchtar Gandaatmaja, Muhammad Shodiq dan Fauzie Firdaus, (eds.), *Kontroversi Pemikiran Islam di Indonesia* [The Controversy of Islamic Thought in Indonesia], (Bandung: Penerbit PT. Remaja Rosda Karya, 1991), pp. 211-227.

²⁰² Teuku Rezasyah, "Changing the Guards in Indonesian Foreign Policy Making: From Cold War into Post Cold War Configuration," *The Indonesian Quarterly*, vol. XXIII, no. 3, 1995, p. 244.

²⁰³ One of the central aims behind the establishment of ICMI, widely articulated by some Muslim intellectuals, has been the amalgamation of the various Islamic leadership (organizations) in order to produce a solid national program capable of enhancing the quality of the Muslim contribution to national development and the empowerment of Muslim human resources. For a review of the large number of ideas that directly or indirectly accentuated the

and those of the government, in terms of allowing its closer control over these movements, and preventing the establishment of any militant agenda that might threaten national security.²⁰⁴ Accordingly, Muslim Intellectuals quickly realized that the government's approval was axiomatic in the founding of any large Muslim organization. Without this approval, the intellectuals would not be able to unify the scattered Muslims under one banner, and, more importantly, would not be able to participate in national political discourse. Realizing such a condition, Haidar Bagir, a leading young Muslim Intellectual who is the operating director of *Harian Republika* (ICMI's news paper), maintained that: "Democratic politics is bargaining. ICMI may not be a full realization of our aspirations. And yes, some people will be co-opted by the bureaucracy. We know that."²⁰⁵ However, even though the possibility of being co-opted by the government is not something entirely negative in Islamic teachings, for we must acknowledge the integrity of many Muslim Intellectuals who joined ICMI,²⁰⁶ although it

establishment of ICMI as a unifier of the various Muslim movements, see for example, Abrar Muhammad, (ed.), *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat*.

²⁰⁴ Some observers believe that ICMI was designed as a vehicle to promote the interest of the government. By accepting ICMI, the government could ingratiate itself to Muslim leaders would thus be better able to control them and prevent any emerging Islamic militant movements. This idea was articulated by Prof. Ismail Suny in an interview with Robert Hefner (August 3, 1993). See Hefner, "Islam, State," p. 26.

²⁰⁵ Quoted from Hefner, "Islam, State, and Civil Society," p. 25.

²⁰⁶ A. Syafii Maarif believes that this integrity should convince us that it would have been impossible for ICMI's members to accept the establishment of ICMI if it were no more than a result of manipulation by the government. *Peta Bumi Intellectualisme Islam di Indonesia* [The Constellation of Islamic Intellectualism in Indonesia], (Bandung: Mizan, 1993), p. 130.

unmistakably brought about some political consequences or concessions.²⁰⁷ Thus, it is also recognized by some prominent ICMI's leaders, that the presentation of ICMI will of course rally support for Soeharto's presidency, but they also believe that ICMI's existence can still provide Muslims with an opportunity to play a more significant role in the future national discourse of Indonesian history.²⁰⁸ ICMI can do so by promoting a balanced approach to education, emphasizing the need for the advancement of intellectual endeavor and the acquisition of skills, the transmission of culture through the preservation and transformation of indigenous values which pertain to environment and the development of the sciences, in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunna.²⁰⁹

The formation of ICMI also marks the climax of the long struggle of Indonesian Muslims to assert themselves on the national scene. Indeed, for the first time in modern history, Muslims were able to unite under a single banner, a situation which bodes well for the future. This achievement is, of course, the result of an arduous intellectual struggle to transform the previous Muslim orientation from the realm of politics,²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ For further discussion on the context of affinity between the State and Islam, see Adian Husaini, *Habibie, Soeharto and Islam*, (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1995), p.89-90.

²⁰⁸ Hefner, "Islam, State, and Civil Society," p. 25.

²⁰⁹ Agus Wahid, "ICMI: Langkah Strategis Menuju Pemberdayaan Umat Berkualitas?" [ICMI: A Strategic Step towards the Empowerment and Creation of the Qualitative Community?], *Ulumul Qur'an*, vol. VI, no. 4, 1995, p. 56.

²¹⁰ Maarif, *Peta Bumi*, pp. 128-130.

which tended to be rather formalistic in its political aims,²¹¹ into the cultural sphere, thus lessening the ideological differences among the Muslims themselves.

In addition, the move into the socio-cultural arena offers Muslim activists and intellectuals a better chance to maintain their strong commitment to their community by providing them with extensive networks both inside and outside the government realms. Needless to say, this strategy is a powerful instrument in building and implementing Muslim programs that are based on the needs of the Muslim community, and that anticipating both cultural and structural changes. Without this change of approach, Muslims will not be able to successfully take on any role in the social, political and economic development of the country. Hence, the establishment of ICMI can also be regarded as a product of this new orientation, according to Muhammad AS Hikam, a LIPI (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia or Indonesian League for Sciences) researcher.²¹²

²¹¹ A formalistic political policy denotes a mode of political struggle that maintains strict observance of recognized Islamic forms which are supposed to lead to the formation of an Islamic political party and even an Islamic state. For further information on the differences between formalistic and substantialistic Indonesian Muslim political thought, see for example, Din Syamsuddin, "Islamic Political Thought and Cultural Revival in Modern Indonesia," *Studia Islamika*, vol. 2, no. 4, 1995, pp. 51-68.

²¹² Muhammad AS Hikam maintains that there are three different approaches in contemporary Muslim movements which carry philosophical, theoretical and practical implications and consequences for the future of Islam in Indonesia. The first approach involves good cooperation and the maintenance of a positive relationship with the state and its policy towards Islam, and tries to induce reform at the upper echelons of government. A case in point is MDI (*Majlis Dakwah Islamiyah*, The Islamic Propagation League) which is affiliated with Golkar and MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia*, The Council of Indonesian Ulama) which is regarded as an extended body of the Ministry of Indonesian Religious Affairs. The second approach takes the socio-cultural realm as the basis for its modernization process of various aspects of Islamic teachings and practices. This camp encourages the building of a good network among the non-governmental organizations, members of student bodies, young entrepreneurs, and university professors as well as government officials. This approach has the ability to attract the interest of the Muslim community. ICMI, according to Hikam, is an example of this successful

Due to the social transformation taking place in contemporary Indonesia, ICMI, as a product of this transformation, was not only able to exist, it also manages to establish Islamic institutions like an Islamic Bank (Bank Muamalat Indonesia, BMI), and a daily newspaper *Republika*. It also creates other institutions, such as *CIDES* (Center for Information and Development Studies) which can be regarded as ICMI's think-tank, together with its publications: *Fokus* (weekly journal), *Sintesis* (monthly journal), *Afkar* (quarterly journal), and *Profile Indonesia* (yearly journal); and other programs including the *Orbit* Scholarship program and *Baitul Mal wat Tamwil* (BMT).²¹³ The establishment of these institutions and their continuing success and popularity were regarded by Robert Hefner, an anthropologist and Indonesianist from Boston University, as a symptom of the growing power of the Muslim middle class. He believes that "whatever ICMI's long-term fate, these initiatives have provided additional momentum for the institutional consolidation of the new Muslim middle class."²¹⁴

approach in terms of its acquisition of government support. The last approach stresses the notion of empowerment of the whole society without giving special treatment to the Islamic community, even though Islam is recognized as an important element in the fabric of Indonesian society. The pluralistic reality of Indonesia is more accentuated in this approach as a reality that must be faced by Muslims. This approach calls for tolerance and expects Islam to contribute to the enhancement of the moral and ethical foundations of the modern Indonesian society. K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid is often depicted as the very paradigm of that approach. See Muhammad AS Hikam, "Islam and the Empowerment of the Indonesian Civil Society," *The Indonesian Quarterly*, vol. XXIV, no. 1, first quarter 1996.

²¹³ For information concerning the autonomous bodies affiliated within ICMI and their programs, see for example, the booklet, *Muslim Intellectuals Society of Indonesia* (ICMI), 1995.

²¹⁴ For a discussion of ICMI's representation of the middle class and its significant role in making bureaucrats more pious, see for example Robert W. Hefner, "Islam, State, and Civil Society," p. 26, 27. For the opinions of some young Indonesian intellectuals who recognize ICMI as the best representative of the Muslim middle class, consult Zuli Qodir dan Lulu M. Iqbal, (eds.), *ICMI, Negara dan Demokratisasi*, pp. 203-267.

Having recognized ICMI as an indication of the resurgent Muslim middle class,²¹⁵ it was consequently held that its establishment will inaugurate more reforms, thereby inducing a strong civil and democratic society in the Indonesian archipelago.²¹⁶ At any rate, its mere existence has come to symbolize the power of democratization and civil-politics.²¹⁷ ICMI is also the child of a democratization process that is sweeping the globe during the last quarter of this century. Interestingly, this century has also witnessed "the greatest period of democratic ferment in the history of modern civilization."²¹⁸ This statement is of course not understood in the sense attributed to it by Francis Fukuyama who had declared that "liberal democracy may constitute the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the final form of human government, and as such constitutes the end of history."²¹⁹

In relation to this global democratization trend, we find that the question of democracy has also encouraged contemporary Islamists, in almost all Muslim countries, to explore its Islamic counterpart and the myriad of inter-related factors that surround it.

²¹⁵ Hefner, *ibid.*

²¹⁶ Discussion of the democratic process, as often considered in the Indonesian society, is still in its infancy and it is difficult to discern its basic elements, which is surprisingly recognized by the ruling regime as democratic. According to Robert A. Dahl, a political regime can only be accredited as democratic if it allows free and open elections, establishes an active political competition, and provides guarantees for the protection of civil liberties. See Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 1-16.

²¹⁷ MT. Arifin, "Melacak Peta Politik Islam" [Tracing the Political Islamic Constellation], *Kompas*, March 29, 1996.

²¹⁸ Larry Diamond and Mark F. Plattner, (eds.), *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. ix

²¹⁹ See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (New York: The Free Press, 1992), p. xi.

Among those encouraging factors is, first of all, the increasing intellectual strength and influence of the Islamists who hope to provide their followers with intellectual guidance and solution to key political questions afflicting their societies. In addition, the exclusion of Islamists from the political process in certain Muslim countries has compelled them to raise some critical questions pertaining to democratic credentials *vis-a-vis* various state and government organs. Finally, the rising number of critical Islamist publications during the mid-1980's has successfully managed, together with other groups and organizations, in drawing public attention to themselves, both locally as well as in regional and international political circles.²²⁰

The problem of democratization has also affected the contemporary Indonesian political arena which started to engage in polemics concerning the ramifications of the democratization process. Furthermore, discussion on this issue later transgressed the boundaries of the political arena, and has now become a staple in the discourse of society at large. Such a phenomenon is undoubtedly the consequence of the ongoing nepotism, as well as feudalistic and neofeudalistic political trends which illustrate the state's superior position and dominant power. In terms of ethics, democracy seems to focus on reconstructing social mentalities towards a readier acceptance and tolerance of

²²⁰ For further details on the increasing concern of Islamists with the problem of democracy, see Raghid El-Solh, "Islamist Attitudes Towards Democracy: A Review of the Ideas of Al-Ghazali, Al-Turabi and Amara," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1995, pp. 57-63.

others.²²¹ In this context, religion (Islam) can serve as a divine source for engendering the sincere existential understanding of the natural pluralism.²²²

Given the need for greater social tolerance within a democratic framework, ICMI was given the task of inducing and disseminating this quality in society. Indeed, it was required to act as a catalyst for change, and to encourage people to be more ready to accept the plurality of their society. Awareness and acceptance of differences are, of course, crucial to the principles of egalitarianism, justice and consultation which are the building blocks of democracy. In other words, ICMI was required to function as a forum for dialogue between the various social stratas in an effort to facilitate greater understanding of their differences, societies, history, socio-cultural resources and government.²²³ Having stated the requirements and goals incumbent upon ICMI to fulfill, one must also note that ICMI was not required to make any formal or legal demands concerning the implementation of Islamic tenets in the state system. Indeed, such demands would have been unwelcome by the regime. Rather, ICMI was expected to foster greater rapport and rapprochement among the various groups of Muslim Intellectuals, between Muslims and non-Muslims, and more importantly between

²²¹ See General (ret.) Soemitro, "Budaya Politik dalam Perkembangan Demokrasi Indonesia" [Political Culture in the Development of Indonesian Democracy], *Suara Mesjid*, no. 238 (July 1994), p. 35.

²²² Religion, as some believe, can definitely function as a divine instrument in understanding the world and its plurality. See, for example, Robert N. Bellah, (ed.), "Islamic Tradition and the Problems of Modernization," in *Beyond Belief: Essay on Religion in a Post-Traditionalist World*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), p. 146; Consult also Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 4.

²²³ See Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 70.

Muslims and the ruling government.²²⁴ Building a sound relationship between Islam and the state may lead to a better implementation of democracy and greater economic benefits for the masses of impoverished Muslims.²²⁵ Furthermore, it was anticipated that ICMI would be able to help Muslims create a workable synthesis between Islam and democracy, without neglecting the socio-cultural values of the Indonesian nation.²²⁶ In short, it can be said that ICMI was intended to function as an *avant-garde* institution with a strong intellectual basis and commitment to enlightening the Muslim society.²²⁷

Having a strong intellectual basis will automatically create a strong civil society, which is a crucial underpinning for any democratic society, as Fachry Ali observes. Ali, a leading young Islamic observer, appears pessimistic about ICMI's ability to forge a democratic framework in the Indonesian political arena; he believes that ICMI was co-opted by the state at a time when Muslim society was undergoing an evolutionary

²²⁴ Bahtiar Effendy, a lecturer at the faculty of Graduate Studies of the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN), Jakarta, and a researcher at the Center for Policy and Development Studies (CPDS), Jakarta, maintains that, theologically speaking, the failure of Islamic countries to establish a mechanism for democratic processes is partly due to their legalistic and formalistic attitude in understanding the relationship between Islam and politics. See Bahtiar Effendy, "Islam and Democracy: in Search of a Viable Synthesis," *Studia Islamika*, vol. 2, no. 4, 1995, p. 15.

²²⁵ See M. Amien Rais, "ICMI dan Pengembangan Demokrasi di Indonesia" [ICMI and the Democratic Development of Indonesia], in Tamsil Linrung, Idham Hayat and Hidayat Tri Sutardjo, (eds.), *ICMI Beberapa Catatan Kritis* [ICMI: Some Critical Notes], (Jakarta: Penerbit Amanah Putra Nusantara, 1995), p. 165.

²²⁶ Bahtiar Effendy, "Islam and Democracy," p. 15.

²²⁷ ICMI, as an organization in which a large number of intellectuals are gathered, is believed to be a potent force in the civil empowerment of the masses and in soliciting their participation in order to reduce the state's hegemony. Nonetheless, the question one needs to ask is whether the intellectual potency of ICMI is capable of overhauling the system peacefully and gradually, and introducing real democracy to the country? This question is asked in view of the plethora of political beliefs and schools which ICMI members espouse.

process that might have made it culturally powerful.²²⁸ With regards to the intellectual prowess of ICMI, however, Ali seems confident of its capacity to disseminate and convince people of the need for a greater implementation of democracy.²²⁹

All in all, the main attraction for the government's willingness to accommodate ICMI seems to be desire to contain, control or perhaps befriend the contemporary Islamic revivalist movement, which encompasses a large number of people from a multitude of backgrounds of Indonesian Muslim society.²³⁰ This revivalist movement can be regarded as a truly mass movement that is engaging people from all walks of life. Nevertheless, in light of strict state control, the extent to which this movement can engineer a significant change in Indonesian Muslim society, in terms of democracy must be questioned. Moreover, can ICMI as an organization representing the Muslim middle

²²⁸ According to Fachry Ali, the natural ongoing evolution of political Islam and its inducement of a strong civil-society since the 1970's came to an end with the informal integration between state and Islam through ICMI. Nonetheless, he believes that the remarkable socio-political weight which ICMI's membership wields can still be used to promote a more democratic milieu in Indonesia. For more details on his historical analysis of political Islam in Indonesia, see Fachry Ali, "Keharusan Demokratisasi dalam Islam Indonesia" [The Urgent Need for Democratization in Indonesia's Islam], *Ulumul Qur'an*, no. 1, vol. VI, 1995, pp. 8-21.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, The title of this article reflects his hope and trust in ICMI's ability to create a democratic environment in Indonesia, through the Islamic leadership. Consult also Ade Armando, "Demokratisasi Melalui ICMI: Proyek yang Ditakdirkan Gagal?, Tanggapan terhadap Fachry Ali" [Democratization Through ICMI: A Project Destined to Failure, A Response to Fachry Ali], in Nasrullah Ali Fauzi, (ed.), *ICMI: Antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi*, pp. 154-159.

²³⁰ The natural ongoing Islamic revival in Indonesian society is widely acclaimed by most Indonesian people and observers. Therefore, the government may still believe that Islam is the real power that can threaten political stability. Bearing this in mind, the government needs, to some extent, to accommodate the interests of the Muslim community to avoid the emergence of such a fundamental or radical Muslim movement. This appears to be one of the very basic considerations for the changing political strategy which led to New Order government's support to ICMI's formation. For observers who believe the ongoing Islamic revival in Indonesia, see, for example, Douglas E. Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, pp. 172-183; see also, Adam Schwarz, *Nation in Waiting*, p. 176.

class, bring about such a massive change in the Indonesian political environment? Can it possibly fulfill all the goals and dreams set for it? In addition, can ICMI maintain the balance it currently enjoys between all the different factions, or will one faction ultimately triumph over the rest, thereby steering the organization onto a new course? All of these questions are, of course, difficult to answer. However, despite the uncertainties surrounding ICMI's future, it is clear that whatever direction it takes will be largely determined by its members and their ability to cooperate together and reconcile their differences.

2. Opposing Ideas: Sectarianism and Co-optation

Even though the ideas which have historically and socially supported the existence of ICMI were reasonably expressed, they have nevertheless not shaken the resolve of those opposing ICMI. Indeed, the opponents of ICMI have continued to lament its establishment, considering it either a political setback or regression, and a devious political strategy on the part of President Soeharto that unconsciously traps Muslim Intellectuals into sectarianism and primordialism.²³¹ The accusation of being

²³¹ The most prominent figure to oppose and blatantly accuse ICMI of being a manifestation of *Politik Aliran* or sectarianism, based on certain ideological inclination, is K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (The general chairman of Nahdhatul Ulama, NU). For the reason that Abdurrahman Wahid was considered by some observers as the most prominent political voice in the Indonesian political discourse, see for example, the reason given by D.E. Ramage in his Ph.D dissertation, *Ideological Discourse in the Indonesian New Order*, chapter three (pp. 123-173). In many instances, Wahid is seen to condemn ICMI as a sectarian organization with short-term political goals. He also said that ICMI wants to dominate the political access and power and to maintain the political *status quo*. For further details on Wahid's view concerning ICMI, see for example, Abdurrahman Wahid, "ICMI Memang Sekterian, Kok" [ICMI is Sectarian, Indeed], in *Mereka Bicara Tentang ICMI*, pp. 15-23. See also Abdurrahman Wahid (interview), "Intellectual di Tengah Eksklusivisme" [Intellectuals Amid the Exclusivism], *Prisma*, no. 3/XX, Maret 1991, p. 69.

sectarianism and primordialism was bluntly asserted by Abdurrahman Wahid. The latter also referred to the political self-interests of certain Muslim groups which have endeavored to dominate political access and to Islamize the state without paying much attention to the existence of other groups or religions. Furthermore, Wahid argued that ICMI has no clear political agenda in terms of the Islamization process, and that the notion that it can Islamize the state from within is quite dubious. Moreover, given the state's undeniable co-optation with ICMI, one has to wonder about the extent to which the latter can swerve from the state's guidelines, let alone change them. Wahid also argued against the suggestion that ICMI wished to Islamize the state by applying a normative Islamic standard to political attitudes.²³²

The detractors of ICMI have similarly asserted that it is no more than a vehicle for Soeharto to manipulate the political scene, in his attempt to enlist the Muslims' support, having lost the support of his strong primordial ally, ABRI. Accordingly, Ramage noted that:

"Concurrent with the Islamic cultural revival, Muslim recognition that *asas-tunggal* did not impinge upon the faith, a Soeharto perception of 'victory' over Islamic politics, had on Soeharto, and finally the more public manifestation of the President's religiosity must all be considered in the context of perceptible change in the relationship between ABRI and the President. The increasingly divergent views of ABRI from those of Soeharto is most evident in the 1988 MPR election for vice-president. Soeharto's pick, General Sudharmono, met unconcealed opposition from ABRI."²³³

²³² *Ibid*, p.16.

²³³ Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 188.

Likewise, R. William Liddle claims that the government's sanction of ICMI was a political maneuver designed by Soeharto to maintain his own interest. Although Liddle recognizes that the political might of the growing Islamization of Indonesian society and culture is a strong current phenomenon, he nevertheless argues that the government turned to Islam, as specifically manifested in its support of ICMI, in response to the growing of elite conflicts within the authoritarian state.²³⁴

Vatikiotis also echoed the belief that ICMI's formation was instigated and facilitated by Soeharto himself, due to his disagreement with ABRI. Indeed, vatiliotis believes that ICMI's establishment is "a violation of its (ABRI's) 'golden rule' that civilians should not be allowed to build up a personal power base. Using Islam as a platform made Habibie even more unpopular with the generals because this threatened religious harmony."²³⁵ This means that, without the conflict between Soeharto and ABRI, it would have been logically impossible for Soeharto to support a civilian power; previously, civilians had been curbed in the effort to maintain the dominant power of his military-bureaucratic political regime.²³⁶ Moreover, the voices raised against the abuses

²³⁴ Liddle believes that the role of ICMI, so far, can be more accurately seen as the current instance of a recurring New Order political strategy. For further analysis of Liddle's vision that concludes that the formation of ICMI was a strategy by Soeharto to enlist Islamic support as a replacement of ABRI, see R. William Liddle, "ICMI dan Masa Depan Politik Islam di Indonesia" [ICMI and The Future of Political Islam in Indonesia], in Nashrullah Ali-Fauzi, (ed.), *ICMI: antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi*, pp. 201-223. See also David McKendrick, "Indonesia in 1991: Growth, Privilege and Rules," in *Asian Survey*, vol. XXXII, no. 2, February 1992, p. 108; M. Ryaas Rasyid, "Indonesia: Preparing for Post-Soeharto Rule and Its Impact on the Democratization," *Southeast Asia Affairs*, 1995, pp.149-163.

²³⁵ Michael R. J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics Under Soeharto: Order, Development and Pressure for Change*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 208.

²³⁶ For an analysis of how Indonesia is ruled by Soeharto through the two pillars of his regime, namely, the military and the bureaucracy, see Richard Robinson, "Towards A Class

of ABRI's power and their involvement in the representative house (DPR/MPR) from ICMI activists provide a further proof of Soeharto's conflict with ABRI.²³⁷

Having stated that Soeharto shrewdly used the Islamic card to secure his own position, Wahid forwarded another controversial but tactical argument against the Muslim acceptance of the government's helping hand. Wahid disapproves of such an offer, believing that any alliance between the government and religion will only lead to detrimental results for both. Thus, he warns the government against taking any further measures to ingratiate itself to Muslims. Indeed, he believes that the government should be very careful as its actions might inadvertently disturb the process of de-linking Islam and politics. Besides, the government's reconciliation with the Muslims has the potential of re-awakening the *aliran*²³⁸ politics of Indonesian Islam, a threat to the pluralistic interests of the Indonesian nation.²³⁹

Wahid's argument, might best be perceived as a strategy to prevent Islamic society, and specifically Muslim Intellectuals from being co-opted by the government. In other words, Muslim acceptance of the government's helping-hand will only disadvantage Muslims themselves, particularly with regards to the ongoing revivalism which is hopefully strengthening the civil society *vis-a-vis* the hitherto hegemonic state power; government-Muslim interaction may be no more than securing Soeharto's

Analysis of the Indonesian Military Bureaucratic State," *Indonesia*, Cornell Modern Indonesian Project, April 1978.

²³⁷ Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics*, p. 216-217.

²³⁸ The term "aliran" refers to the plethora of distinct ideologies espoused by numerous Indonesian organizations prior to the acceptance of Pancasila as the sole basis of the state or *asas-tunggal*.

²³⁹ Ramage, *Ideological*, p. 189-191.

position at a time he needs it most; having lost the support of ABRI. Wahid's opposition to ICMI's establishment can, implicitly, be regarded as a strategy designed to stop Muslims from giving their support to the government when it is losing its primordial allies. If the Muslims do not cooperate with the government, political change and greater democratization might be more possible, since the government will not have enough power to maintain the *status-quo*. Meaning that the external pressures from outside the state demanding political change will then become more effective, and compelling the government to undertake political improvement in its authoritarian-bureaucratic political order. In this context, the idea of attributing approval of ICMI to a change in Soeharto's religiosity appears baseless and rather erroneous.²⁴⁰

Other critical responses to ICMI's genesis are expressed in the argument that intellectuals should not require such an organization to express their ideas or implement their wishes. Moreover, membership in such an organization will ultimately trap them in a maze of government stipulations thus stifling their critical spirit, independence and intellectual freedom.²⁴¹ In addition, one cannot simply claim to be an intellectual and thus join ICMI; status as an intellectual should be accorded by society's recognition and reverence.²⁴² This opinion is understandable from the perspective of the intellectual's

²⁴⁰ R. William Liddle, *Islam and Politics in the Late New Order Indonesia*, a paper presented at the Conference of Southeast Asia Islam, Jakarta, 1995, pp. 17-25.

²⁴¹ See Ridwan Saidi, "Cendekiawan Muslim Berhulupis Kuntul Baris?" [Muslim Intellectual: Making the Line?] *Media Indonesia*, December 8, 1990. See also Fransiskus Paulus Paskalis Abi, "ICMI dan Pluralisme Kehidupan Keagamaan di Indonesia" [ICMI and the Religious Pluralistic Life in Indonesia], Zuli Qodir dan Lulu M. Iqbal, (eds.), *ICMI, Negara dan Demokratisasi*, p. 63.

²⁴² See M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam*, p. 290.

mission towards his society, and his duty to attempt to solve its problems seriously and responsibly. In other words, the upholders of this idea believe that an intellectual does not earn this status until he merits it on a social and practical level. He does not earn it by declaring himself to be an intellectual and joining an organization that is also a self-declared "intellectual" organization.

Consequently, the debate over intellectual criteria as applied by ICMI, has resulted in another line of critique.²⁴³ It has even been said that the intellectuals who joined ICMI are guilty of an existential betrayal of intellectual values.²⁴⁴ While others believe it is impossible for ICMI's intellectuals to struggle for the actualization of Muslim political aims without immolating their intellectual images.²⁴⁵ This accusation is based on what Julien Benda's criteria for recognizing somebody as an intellectual. The latter believed that an intellectual should not be involved in the achievement of practical or material aims.²⁴⁶ Hence, it was argued that there was no need for an intellectual to join any organization, since such involvement will strip him of his status

²⁴³ Many views on intellectual standards have been expressed in the mass media during the early days of ICMI's creation. Among them, to mention but a few, see for example, Deliar Noer, "Cendekiawan, Politisi dan Teknokrat" [Intellectual, Politician and Technocrat], in *Pelita*, December 12, 1990; H. Sofia Rangkuti-Hasibuan, "Seorang Ilmuwan" [An Intellectual], in *Pelita*, December 21, 1990; Marwah Daud Ibrahim, "Cendekiawan Tak Harus Sendiri" [An Intellectual Must not be Alone], in *Media Indonesia*, February 17, 1991; Nur Cholis Huda, "Cendekiawan dan Ulul Albab" [An Intellectual and an Enlightened Man], in *Surabaya Post*, December 5, 1990; Prasetya Irawan, "Cendekiawan adalah Individualis" [the Intellectual is an Individualist], *Media Indonesia*, March 7, 1991.

²⁴⁴ The accusation that those intellectuals who joined ICMI had betrayed their natural-essential functions was made by Fransiskus Paulus Paskalis Abi. See his article in Zuli Qodir dan Lulu M. Iqbal, (eds.), *ICMI, Negara dan Demokratisasi*, pp. 54.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁴⁶ See Julien Benda, *The Reason of Intellectuals*, (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1928).

as an intellectual. However, in the Islamic context, the status of the intellectual does not automatically disappear or deteriorate upon joining an organization. Therefore, those who insinuate that joining ICMI will ultimately demean an intellectual's status do not have a sound religious basis for their insinuations. Indeed, religiously speaking, there is nothing wrong with joining any organization, particularly one which tries to unite Muslims. Beyond that, Islam often exhorts Muslims to work together in order to organize to establish good order in the *ummah*.

3. Neutral Ideas: Wait and See

Needless to say that, among the Indonesian populace and observers, there are also many opinions expressing neutral feelings towards ICMI's establishment and existence. By neutral feelings, one means that their responses neither support nor oppose ICMI's formation. This neutral stance tends to be more cautious in evaluating ICMI's meaning for Muslim society in particular, and the Indonesian nation in general. Nonetheless, the various neutral responses seem to support and understand the cultural reasons behind ICMI's formation, albeit holding certain reservations with regards to the requirements and path to be followed by ICMI. They declare, for instance, that ICMI should steer clear of sectarianism, exclusivism and politics, and that its primary duty should be to help the common people, work to enhance people's economic well-being *vis-a-vis* the conglomerate economic power.²⁴⁷ Actually, all these requirements are in

²⁴⁷ The various opinions expressing positive expectations towards ICMI can be found in the printed-mass media. See for example, Abrar Muhammad (ed.), *ICMI dan Harapan Ummat*. See also, *ICMI: Dalam Sorotan Pers*.

line with ICMI's aims, as stipulated in its statutes. Nevertheless, many people remain uncertain about ICMI's commitment to fulfill the aims it set out to undertake, along the line ICMI has stipulated. This is quite understandable given ICMI's alliance with the government and the presence of many government bureaucrats among its membership.

One important response must be mentioned here as representative of the neutral stance, namely that of Adnan Buyung Nasution, a prominent senior lawyer and NGO leader who has long campaigned for greater democratization. He maintains that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the establishment of ICMI, although he himself does not want to personally join it. He also added that any struggle in the Indonesian context must be a struggle to improve the prevailing political system, regardless of the means adopted, and that this purpose should become ICMI's main concern. In other words, as long as ICMI really seeks to improve the political system, through democratization and openness, Nasution will definitely support it.²⁴⁸

The opinions stressing the improvement of the prevailing political system portray such an improvement as a task or challenge that will require much effort to fulfill; once fulfilled, however, ICMI's existence will be strengthened by it, they declare. The improvement of the political system and the allowance of political freedom are axiomatic for further social and educational reform, moral improvement, and industrial expansion.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ See, *Mereka Bicara Tentang ICMI*, p. 37.

²⁴⁹ See June O'Connor, *The Quest for Political and Spiritual Liberation: A Study in the Thought of Sri Aurobindo Ghose*, (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Press, Inc., 1977), pp. 55-56.

Ushering a systemic reform of the state essentially relates to the vigor of the intellectual dynamics surging through the country and the willingness to create a propitious socio-political transformation. Moreover, there are two venues open to intellectuals: the conservative venue which does not challenge the status quo and is willing to abide by the norms set by the state, and the progressive venue, requiring greater effort on the part of intellectuals to transform, innovate and lead society to a higher plane. Given ICMI's progressive and dynamic nature, three important questions immediately thrust themselves on our thought. *First*, how far is ICMI committed to its stated aim of spreading knowledge and what is the soul of the knowledge that it seeks to disseminate? *Second*, how does ICMI view its religious responsibility and is it willing to bear the torch of universal-spirituality and abandon any forays in the field of politics, as well as any espousal of political tenets or aims? and *third*, how does ICMI relate to the practical-political realms in terms of the extent of criticism it is willing to express, the changes it is willing to introduce, or, contrarily, the material opportunities it is willing to grab?²⁵⁰ Some observers believe that the answers to all of these questions will determine whether or not ICMI will prove beneficial to the future of the whole Indonesian nation.

The dissemination of knowledge imbued with pragmatic values that address social problems will definitely broaden ICMI's support and stabilize its existence through people's participation in its programs. Furthermore, if the universal-spiritual values of Islam are steadfastly held and espoused by ICMI's intellectuals, this will

²⁵⁰ See, Denny J.A., "Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia: Quo Vadis?" [Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association: Quo Vadis?], *Media Indonesia*, December 6, 1990.

enforce its positive image, and minimize or even eliminate the attacks on its integrity made by its opponents. In addition, if ICMI can indeed play a significant role in critical politics, it will have the potential to undertake the democratization and empowerment of society *vis-a-vis* the hegemony of the state. Lastly, in ensuring the continuation of its socio-economic programs, it has been suggested that ICMI should retain its grass-root power base, which will definitely consolidate its participation in the political arena and the development process of the country.

ICMI's success and the benefit it offers to society will ultimately be judged against its ability to fulfill the aims given above. In addition, the organization must strive to do so without incurring the regime's wrath, suspicion or even making the latter feel threatened in any way. Accordingly, ICMI should be extremely cautious that its promotion of Islamic culture must not carry any hints of Islamic political ideas. Needless to say, such a combination of tasks will prove inordinately difficult to balance and maintain, particularly since no Islamic organization can remain completely aloof from politics.²⁵¹

ICMI's member hail from numerous professions, classes and ideologies. Indeed, they include government ministers, bureaucrats, scientists and a number of Golkar leaders who will undoubtedly support the *status quo*. On the other hand, ICMI has also attracted some moderate Muslim thinkers who are intent on turning ICMI into a forum for Islamic studies and the creation of a positive civil power. Thirdly, there are a

²⁵¹ M. Syafii Anwar, "Negara dan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia Orde Baru" [the State and the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals in the New Order], in M. Imam Aziz, Jadul Maula, and Ellyasa K.H. Darwis, (eds.), *Agama, Demokrasi dan Demokrasi*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1993), p.152.

number of non-governmental Muslim leaders who are highly esteemed as Islamic thinkers, and who want to make ICMI a political instrument for various ambitious programs.²⁵² Hence, this combination of personalities has led some observers to feel pessimistic about the long term existence of ICMI, and its ability to play a significant role in transforming the political system, based on the progressive spirit of the intellectuals alone. Moreover, ICMI's proximity to the government and the prominence of the first group (government bureaucrats) in ICMI's membership, will also hinder the attainment of ICMI's aims at political transformation.²⁵³

Those who remained neutral towards ICMI's establishment have refrained from joining it. Such a stance is based on the attitude of numerous Indonesian Muslims,²⁵⁴ who are generally skeptical of ICMI's ability to promote the economic well-being of the common people, even though they support it in the spirit of *ukhuwwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and consider the organization a positive addition to the total development of Indonesian Muslims.

Moreover, the neutral observers of ICMI have always commended it, throughout its short five year existence, for its consistent attempts to benefit the Indonesian people,

²⁵² See Saiful Mujani, "Mitos Politik Aliran dan Aspirasi Politik ICMI Modernis, Tanggapan Terhadap Adam Schwarz" [The Myth of the Stream Politics and ICMI's Modernist Political Aspiration, Response to Adam Schwarz], in Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi, (ed.), *ICMI antara Status Quo*, pp. 104-105.

²⁵³ See, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 1995, p. 275.

²⁵⁴ In the book entitled *ICMI: di Mata Pemuda, Mahasiswa, Da'i dan Kaum Dhuafa*, we can find an outline of the various neutral responses that emerged after five years of ICMI's existence. On the whole, they express a more positive evaluation of its existence. Under the sense of Islamic brotherhood, they have all supported it, even though they may remain reluctant to join its ranks. Moreover, they have all emphasized that ICMI's success depends on its real work with the common people.

even though it was somewhat influenced by the government. Hence, even though ICMI cannot be said to have engendered any significant changes in the *weltanschauung* of Indonesian politics yet, it has introduced some color to it.²⁵⁵ All in all, the establishment of ICMI, in the eyes of the neutral observers, can be regarded as acceptable; albeit more time is needed to judge its overall effect or benefit to Muslims and Indonesian society as a whole. In short, the stance of the neutral observers involves a period of waiting and seeing before deciding on what the outcome of the whole endeavor is going to be.

²⁵⁵ Nabhan Husein, "ICMI Sekedar Mengubah Cuaca, Bukan Musim" [ICMI is Merely Transforming the Weather, not the Season], in Mahmud F. Rakasima et al., (eds.), *ICMI: di Mata Pemuda*, pp. 133-140.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

One may conclude by stating that ICMI's formation has drawn wide acclaim from Muslims as a culmination of a long effort by Muslim Intellectuals to establish a formal intellectual organization. The primary aim of any such intellectual organization was the promotion of Islam to a significant place in the national and political arenas after years of existing only on the peripheries of national policy making. ICMI's formation was in general regarded as the product of four factors. The first factor was the Islamic socio-cultural renaissance, symbolized by the structural transformation of Muslim society through the increase in the number of educated middle-class men and women and their acquisition of advanced degrees, as well as their improved economic standards, which enable them to form a new social and highly articulate strata. This new Muslim strata was regarded as a "political-resource" that could not be neglected by the New Order government. The second factor was the ongoing Islamization process of the government and bureaucracy, and the fact that many government bureaucrats were becoming increasingly observant of their religious duties. The third factor was the government support of ICMI, which is perhaps a devious ploy to control Islam. According to this perspective, Islam and/or Muslims are utilized as a vehicle for maintaining the status quo, in which the near future of national succession process highly incorporated within it. As for the fourth and last factor, it is held to be a transformation in the Islamic mode of thinking, a shift from a formal-political orientation which calls for the realization of an Islamic political entity, to a socio-

cultural orientation which lays more stress on the implementation of Islamic values in one's daily life. Hence, this new pragmatic orientation is not perceived by the New Order government as a threat to national stability. Indeed, this new orientation is painted as a complement to the Pancasila-based state.

Of all these factors, one is inclined to believe that ICMI is a manifestation of the religious commitment of the Indonesian Muslim society, its power and revival during the past decade. This commitment to Islam not only attests to the staying power of religion in the face of change and adversity on the part of the state's marginalization policy, but by the inability of modernization to purge society of religious doctrinal and traditional values or to hamper their extension to the socio-political fields.²⁵⁶ The implications of such a commitment were indeed noticed by both academics and policy makers, who henceforth cannot launch strategies that disregard or violate religious tenets. Indeed, any new policies have to reconcile the need for change and the adoption of new phenomena with religious dicta. In the Indonesian case, the qualities of tolerance and compromise²⁵⁷ have been emphasized time and again as fundamental elements in the overall promotion and implementation of religious values in politics. They have also been used to minimize the challenge of Islam's more assertive face. Elsewhere, there has been a growing concern for the need for a new understanding and interpretation of Islam

²⁵⁶ In this regard see Said Amir Arjomand, "Social Change and Movements of Revitalization in Contemporary Islam," in James Beckford, (ed.), *New Religious Movements and Rapid Social Change*, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1986), pp. 87-112. See also Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988).

²⁵⁷ Tolerance and compromise must be understood under the banner of the Muslim acceptance of Pancasila as the sole basis of the state since 1984, after which the government seemed to view Islam in a friendlier light. See Ramage, *Ideological Discourse*, p. 184.

itself, in the sense of making it compatible with the objectives of modernity before introducing it to the realms of the statecraft. Such an understanding will hopefully promote the welfare of modern Indonesian society, both complying with and enhancing the nation's long-term ideals.²⁵⁸ In this regard, Islamic modernism can be viewed as a means for facilitating a janus-faceted existence, serving Islam while moving towards modernity.²⁵⁹ It is expected to promote modernization under the aegis of Islam, and by the same token, act to disperse the revivalist inklings of that religion.

As a modern Muslim Intellectual organization, ICMI is expected to embody the genuine spirit of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (mercy to all over the world). Moreover, it is required to bring Islam, via the media, into the mainstream of political life and even to make it part and parcel of the state's fabric. Accordingly, Islam should evolve from the status of the opposition to a symbolic tool or forum for reconciliation and dialogue between the whole Indonesian nation. In other words, Islam should unite and hold the fabric of Indonesian society together, in all its myriad shades.

Societies usually pass through three stages of religiosity. The first of which is the "stage of faith" when people merely perform the religious duties that are accepted by an individual or the whole society as necessary duties, without applying rational

²⁵⁸ The long-term ideals of the Indonesian nation are the attainment of social welfare and justice for the whole Indonesian nation, which have been explicitly stipulated in the *preamble* of Indonesia's basic statute, *Undang-Undang Dasar 1945* and in various Indonesian development programs. In this regard, see for example, Drs. John Surjadi Hartanto, *Memahami UUD 1945, P4, GBHN (1993-1998)*, *Waskat* [Understanding UUD 1945, P4, GBHN], (Surabaya: Penerbit Indah, 1994).

²⁵⁹ This argumentation has been well illustrated by Bassam Tibi in *The Crisis Of Modern Islam: A Pre-Industrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age*, trans. by Judith von Sivers, (Salt Lake City, UT: The University of Utah Press, 1988).

understanding of the ultimate meaning and purpose of such duties. The second stage is the “stage of thought” which occurs after the total submission to religious discipline, but which partakes of a rational understanding of the duties dictated by it. As for the third stage, it is the “stage of discovery” when the believers try to get in touch with the reality of what they understand all about.²⁶⁰ Based on these stages, the existence of ICMI can be regarded a manifestation of all three stages, since it promotes religion through a rational understanding of its tenets that is not satisfied with simple answers but dwells deep into the meaning of religion itself. Such an enlightened attitude is displayed by numerous ICMI members.

The establishment of ICMI has been variously seen as the product of the growing maturity of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals, the renaissance of Islam in the archipelago, as well as the rise of the Indonesian middle-class, all of which have the potential of creating a powerful civil-society that can indeed introduce a more democratic culture in Indonesia. And, even though ICMI, to some extent, seems to be under the wing of the government, it has endeavored to elevate the living standard of the Muslim community, to empower Muslims to play a more significant role in national discourse and development. One must also take cognizance of the fact that ICMI’s membership embodies a variety of professions, backgrounds and political ideologies, and that its establishment was partly due to the religious and intellectual factors, that will help distance ICMI from the government.

²⁶⁰ These three stages were inspired by Allama Muhammad Iqbal. For further explanation of these stages see Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 143-157.

Islamic modernism, as a discursive interpretation of Islam, emerged in the wake of the political and cultural subjugation of Muslim societies to a state of marginalization in the previous decades. This state was a result of social, economic and political drawbacks produced by the modernization process of the twentieth century. Islamic modernism has in many ways been the Islamic equivalent of "*theologie nouvelle*" (new theology) which had sought to reform Catholicism in Europe, and to bring the Church into contact with the modern world.²⁶¹ In this sense, ICMI can utilize Islam in solving the ever-increasing social problems besetting the modern Indonesian society through the application of modern rational and practical approaches in understanding the doctrinal messages of Islam.

To conclude, one must note that the formation of ICMI has triggered various responses from numerous quarters thus suggesting that every move the Islamic society makes will always invite the attention of both Muslims and non-Muslims. Moreover, whatever the causes and responses concerning the establishment of ICMI may be, one must bear in mind that there is no single cause or response that can be claimed to be the most correct one. Rather, ICMI's formation should be regarded as an accumulation of various causes, which have in turn given rise to various responses. Needless to say, whatever motive prompted the establishment of ICMI's phenomena, most of the Indonesian Muslims community is very happy with its establishment, even though people remain both careful and critical, observing and evaluating ICMI's direction, goals

²⁶¹ On "*Theologie Nouvelle*" see, L. Praamsma, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, vol. 7, (St. Catherines, Ontario: Paideia Press, 1981).

and achievements. As such, hope and worry maintain an equal balance in the assessment of the ICMI phenomenon in Indonesia's national development and political discourse.

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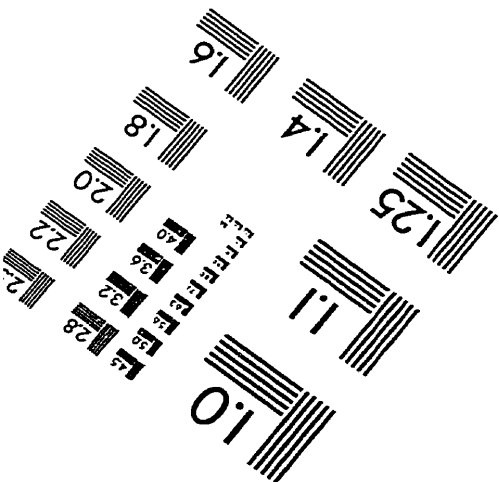
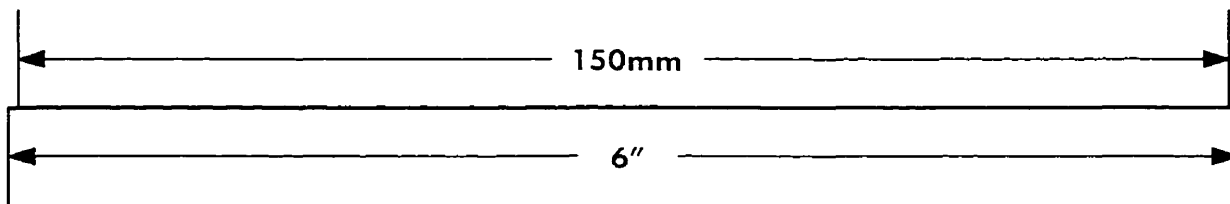
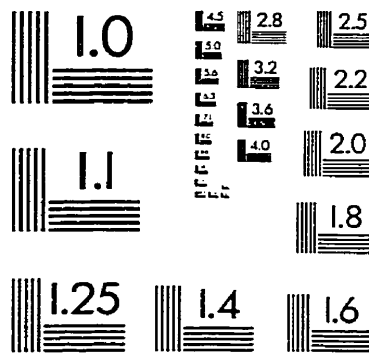
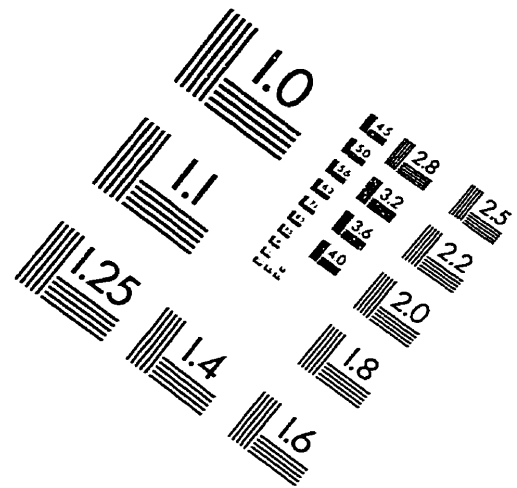
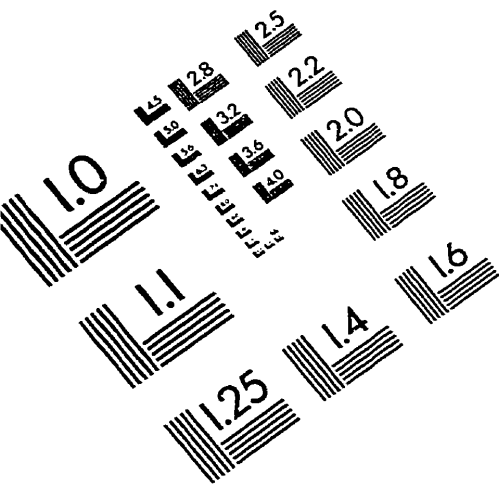
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IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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