

PIR-H¹

Persatuan Indonesia Raya- Hazairin

Greater Indonesian Association– Hazairin

This political group represented part of a split from an original group known as Persatuan Indonesia Raya. The original party was quite influential in pre-election Cabinets with representation in all but the first PNI led Cabinet of Prime Minister Wilopo. In the 2 Cabinets prior to the 1955 elections, the party enjoyed 3 Cabinet positions and in the pre-elected parliament occupied 17 out of 232 seats, equal with PSI as the third largest party in parliament at the time.

The party was nationalist in orientation, arguably a little more conservative than the lead nationalist party, PNI. For example it is reported the PIR did not take a hard line position with regard to Vice President Hatta seeking to engage in dialogue with the Dutch as part of the wider struggle for full independence.

However as so often with Indonesian political parties then and now, fragmentation became an issue and by the time of the 1955 elections the party split into two major groupings, known as the PIR-Wongsonegoro (after the faction leader and frequently re-appointed minister Mr Wongsonegoro) and PIR-Hazairin (taking the name of this faction's leader – Prof Hazairin another appointee to pre-election Cabinets). The faction of Prof Hazairin played an active role in the last Cabinet led by Burhanuddin Harahap (Masjumi) before the 1955 elections, including as First Deputy Prime Minister, the same position held by Mr Wongsonegoro in the outgoing Cabinet of Ali Sastroamidjojo (PNI).

Perhaps because of this party splintering and perhaps due to a weak political base from which to build a firm electoral base, both factions performed poorly – separately securing 1 seat each in the post-election Parliament. From this poor result both parties' fate was sealed and neither enjoyed Cabinet level.

In the 1955 elections PIR-W secured its best result in Nias (20%) in North Sumatra, West Lombok (11%) in the then province of Nusa Tenggara, while on Java the party secured 9% in Bantul, Special Territory of Yogyakarta. PIR-H secured an extraordinary 53% of the vote in Bima on Sumbawa – actually securing over half its national result in this one kabupaten. It also gained 15% of the vote in Sintang, West Kalimantan and 7% of the vote in Kutai, East Kalimantan.

In the local elections of 1957 and 1958 neither party played an active role, although PIR-H managed to retain its 7% of the vote on Kutai, East Kalimantan.

¹ Lots of interesting perspectives and information on this party can be found in Feith, Herbert “The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia”, Cornell University Press, USA, 1962. Specific comments on the origins of the party as it began can be found on pages 143-144.