

The Police, the Military & Politics in Post-New Order Era's Indonesia

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Abstract: There is tumultuous political relation between The Police and the Military in many countries. In the midst of democracy building, they competed to gain their existence and interest. In post-New Order era of, the relation among them changed fast. The separation of Police institution from military instituton was considered as foundation of professional police. The article argued that, there were other forms of political relation between Indonesia National Police and Armed Forces in Indonesia. It was caused by two factors: first, the history of Indonesia National Police and Armed Forces as the foundation of the country. Second, internal culture of Police and Armed Forces that forced them to play dominant role in politic. It was not a surprise that the political relation between Police and Armed Forces in post-New Order era of Indonesia was on the benefit of their interaction, in term of politic, economy or the use of power. In this context, Indonesia National Police had good access in economy but had to face pressures from the ruling government. On the other side, Armed Forced had some access to economy but faced potential clash between Police and Armed Forced personnel.

Keywords: Police, Armed Forces, Politics, Democracy, post-New Order Era.

Introduction

The Indonesia National Police (Polri) was the key institution for national security, especially to maintain homeland security. The Polri has become inseparable part of the development of the country, whether during independence war, fought local uprisings and also handled civil disturbances and disorder. The Polri took part to fight for and defend the independent of Indonesia, that was the reason behind militaristic culture inside Polri organization.

The militaristic culture was strengthened by the integration of Police into the Armed Forces of Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) in 1961[1]. Indonesian Police experienced many modification before 1961, starting as agency under Prime Minister, part of Ministry of Defense and under coordination of several departments such as State Attorney, Minsitry of Law etc. Culturally, there was no impact on Police under those Ministries as, historically, Police was born during independence war. Police approaches were similar to Armed Forces just like in other thrid world countries, where Police was developed by intervention of Armed Forces [2]. It was not strange, politically, Soekarno then integrated Indonesian Police into the structure of ABRI. Soekanto, Chief of Indonesia Police at the time disagreed with the integration and decided to resign from his position that he had held since Indonesia Police was found [3].

The Polri then became support system of ABRI to protect the regime. On the last year of Soekarno's regime, Polri was just like other institutions, became part of political conflicts. Some leaders of Polri supported Soekarno in his power or took side with groups against Soekarno, just like the Armed Forces, in this case the Army [4]. Indonesia Police support to Soekarno was in form of deployment of one batalyon of Police Mobile Brigade (*Brimob*), a Police paramilitary unit, to battlefiled across the border of Indonesia and Malaysia in Kalimantan under "Dwikora Command" during confrontation policy of "Destroy Malaysia" (*'Ganyang Malaysia'*)[5]. The involvement of Police in "Dwikora Command", issued by Soekarno to reject the independence of Malaysia as part of Britain accomplice to legitimate Britain's and Western Countries role in South East Asia, was to infiltrate and conduct paramilitary activities in Malaysia and Singapore territory[6]. However, in this situation, Indonesia Police (*Polri*) had become part of the conflict between Soekarno, Indonesia Communist Party (*PKI*) and the Army.

The article's argument was on the other form of relation between the Polri, politics and the Military in Indonesia. The argument was based on two issues: first, the history of The Polri and Armed Forces as the foundation of the country. second, politic was already become part of intern culture of Police and Armed

Forces. It was not strange then if the relation of Police, Politic and Armed Forces in the post-New Order of Indonesia was related on the advantage, political and economical, gained from the interaction pattern through power or by force. The Polri although gained good economic access as the institution to maintain homeland security in the post-New Order of Indonesia, the institution faced so many political pressures from the ruling government and political parties. On the other side, the economic access gained by the Armed Forces had made put them in new relation pattern between Polri and Armed Forces in the post-New Order era of Indonesia which sometimes resulted in clash among personnel of Police and Armed Forces.

Politics over the Police: Military and Political Influence

The Polri after the integration into ABRI, faced political intervention and moves which were conducted publicly. The Polri had become target for political support from parties and elites, while some leaders inside Polri also tried to get close to the regime for their own personal advantages in form of promotion. The underlined fact was moves made by extern and intern groups of Polri had put the institution in a dilemma and repeated history of Police in Indonesian politic, especially in the first year of independence and also during liberal democracy era. The difference of police activities in Indonesian politic during both era and after the integration of Police into ABRI was the political actors. In early years of Independence and liberal democracy era, political elites and parties close to Soekarno made political approaches to Polri. There were two groups of elites who made political approaches to Police during the integration of Police in ABRI, the first was elites who supported “Nasakom” ideas, especially Indonesia Communist party (PKI) and Indonesia Nationalist Party (PNI), while the second group was some anti-Communist Generals who controlled the Headquarter of ABRI.

Politics over police institution were conducted openly by Soekarno and elites near him. The most crucial move was the replacement of Chief of National Police, from RS Soekanto Tjokrodiatmodjo to Soekarno Djojonegoro. Soekanto was replaced after he disagreed with Soekarno policy to integrate Police with Armed Forces [7]. Soekarno Djojonegoro was a police leader close to PNI leaders and made policy based on political opportunities. It was not strange then if Soekarno as the Second Chief of National Police was very close to President Soekarno. Unfortunately, the conflict was not resolved inside the Police. Soekarno Djojonegoro did not rule the Police for long and being replaced by Soetjipto Danukusumo with new rank of Commander of Police Force (*Pangak*). Politically, the replacement raised questions and made intern conflicts inside the Polri.

Soetjipto Danukusumo received special acceleration promotion from Lieutenant Colonel (*Ajun Komisaris Besar Polisi*) to Inspector General. The decision to elected Soetjipto Danukusumo as replacement of Soekarno Djojonegoro was then considered controversial and full of political intervention [8]. Aside of the controversy on the election of Soetjipto Danukusumo as Commander of Police Force (*Pangak*), Soetjipto had successfully cleared Polri of political factions. His effort and achievement were considered remarkable as he had successfully removed agents of politics inside Polri. The most distinctive achievement was when he cleared Security Agency Police Corps (*Korps Polisi Dinas Security—Korpolsek*), the early form of Police Intelligence Unit (*Badan Intelijen Keamanan—Baintelkam*), from agents of State’s Central of Intelligence (*Badan Pusat Intelijen—BPI*) led by Soebandrio and military intelligence who wanted to drag Polri into conflict of Soekarno, PKI and Armed Forces [9].

The Polri, since it was founded, has been designed as a national police institution. It was part of agreement of the founding father, that, as a state institution, Indonesia Police (Polri) was a national and integrated institution. It was a bold and sound decision as police units in many regions decided to integrate themselves into national police organization. There were many police organization with national and traditional approaches in Indonesia during early years of Independence. One of them was M. Jasin who founded Police Special Force, an early form of Mobile Brigade (*Brigade Mobil—Brimob*) [10]. However, steps to integrate police organizations into one national police institution was halted by instability of the government. Wars to defend the country independence became the place to integrate police personnel with various background (dutch trained, japanese trained, and local combatant). The next situation also showed how Polri leaders faced difficulties to integrate personnel with various background as the nation was divided into several states as result of Dutch efforts to conquer Indonesia. The local specialties mixed with Dutch influence became trademark of police trained in these states, while Polri still existed in Republic area and based in Purwokerto. Polri leaders kept contacting local police leaders to integrate themselves into Polri. Despite of geopolitic separation, local police leaders in these states agreed to join Indonesia Police Institution (*Jawatan Kepolisian Indonesia*), and their agreement was stipulated in Indonesia Unitary State President Decree No. 150, dated 7th June 1950 [11].

The decision of founding father to formulate a national police organization affected to budget allocation for Indonesia Police. Leaders of Indonesia Police in early years of Independence, during hard time and limited infrastructures, conducted many efforts to

meet Police need. One of them was to take the same step taken by the Armed Forces, doing illegal businesses [12]. Indonesia Police, just like the Armed Forces as an organization allowed to take offensive acts, conducted activities by forcing local leaders to approve their moves only to meet the budget need. Indonesia Police conducted illegal export of copra, rubber and other commodity which in turn raised disappointment of local leaders and triggered PRRI/Permesta rebellion [13]. Leaders of Police and Armed Forces often conducted tricky efforts to find money for their operation need and also welfare of their personnel [14]. The situation happened for quite long until the fall of Soekarno and his Old Order regime.

The strong Armed Forces clutch over *Polri* had made Indonesia Police was weak as an institution, even weaker than Police in the era of Liberal and Guided Democracy. Indonesia Police was considered as “free particle” in early years of independence and liberal democracy era, which tried to develop and expand the institution in the midst of enraging political conflict. Indonesia Police in Guided Democracy era had equal status of Deputy Minister and even ex-officio State Minister. Police in the New Order era was part of the Armed Forces and managed by the Headquarter of Indonesia Armed Forces. Almost all administration process on the development of Indonesia Police should be approved by Headquarter of the Armed Forces and Ministry of Security and Defense Affair. The situation turned off intern creativity in developing professional organization of Indonesia Police, in term of demoratic policing. The most actual change was the organization and culture of Police which adopted military perspective and culture, far from the idealism of Indonesia Police founding fathers.

Indonesia Police role in the New Order era was influenced by stabilizing political situation against separatism such as Jihad Command, East Timor, Aceh Freedom Movement (*GAM*), also movements with religion sentiment such as Warsidi clerical group and Tanjung Priok affair. Professionalism of Indonesia Police in dealing those cases was not as people expected. Indonesia Police was locked and controlled by the policy of the New Order Regime through Ministry of Security and Defense and Headquarter of Armed Forces as direct leader of *Polri*.

The involvement of Indonesia Police in dealing with case of silent killer (*Penembak Misterius-- Petrus*) had turned opinion on Police as the executor [15]. Indonesia Police was even considered as corrupt institution as the eradication effort of crimes and society hazards were overruled by the policy of the ruling regime. People clearly saw and felt how *Polri* had turned into corrupt institution on the street and in the office. People were reluctant to report crime to Police as

there was saying that “if you reported losing a goat to Police you will lose two goats” or “to be a police witness is almost as bad being the criminal offender”[16]. Aside of that, people had poor information and understanding on police role in the society. People preferred to establish their own security system as part of civil defense developed from the concept of Armed Forces’ territory command. Non-state policing organization in the people supposed to help Police in performing tasks. However, in Indonesia, it became problem to the society. Non-state policing developed by Armed Forces was then modified in form of Self-Security Organization (*Satuan Pengamanan*) by Indonesia Police, Civil Defense (*Hansip*), Militia organization, Political Party Security Guard (*Pam Parpol*), down to traditional security unit like *Pecalang* in Bali. Their presence had made people gain power and control over their own territory in order to arrest, judge and punish [17]. Community Security System (*Sistem Keamanan Lingkungan--Siskamling*) was developed by *Polri* from traditional security manning named *ronda kampung* and *kentongan* and became basic of a failure community policing system in Indonesia [18]. People at the time thought security was the sole responsibility of Police, as people considered police personnel were wealthy people [19]. The responsibility of police should be more than just receiving report from the people. This situation was classic debate on the role of the State in protecting and securing the people.

The relation between Police and local government in the New Order era was related to the Police role in homeland security (*Kamdagri*), meaning that, even if each institution has its own law, but Police cooperated with local government to perform public security and overcome hazards in the society. Local Police and government were doctrinized to maintain stability and security to support government development program. It means the role of Indonesia Police as a national police organization was not affected with technical operation agreement between local police and local government. There was fund allocated for local police through local budget and approved by local House of Representative to support vertical technical support. The amount varied depends on the ability of the region [20]. The interesting part was that, the budget allocation was considered normal as usual in the New Order era although the use of the budget could not be accounted in State Budget system. It was not strange that the allocated budget for Police in State Budget did not have significant annual increase and did not meet the requirement as Police should share budget with other Forces in the Ministry of Security and Defense Affair. The impact was on the development of Police as an organization. The support aid from local governments could not be accounted for since most of them were directly received by personal leaders of local police, not to mention other informal sources of

fund such as illegal gambling, illegal backing in form of friend participation (Partisipasi Teman--Parman), community participation (Partisipasi Masyarakat--Parmas) and crooks participation (partisipasi kriminal--Parmin) [21].

The Fall of New Order: New Chapter of POLRI

The fall of New Order Regime had given a little hope to *Polri*, as there was desire to be separated from military control in order to reform police organization. The fall of Soeharto had implied on the poor consolidation of Indonesia Armed Forces (ABRI), the government faced little option but to reduce the role of military in regions as part of political reform. The revocation of Military Dual Function and Territory Command had become reform issue from civil society reflecting their disappointment on military practices in public areas. The situation was well monitored by *Polri* to issue the need to separate Police from Military organization [22]. The issue was responded well by President Habibie, replacing Soeharto, by a President Decree on 1st April 1999 stipulating the separation process of *Polri* from Indonesia Armed Forces organization due to differences in scope of work of security and defense. President Habibie effort was then supported by People's Assembly in year 2000 through Decree No VI/2000 on the separation of Police from Indonesia Armed Forces organization and Decree No VII/2000 on the role of *TNI* and *Polri*.

The separation process was continued by President Abdurrahman Wahid through Decree No 98/2000 on the position of *Polri* in law enforcement and homeland security under President Desk in order to clear and remove militaristic culture inside Police organization. The situation urged reform, improvement and also development of police organization under President Desk.

The separation of Police from Armed Forces organization marked new chapter for *Polri* to leave the curbed situation. As a state institution, *Polri* was supported with Law No. 2 year 2002 on Indonesia National Police (*Polri*), which at the same time Government also issued Law No. 3 year 2002 on State Defense for *TNI*. The Law of State Defense was then improved two years after that through Law No. 34 year 2004 on Indonesia Armed Forces. Indonesia National Police then developed and improved the organization internally and externally. However, the separation was not without problem. The Law did not completely protect *Polri* from political intervention by elites and Armed Forces. The relation between *Polri* and local government also became obstacles in developing police organization. Steps to gain political support from Police were conducted by all Presidents in post-New Order of Indonesia. It was a real challenge for *Polri* as part of consequences of being under the President Desk. The

politicization efforts were various, starting from to support certain elite in political conflict, the election of *Kapolri* up to the pressure during legislative and presidential election.

Politicization of police also happened at the level of province, regency and also municipality. The differences were on the initiative of local police leader where politic was treated as mutualistic symbiosis; a profitable political and economical subject. Local leaders often gained support from *Polri* and also *TNI* against impeachment, legal issue and mass rally. The support of local police and armed forces were implied by political process in Local House (*DPRD*). The outcome was clear where the administration of local leaders were secured against protesters on street or political process in the Local House. Aside of support from local police and armed forces, local leaders also spent millions up to billions of rupiah to bribe members of the Local House for support. Economical support gained by *Polri* was budget aid, donation and security coordination fund. Beside that, local police also gained money through informal sources such as amusement center, illegal gambling and prostitution.

Based on description above, the research on the Strengthen over Indonesia Police Organization in Post-New Order of Indonesia is important and interesting subject. There are problems that haunted *Polri* as a national police institution ever since it was founded until now. The problem related to the existence and position of *Polri* as an institution including strong militaristic culture inside the organization and scope of work. Both subjects clearly affected the organization of *Polri* ever since it was founded until now. The position of *Polri* was not ideal and vulnerable against political moves in the center down to local government. The role of *Polri* as State Institution with legality to conduct offensive acts was part of strong militaristic culture. Indonesia Police was often considered as watchdog of the ruling regime, especially in the New Order era due to Police repressive approaches in security affair and neglecting the preventive and pre-emptive efforts. The relation between *Polri* and local government in the decentralization era was limited in coordination aspect, not as subordinate of local administration.

The context of strengthening the organization of *Polri* in the post-New Order Era of Indonesia was assumed as result of political reform and democracy transition, which has opened opportunity to improve state organization and public participation. It was also marked by decentralization policy which opens democracy process at the lower level. The organization of *Polri* is part of state institutions to improve the civil society. However, *Polri* is also a state institution with authorization to conduct offensive acts. These roles have made *Polri* as an actor for democracy transition

process. Indonesia Police (*Polri*) should have ability to be independent and professional state institution.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research was to elaborate the strengthening of *Polri* as an organization after the separation of *Polri* from TNI organization, based on the context of relation between *Polri* with national government, Armed Forces and local government. There was significant influence of these three institutions on the strengthening of *Polri* as an organization. They affected police policy from upstream to downstream, in meaning, they may affect directly or indirectly police scope of works and operational aspect. The research may also describe patterns of relationship between *Polri* and three institutions mentioned through two approaches; politicization and decentralization. The research also analyzed the strengthening of Police organization in the context of democratic policing, where *Polri* should show their professional performance in strengthen democracy process. Another subject of the research was on the impact of strengthening the police organization to the relation of *Polri* with three institution mentioned and public services. Theoretically, the research is also to enrich discourses on politics over police organization by State and military in decentralization era. The research should also develop new concepts on relation between Police, State and Military in the new democratic country like Indonesia and also in other third world countries.

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