

# The Way to the Man Is the Heart

*Sukarno: An Autobiography, as told to Cindy Adams (Bobbs-Merrill, 324 pp. \$6), provides a perspective for the attempted coup in the Southeast Asian republic the end of last September. John M. Allison has been U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia.*

By JOHN M. ALLISON

FOR THOSE who want to know what it is that makes Sukarno, the vain, mercurial leader of 100 million people, tick, here is the answer. According to Bobbs-Merrill, Cindy Adams, the wife of comedian Joey Adams, spent some eleven months over several years helping the Indonesian President tell his story for publication. She has done a good job. I have known Sukarno since the autumn of 1952 and for one year lived in his country as American Ambassador, in which capacity I came into constant contact with him. In this book I can hear him talking again.

Now the events of the attempted coup in Djakarta the night of September 30-October 1 and what has happened since become more understandable. Sukarno, the man who has dedicated his life to molding a unified, independent nation out of the many disparate groups which make up Indonesia, is once again, perhaps for the last time, trying to prevent his country from flying apart at the seams. One may believe, as I do, that he is wrong in the manner in which he is attempting this, but anyone who really knows Sukarno and has made any effort to understand him cannot doubt his love for his people and his determination to see Indonesia take its place as one of the leaders of Southeast Asia.

Sukarno tells how the American Government stopped Marshall Plan aid to Holland after the United Nations Security Council had reported the Dutch had invaded the territory of the Indonesian Republic in 1948 while the Renville truce was still operative. He also refers to the more recent demands in the United States Senate and elsewhere that all aid to Indonesia be suspended. Some of the reasons why U.S.-Indonesian relations went from extreme friendship to almost complete enmity become clear in the pages of this absorbing story.

Sukarno quite rightly complains that the United States Government and

many of its leaders have not understood him. But it is equally clear, from what is included in his book, that Sukarno has never really understood the U.S. and its leaders. I'm afraid some of the revelations of Sukarno's beliefs, desires, and actions will repel many Americans, among them the average high-level bureaucrat with his conscious or unconscious inhibitions and generally conventional outlook. Americans are inclined to want their public men, at least in public, to observe all the rules and customs of the tribe. Sukarno is often too frank, too inclined to believe that the normal rules do not apply to him as long as he is helped in his main task of building an independent, unified Indonesia.

However, these foibles should not impede the course of normal government relations and diplomatic contact. On the part of America's representatives in Djakarta they rarely did, but when policy proposals reached Washington it was frequently difficult to get agreement for anything wanted by "that man Sukarno." Too often this disapproval of him was ill concealed, and a bad situation was made worse. Too often Washington has insisted that Sukarno conform to its standards and methods and has not been able or not tried to understand that he is the leader of an Asian people who is acting in an Asian way, which, while it may not be our way, is for them perhaps not too bad.

That Sukarno has not only resented this but that many of his actions have been the result of such American attitudes is made clear in his autobiography. Time and time again throughout the book Sukarno expresses his love and admiration for Americans and what America has stood for in the past. Towards the end of the book he says: "Over the years I have desperately wanted to be America's friend, but she wouldn't let me. She repeatedly mistakes foreign aid for friendship."

He then tells how whenever he travels to Moscow or Peking he is given the treatment befitting the head of a nation of 100 million people, with parades and gun salutes and bands playing the Indonesian national anthem. He is met at the airports by the heads of state and, as he says, "The people with me are proud of me, proud that our down-trodden country has taken its place among the great nations."

When he comes to America, however, he is met by lesser officials, and on at least one occasion, he reports, President Eisenhower kept him waiting almost a full hour in an anteroom before receiving him. To us this may seem a small matter but to the head of one of the new nations, which has but recently come out of colonialism and is crying for recognition and status as an important, equal member in the family of nations, it can be all-important.

Sukarno's experience with President Kennedy, who treated him as an equal, was different. "Perhaps if Mr. Kennedy were still here," he writes, "our countries might not have drifted so far apart."

Many Americans will say this attitude of Sukarno's is childish. He will admit it. In the beginning of his story he complains of people who do not understand



—Rochelle Girson.

Balinese purification ceremony following the mass cremations—  
"an Asian way, which . . . is for them perhaps not too bad."

him and explains: "They do not all see that the way to approach me is strictly through the heart—that I am like a child."

Sukarno repeatedly insists that he is not and never could be a Communist. This is not only because of his belief in God, which was deepened during his periods of imprisonment by the Dutch, but also because Communism requires slavish obedience, and, as he says, "Anybody who ever came near to Sukarno knows he has too much ego to be a slave to anybody—except his people."

Sukarno has believed the Communists could and should be included as part of a unified Indonesia, and for some time he managed to keep them under some sort of control. The abor-

tive coup of last September 30 seemed to indicate he was losing that control. What the future will bring to Indonesia is still uncertain. However, this book will be an indispensable background for unfolding events. It does much to explain Sukarno's and most Indonesians' preference for Socialism over capitalism, why Sukarno and Hatta could not work together, why Western style parliamentary democracy and freedom of the press have not flourished in Sukarno's Indonesia, and many other fascinating bits of untold history.

Americans may still disapprove of Sukarno but surely after reading this book they must recognize that here is a man who cannot be ignored and who must not be underrated.

## The Man Who Lost Russia

***Russia and History's Turning Point***, by Alexander Kerensky (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 558 pp. \$8.95), a political autobiography, seeks the causes for the overthrow of the author's Provisional Government by the Bolsheviks in 1917. Harry Schwartz is a member of *The New York Times's* Editorial Board. His latest books are "China" and "The Soviet Economy Since Stalin."

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

NEAR the end of this book Alexander Kerensky tells of a 1923 conversation in which a German Social Democrat asked him, "But how could you have lost power when you held it all in your hands?" How many thousands of times since that fateful November day almost half a century ago must that question or its equivalent have confronted Kerensky! One would have to be completely devoid of human sympathy not to understand his internal ordeal these past decades as he has watched the consequences of his defeat.

Kerensky's view emerges clearly enough. His régime was overthrown primarily because of the blows inflicted upon it by the "right," *i.e.*, by those who wanted to replace the young Russian democracy with a military dictatorship, and who accordingly supported General Kornilov's abortive coup of August 1917 with all its disastrous political and psychological consequences. Kerensky considers that his "one great mistake" was in not speaking out clearly enough against the coup, which he knew was being prepared. He considers that the

campaign of slander "aimed both at the Provisional Government and at me personally in the wake of the Kornilov affair was undoubtedly one of the major factors in the destruction of democracy in Russia."

There is a goodly measure of truth in all this, for the widespread belief that Kerensky had collaborated with Kornilov and also wanted a dictatorship—but with himself, not the general, as dictator—helped mightily to discredit the Provisional Government. There is also much truth in Kerensky's remarks on the blindness of the moderate leftists, who failed to understand Lenin's true character and goals, and who therefore in varying degrees cooperated with the Bolsheviks, or at least refrained from opposing them vigorously when such



—From the book.

Kerensky in Paris, 1918—he was the Provisional Government.

opposition might have been effective.

But this is a politician's worm's-eye view of history, appropriate enough on the morrow of a battle, but hardly satisfying as the fruit of almost five decades of reflection. In this view—as in the book generally—the people of Russia and the mighty forces churning them in 1917 appear only dimly, and the impression is given that if only a handful of generals and politicians had been more far-sighted things might have turned out differently.

The thesis would be more defensible if the author had been readier to re-examine in the light of their consequences the policies he himself followed. Kerensky, after all, was practically *the* Provisional Government for most of its short life, the "persuader-in-chief," as he proudly reminds us in a footnote, whose oratorical genius in the first post-czarist months did so much to sway the multitudes toward respect for his régime. But there came a time when Kerensky's speeches no longer exercised their earlier sorcery; they brought only ribald mockery from masses and politicians alike. Was it simply slander that produced this change? The record suggests a negative answer.

The fact which Kerensky fails to recognize is that his own understanding and his own policies did not keep pace with the progressive radicalization of Russia during 1917. That evolution—of which Trotsky wrote so eloquently in his history of those fateful days—was ultimately what determined the outcome. To the bitter end Kerensky remained the classic middle-class radical. His concerns were the need for continuing Russia's participation in the great slaughter of World War I, for full, formal legality in handling the land reform the peasants demanded, for preserving the Russian empire as intact as possible. Kerensky might have held his power longer if he had responded to the cry for peace at any price, and if he had had fewer lawyer's scruples about how the peasants took over land. But then he would not have been Kerensky.

This book is, of course, more than mere self-justification, and it can be read as a fascinating personal memoir of life in Russia between the 1880s and 1917. But self-justification before history is clearly the book's primary objective, and as such it fails. Rather, it tends to make more understandable the judgment pronounced many years ago by N. N. Sukhanov in his irreplaceable account of the Bolshevik Revolution: "I used to say that Kerensky had golden hands, meaning his supernatural energy, amazing capacity for work, and inexhaustible temperament. But he lacked the head for statesmanship and had no real political schooling."