

REVISITING THE SPIRIT OF RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM IN THE ERA OF PLURALISM AND GLOBALIZATION: Reading the Text of NDP of HMI*

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Abstract

This article is a reflection of the text of NDP (Nilai Dasar Perjuangan/Basic Principles of Struggle) text held by HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam/Muslim Student Association) as a basis of their activism struggle in Indonesia. The text consists of eight sections covering many aspects, such as theology, anthropology, sociology, and epistemology. By critical thinking, the NDP text of HMI should be transformed continuously toward an era of global diversity and plurality. In Indonesian context, there has been a fundamental change along with the democratization that brings out an openness and multi-party political system. This is important regarding that the NDP of HMI has been drafted in 1960 and 1970 when Nurcholis Madjid era faced the context of socio-political thought. The study found that the NDP of HMI is required to be changed in the context of new world order. It is not a sacred text, so the change is a necessity.

Artikel ini merupakan refleksi dari teks NDP (Nilai Dasar Perjuangan) yang dimiliki HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam) sebagai dasar untuk perjuangan aktivisme mereka di Indonesia. Teks terdiri dari delapan bagian yang meliputi banyak aspek, mulai dari teologi, antropologi, sosiologi, hingga epistemologi. Dengan pembacaan secara kritis terhadap teks NDP HMI di tengah perubahan dunia global yang terus mengalami transformasi menuju era keragaman dan kemajemukan global. Pada konteks lokal Indonesia, juga telah terjadi perubahan yang mendasar seiring dengan gelombang demokratisasi yang memunculkan era keterbukaan dan sistem politik multipartai. Hal ini penting, mengingat NDP HMI disusun dalam kurun waktu antara tahun 1960 hingga 1970-an di mana era Nurcholis Madjid menghadapi konteks pemikiran dan sosial-politik pada waktu itu. Studi ini menemukan bahwa NDP HMI sudah sewajarnya memerlukan perubahan di tengah konteks dan tatanan dunia yang baru. NDP HMI bukanlah teks yang suci, sehingga perubahan adalah sebuah keniscayaan.

Keywords: Muslim Students Association; islamic ideology; criticism to nationalism and Islam; pluralism

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A. Preface

This writing is a critical insight into the HMI's ideology, a Muslim Student Association established in 1947 by Lafran Pane and other fourteen students in Yogyakarta. Since its establishment, the association has played a role in, and contributed to, political and intellectual movement of Indonesia. The HMI has produced many important political leaders and intellectual figures who contributed to the development of the nation, particularly during the New Order era. In discussing the theme, this writing will begin with a brief history and role of the HMI during the New Order in politics and the way in which the HMI changed the direction in political strategy during the reform period after Soeharto's fall. Then, the article will focus on the critical insight into stagnant and sluggish HMI's ideology to face the new era of pluralism and globalization. In this vein, this article will closely read the text of the NDP. Many ideas contained in the text will be read critically. From the reading, we learn that the text is outdated, and it thus needs rethinking for revisions. Reading the text will also offer a broader and fresh perspective in criticizing the ideas contained in it. In this rapidly globalizing world, the association needs another perspective with the spirit of pluralism for younger generation.

B. Flexibility and Pragmatism

Along the history of the nation of Indonesia, particularly during the New Order and reform period, the HMI played a vital role in the national politics and contributed to the intellectual discussion in public spaces. The role of this students association was more apparent during the fall of Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, and the transition from the first to the second president Soeharto. During the New Order the HMI cadres were actively involved in the administration and bureaucracy.¹ In this regard, this students association has produced many national leaders in many leading fields such as politics,

¹For some studies of HMI, see for example, Agussalim Sitompul, *Menyatu dengan Umat, Menyatu dengan Bangsa: Pemikiran Keislaman Keindonesiaan HMI, 1947-1997* (Ciputat: PT. Logos Wacana Ilmu bekerjasama dengan Lembaga Indonesia Adidaya, 2002); Agussalim Sitompul, *Pemikiran HMI dan Relevansinya dengan Sejarah Perjuangan Bangsa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Integrita Dinamika Press, 1986).

economy, government, NGO, religious organizations, and intellectual movement. Without belittling their roles in national politics, rise and falls of many national figures and leaders trained in the HMI, becoming part of ruling party and opposition in the governments, this writing offers a reflection of what can perhaps be done for the next generation of the organization in terms of intellectual and ideological role in the country, not only exposing the golden time of the previous generation with their contribution to the national development. This writing aims at reflecting and questioning the role of the HMI for the next development as a Muslim student organization which has produced notable intellectual leaders or ideologists for the nation of Indonesia. However, the organization during the reform era seems stagnant and is no longer dynamic in intellectual movement. Apparently, most of the cadres of the HMI are interested only in politics, administration and bureaucracy, not in intellectual movement which did not have much implication in power and economy as in politics.

Along the history of the nation, HMI activists came to political stage in the aftermath of crisis, such as during the time of consolidation of the New Order after the fall of Sukarno. After the failure of eclectic, accommodative, and syncretic approaches of Sukarno in politics and ideology (as he attempted to unite all elements of the nations from religion, nationalism, socialism, to communism), the New Order came with a new ideology. The new regime did not continue what Soekarno has done, but offered a militaristic strategy in building the nation with the spirit of homogenizing diversity. In the aftermath of the 1965 upheaval, communism, or broadly speaking socialism, was seen dangerous and therefore banned from the nation: any elements of the two were swept away particularly in all public positions and civil servants. The development program of the New Order was performed with the propaganda and political tactic of militaristic homogenization. The HMI joined the government playing many important roles and taking many important positions in the ministries and directorates of the ministries. Their roles can still be seen after the reform period. One of an example of this is Akbar Tanjung, a Golkar politician and close ally to Soeharto whose political career still survived until the reform period. Due to Tanjung's role, Golkar, unlike communism or PNI

(Nationalist Indonesian Party founded by Sukarno) which died out after Sukarno's fall, remains one of major political parties during the reform period. Many said that without Akbar Tanjung's leadership and political maneuvers during the reform period, Golkar, unlike PKI (Indonesian Communist Party), would have not survived. The point made in this regard is that Tanjung's leadership in Golkar and his role in managing the party represent the role of HMI in politics and bureaucracy of his generation, which remains influential and vital for the younger generation of HMI until now.

Many alumni of the HMI (or KAHMI/the family of the HMI alumni) after the reform period took the path of the previous generation, building careers in politics, starting from serving as assistants of their seniors, and then taking similar roles as leaders of political parties. An example of this is Anas Urbaningrum who represents this strategy along with his tragic career. Anas' political career was marked with flexibility and pragmatism. He was not fanatic with only a single political party, but moving from one to another. He was raised for the first time in Golkar, he then moved to Democrat Party/PD (founded by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, SBY). He was a rising star in the party, particularly he finally became the top leader of the Democrat.² However, his fall was marked with his involvement in corruption bringing him to jail. The point made in this regard is the way in which he moved from one party to another disregarding ideological principles of different parties. Anas represents the flexibility of HMI cadres in building political career during the era of multi-party system. Note that the reform era witnessed the change in political landscape of Indonesia from three parties during the New Order (Golder, PDIP/Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle, and PPP/Unity Development Party) to many parties founded after Soehartno's fall. It should be noted that many HMI alumni played roles in many political parties, a fact which indicates their pragmatism and flexibility. HMI politicians can change the direction and tone of their ideology and political party, if necessary. As politicians, their goal in their careers is to achieve high positions in administration and leadership. To put simply, the HMI cadres are successful in politics. However, the association fails

²Al Makin, "The Phenomenon of Anas Urbaningrum," *The Jakarta Post*, June 7, 2010.

to provide a home for a fresh intellectual movement. The HMI's intellectual side lags behind compared to its political movement. In other words, the HMI politicians played good roles due to their flexibility in taking pragmatic steps in moving from one party to another and achieving top positions in leadership. However, intellectual tradition of the HMI seems forgotten. The cadres were interested more in politics but leaving the intellectual arena behind.

As part of the New Order, the HMI cadres competed and collaborated with other elements, such as military faction, NGO, and religious organization. The cadres were successful in maintaining their position and building partnership and winning political competition. During the reform era, the political landscape changed. A new students organization PMII (Islamic Indonesian Students Movement) came to the national stage. This became a main competitor and yet collaborator of the HMI. During the New Order, the PMII, unlike the HMI, had no opportunity to join the government administration. But it is noteworthy that since the New Order, the HMI showed no sectarianism, leaving traditional emotional ties of either Muhammadiyah or NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) behind, forming a new identity as the HMI cadres. It is important to note that NU and Muhammadiyah have become major factions in politics in Indonesian Muslims. Any political competition in Indonesian Islam cannot avoid the two divisions. In many campuses the issue of Muhammadiyah and NU dominated politics particularly in the succession of campus leadership.³ However, some HMI cadres played good roles in decreasing the tension, or at least playing in between the two major forces of Muslim politics. Unsurprisingly, HMI cadres can be found in both NU and Muhammadiyah. During the reform era, politics changed, so did the HMI. During the authoritarian regime of Soeharto, the HMI did well in joining the government. During the reform period they did so once more by offering their cadres with the spirit and messages of openness, democracy, and multi-parties orientation. Indeed, the HMI does not bring one color or tone, but plural and heterogenic politics, in which many cadres joined different political affiliations.

³In many successions of rector or dean in many Muslim universities, the division of NU and Muhammadiyah remain important and was used to divide the positions among warring factions. The two groups competed for power and oftentimes compromised to share the task of administration and bureaucracy in campuses.

B. Stagnant Ideology

Despite all successful political and leadership roles in the national level, HMI cadres seem to forget intellectual and ideological movement. This is unsurprising as many organizations in the post reform era are not tied to a certain ideology; most of them took a pragmatic and flexible tactic in the political choice. This, however, becomes disadvantageous when radicalism and conservatism entered public and influenced the process of democratization. The free public space in the wave of democratization also gave room to conservatism and radicalism which, on the other hand, want to silence many liberal and moderate voices. Radical ideology, of course, opposes this free space and wanted nothing but to dominate the space by threatening democracy⁴. However, radical and conservative group at the same time can also be used for political purpose by means of intimidation, such as the FPI which attacked many minorities and groups of progressive Islam.⁵ Oftentimes, the HMI cadres built relation with the radical organizations. The HMI cadres are indeed fluid in their political strategy and tactic, so much so that they can join many different groups by showing flexibility in political choices and attitudes. Indonesia is a country whose citizens are serious with religion. Their sentiment to religion is seriously taken and influenced political attitude, although in many general elections Islamist political parties never win the election. Thus, the HMI cadres, as a Muslim organization can use religious sentiment in their many maneuvers.⁶

Nonetheless, the greatest icon in the intellectual movement in the HMI remains Nurcholish Madjid (Cak Nur), whose pluralist and secular ideas serve as a main foundation of the national development of the New Order. His words and slogans become important for younger generation to cultivate pluralism and

⁴Al Makin, *Challenging Islamic Orthodoxy, Accounts of Lia Eden and Other Prophets in Indonesia* (Dordrecht, Holland; Cinnaminson [N.J.], U.S.A.: Springer, 2016); Al Makin, *Keragaman Dan Perbedaan, Budaya Dan Agama Dalam Lintas Sejarah Manusia* (Yogyakarta: Suka Press, 2016); Al Makin, "Revisiting Indonesian Public Reactions against Danish Cartoons Depicting Prophet Muhammad," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2015), pp. 195–229.

⁵Al Makin, "The Death of Reason the Destruction of Nation," *The Jakarta Post*, June 7, 2008.

⁶Yuhiril Ihza Mahendra recently tried to bid for the position of governor of Jakarta competing with Ahok Basuki Cahya Purnama. Mahendra seems to gather conservative groups to raise the issues of racism, such as pointing Purnama's Chinese ancestry. Indonesia is quite divisive with the issue of Chinese and native (pribumi) relation due partly to successful endeavor of Chinese descendants in economy. Jealousy often dominates the hatred racism.

spread tolerance among religious diversity in many cities, mainly starting from Jakarta and Yogyakarta. In Yogyakarta, UIN (State Islamic University) becomes a center of pluralism, whereas in Jakarta UIN and Paramadina are associated with Madjid's ideas. Due to Madjid's ideas, some intellectual Indonesian Muslims now comfortably accept, or at least discuss, many terms such as, secularization, pluralism, the divorce of religion and state, Indonesian theology, reinterpretation of Islamic doctrine, social piety, progressive Islam, Indonesian fiqh (Islamic law), etc⁷. In the Indonesian intellectual arena Madjid's rise coincided another spirit of pluralism launched by Abdurrahman Wachid (Gus Dur), a chairman of the biggest Muslim organization NU.⁸ Wachid attracted a large number of audience as the NU has millions of members across Java and other major islands of Indonesia. The two voices of pluralism, secularism, and democratic movement during the height of Soeharto's regime cannot be ignored in looking at the history of Indonesia. Particularly Wachid was often faced suppression from Soeharto, but he managed to play a political strategy, which fortunately saved his career and life. Madjid, on the other hand, retained his position outside political arena. The two, however, are different in their audience. Whereas Madjid delivered pluralist messages to some intellectual circles, such as in Yogyakarta and Jakarta, Wachid did so to a broader audience among the NU members. Consequently, their languages are also different: Madjid used a more academic language in the circles of students in universities, whereas Wachid's language was aimed at larger number of people from various backgrounds.⁹ Unsurprisingly, Madjid often used academic jargons, whereas Wachid used humorous rhetoric entertaining audiences. However, notwithstanding differences in language and audience, both have a similar agenda in delivering messages to Indonesian Muslims that Indonesian Islam has many unique characteristics, different from Islam found in

⁷Ann. Kull, *Piety and Politics: Nurcholish Madjid and His Interpretation of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (Lund: Department of History and Anthropology of Religions Lund University, 2005); Greg Barton, "Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid as Intellectual Ulama: The Meeting of Islamic Traditionalism and Modernism in Neo-modernist Thought," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 8, no. 3 (1997): 323-50; Greg Barton, *Gagasan Islam liberal di Indonesia: pemikiran neo-modernisme Nurcholish Madjid, Djohan Effendi, Ahmad Wahib dan Abdurrahman Wahid, 1968-1980* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999).

⁸Barton, "Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid as Intellectual Ulama: The Meeting of Islamic Traditionalism and Modernism in Neo-modernist Thought," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* Vol. 8, No. 3 (1997), pp. 323-50.

⁹Mark Woodward, conversation with Mark Woodward, July 30, 2016.

other places in other countries in the world. Islam and patriotism, religion and love of nation, should go hand in hand. Islam does not become an obstacle for the progress of the nation. Diversity in faiths and religious traditions commonly found in various islands of Indonesia is a capital to cultivate the nation. The practices of Islamic teachings should not contradict Pancasila, the five principles of Indonesia. Indonesian Muslims should retain this unique Indonesian characteristic by which Islam can contribute to the development of the nation. The mission of the two intellectuals has been carried on by next Muslim intellectual generations in Jakarta and Yogyakarta and other cities in Indonesia.

However, there is a static phase in intellectual thinking, particularly in the HMI. Madjid has developed the ideas of pluralism, patriotism, secularization, and harmonization between Islam and Indonesia, whereas later generation fails to appreciate sufficiently the idea of Madjid, much less to develop or offer critical insights into them to find new ways to understand the diversity of Indonesia. The later HMI generation does not show that they cultivate their own ideas for the future generation. There is a problem in the stagnant idea of patriotism and Islam, a legacy from the past since the independence of the nation which remains relevant today, if we put the issue properly in the context of globalizing world. However, nationalism with the old concept and understanding of the struggle to free the nation from foreign domination is no longer relevant. Today the world is filled with competition in economy and human resources among nations in the world. Today is time for cooperation and collaboration among the nations, where diversity in the world should be appreciated. The old concept of nationalism and patriotism meant as a struggle to fight against alien hegemony is no longer relevant. Unfortunately, the current HMI generation still imagines the old concept of struggle between the East and the West.

There is no progress in the HMI cadres in terms of ideas and discovering new concepts of Islam and Indonesia. Madjid reached a culmination and climax after which only repetition and admiration came. But this, if true, is still better than a generation without understanding and appreciation of what Madjid has done. Once I gave a lecture in the advance training of the HMI (LK II) with various participants coming from many provinces of Indonesia. They showed no sufficient knowledge of who Nurcholish Madjid really is and what his ideas, such as "Islam yes, and political Islam no," are. The participants of the LK II often

cited books belonging to Sayyid Qutb or al-Maududi. What a sad story. What a pity. Few also mentioned an ideal state of Islam, such as the system of caliphate.¹⁰ This is ironic as the earlier HMI intellectuals built a reputation as progressive Muslim intellectuals, but today generation return to conservative ideas. However, it should also be borne in mind that not all HMI cadres chose progressive side, some cadres also supported conservative ideology. I, as a trainer, felt lost and defeated, wondering to the question as to why the current HMI cadres are trapped in conservative ideology. I question myself and to other participants where the legacy of Madjid is. Why Madjid is simply defeated in his own home. I also gave training in more occasions in LK I (Basic Training), and other groups of HMI MPO (Majelis Penyelamat Organisasi), a wing of HMI which rejected Pancasila as the sole ideology during the New Order.¹¹ The trainees did not read Madjid's book, a fact which made me sad. The cadres of the two wings of HMI (Dipo and MPO) seem to search for foundation of ideology, forgetting the previous search done by their predecessors. This is not a good sign of progress, which should be based on history of the organization, not starting from a new and zero foundation. In fact, Madjid has criticized the literal interpretation of Islam showing disagreement with conservatism. Madjid and his circle like Djohan Effendi, Ahmad Wahib, and Dawam Rahardjo become phenomenal because of their ideas of reformation in giving new interpretation of Islamic theology and law. When I asked some trainees about Wahib book's, which was famous when I was student in 1990s, they were confused, showing no knowledge about it. The book contains provocative reformation of Islamic theology.¹² In 1990s some cadres of HMI and PMII have accepted the ideas of post-modernism, citing Western and Muslim thinkers such as Michel Foucault or Muhammad Arkoun. Deconstruction and hermeneutics have become daily readings in the circles of students in 1990s. But in 2000 this regressive move-

¹⁰HMI cadres, conversations with HMI cadres during Training of LK II (Second Training) in Yogyakarta, August 2014.

¹¹The current HMI is divided into two wings, the Dipo (Insan Cita) took pragmatic step by accepting Pancasila during the New Order. This wing is associated with Nurcholish Madjid intellectual movement. Another wing is the MPO which rejected Pancasila and remained passive opposition to the New Order.

¹²Ahmad Wahib, *Pergolakan Pemikiran Islam: Catatan Harian Ahmad Wahib* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial, 1981); Barton, *Gagasan Islam liberal di Indonesia: pemikiran neo-modernisme Nurcholis Madjid, Djohan Effendi, Ahmad Wahib dan Abdurrahman Wahid, 1968-1980* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999).

ment concerns me, or us. The spirit of progress was corrupted by conservatism and radicalism penetrating some students groups. Criticism and critical attitude toward the situation are needed. If the current generation returns to literal interpretation of Islamic history and text, this can be called regressive, not progressive at all.

C. A Fundamental Step: A Critical Reading of the NDP Text

Given the above sad situation, the HMI cadres should think differently. What the HMI cadres need not only rereading the works of the previous thinkers or intellectuals born in the HMI circles but also the courage to adopt a critical attitude. The first should do for the current generation is not only to understand the basic text of the NDP which is taught for all cadres during the LK I and later reread in the LK II. This text reflects the spirit of nationalism and religion in the old days, in which Islam became the basic foundation of the spirit of the struggle for the independence of Indonesia. However, given today globalization and the rapid decline of boundary among nations and given pluralism and democracy advanced in the country, not all ideas contained in the text valid anymore. What the HMI cadres should do is to rethink the text, not only to repeat what it contains, but also to read it with a new spirit. The search for identity with combining Islam and nationalism in the old days of struggling for the nation's independence should change, given a different context and challenges in the globalizing world. But what make me sad is that the current HMI cadres still stand in the old issues of nationalism and religion, which has changed lately due to much more complicated problems faced by nowadays world. Economy, social, political, and religious dilemma have changed, so must the HMI cadres and their ideology.

The NDP is not a sacred text, which is a subject to change; and nothing, including this text, is unchanged. If the text remains the same, we should read it with a critical attitude.¹³ Note that the most fundamental text in Indonesia is the state's Constitution of the 1945 (UUD 1945) which is also a subject of change through the amendments in the House of Representative. The most sacred text for Muslims is the Quran, whose interpretation has changed throughout the

¹³"Nilai Dasar Perjuangan (NDP)" (HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam), n.d.).

history of this religion along with Muslim cultures and traditions in different times and places. The NDP is also an interpretation of the Quran and Islamic thought with the spirit of HMI activism. In short, the text should also be a subject of change.

To present the history of the NDP briefly, the text was originally the ideas of Nurcholish Madjid when he served as the chairman of HMI (1966-1969 and 1969-1971). The story goes that he travelled across many Muslim countries in the Middle East and Asian countries and saw that left oriented students in the US held their fundamental principles in their struggle. He seems also to realize that Marx and Engels formulated the Communist manifesto for those who believe in communist revolution. Madjid then contemplated that the HMI should have its own foundation and principles serving as a guide to its cadres. This seems also to give a foundation for the HMI cadres to understand Islam in a unique way with the principles of Indonesian context. Madjid admitted that the text is not final. Madjid then presented the text in the ninth congress of the HMI in Malang. He then gave the text to a team consisting of Endang Saefudin Anshari and Syakib Mahmud. Other HMI activists also perhaps joined the team for editing the text. Another congress in Palembang in 1971 endorsed the text as the foundation of the HMI in understanding Islam in Indonesia and the struggle for equality and plurality. Note that Madjid went to the US in 1979-1984 in which he learnt philosophy, history, and Islam in Chicago University in which also he met Fazlur Rahman, a prominent influential thinker on Indonesian intellectual.¹⁴ The NDP text belongs to the young Madjid before he went to the US. In Padang congress in 1986, due to the pressure of the New Order, the NDP took a new name as NIK (Identity Cadre Values) and adopted Pancasila as the ideology of HMI, rather than a mere Islam. However, the text remains essentially the same. It seems the name's change due to a tactic and strategy to face the New Order which attempted to homogenize all movements and control any political threats to the regime. However after the reform period, the NIK returned to its original name, the NDP.¹⁵

¹⁴Suhaimi, "Pendidikan dalam Platform Politik Nurcholish Madjid," *Al-Ulum*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2014), pp. 189-210.

¹⁵Azmiansyah, "Sejarah Pemikiran Nurcholish Madjid Studi Atas Nilai-Nilai Dasar HMI" (Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, 2013).

The main purpose of this reading is to criticize the text and propose a revision and amendment of to contextualize the ideas into the current world.

The NDP text in the form of Microsoft Word consists of 6, 664 words divided into eight sections. I had the access to the text as circulated among HMI activists, and read and learned during the training of LK I and LK II. The text discusses various themes ranging from theology (God), human being (anthropology), society, to knowledge (epistemology). Upon reading the text, modernist spirit can immediately be felt: rationalism is combined with religious teachings. The text represents the time when the work was composed in the formative years of development of the nation propagated by the New Order. Today readers can easily find that the text fails to address more important issues, such as daily life and political problems. Some felt that the text is no longer relevant for the current HMI activists, but so far no attempt has been done to revise the text. Nor is there any attempt to compose a new text relevant to the current context. Any interpretation of the text is not found yet. Thus the text remains open to both amendment and interpretation.

In the current globalizing world there are more problems urgently needs for HMI activists to address: such as ecology, pluralism, history, archeology, postmodernism, technology, interdisciplinary approaches, which, however, are not found in the NDP text. From this perspective, it is clear for the HMI activists to provide a new text which can answer the current problems. These issues, such as global warming, discovery of new planets in astronomy, galaxy system, the expansion of universe, other discoveries with regard to sciences, are encountering us. Thus HMI activists will fail to answer these questions if the NDP text remains unchanged. HMI needs a new guide, at least a revision is urgent.

For the sake of clarity let us read section one of the NDP:

Manusia memerlukan satu bentuk kepercayaan. Kepercayaan itu akan melahirkan tata nilai guna menopang hidup budayanya. Sikap tanpa percaya atau ragu yang sempurna tidak mungkin dapat terjadi. Tetapi selain kepercayaan itu dianut karena kebutuhan dalam waktu yang sama juga harus merupakan kebenaran. Demikian pula cara kepercayaan harus pula benar. Menganut kepercayaan yang salah atau dengan cara yang salah bukan saja tidak dikehendaki, akan tetapi juga berbahaya.

Human being needs a belief, which will in turn give to birth to a value system sustaining culture. Atheism or skepticism is impossible. Not only is faith a

necessity, it is also truth. The way to believe also involves truth. Belief in a wrong faith or the way to believe wrongly is not only unwanted, it is also dangerous.

From the perspective of history and anthropology the above quotation contain a fundamental logical fallacy. What kind of faith, belief or religion the text is dealing with is no longer relevant to the newest development of the two branches of knowledge. Belief, faith, or religion in human history is only a part of the recent development of human civilization and culture. From biological stand point, human being which currently occupies earth is a new species called homo-sapiens. The older kind of human being cannot be related to faith or belief. We are descendent of older kind of human being about whom, however, we are not sure whether religion played a role in their life. Or at least what kind of religion did our ancestors embrace we are not quite certain. Older human beings focused attention to their effort to survive by a modest way of life: hunting and gathering. There were of course systems of beliefs along human history. But the question is what kind of belief or faith is, about which our knowledge is too little. The text of course implies that monotheism is the oldest form of human faith, and is the only truth, particularly Islam.

The above mentioned NDP text limits the search of knowledge of human faith in Mecca and Medina where Islam was born in the seventh century, or a broader context of Semitic tradition. In human history, the oldest proof of human belief is much older than Islam. We have evidence of 20000 BC in the Middle East along with human population in building society from Catal Huyuk, Babylonia, Sumerian, Egypt, Greek, Rome, Persia, etc. There were also other human civilizations which were also homes to faiths and beliefs beyond Semitic traditions, such as China, Japan, India, South America, etc. The text of the NDP above did not give any hint or clue of knowledge or realization that the world of faith and belief is much more complex than we Muslims imagine.

However, we should return the text to the context of Indonesia during the phase of formation of Indonesian theology and development under Soeharto. The attempt to give legitimacy of Islam as a foundation of development is apparent in the text. The sense of nationalism and religion which becomes the spirit of independence and development is also clear in the text. But to read the message with the spirit of the current research in archeology and history, and

the development of religious scholarship, it is indeed far from answering the problem.

The part of the NDP which discusses a system of belief is not an inclusive message, and it does not address properly the complexity and plurality of the current world. In fact the system of belief is not only monotheism or *tawhid* (oneness of God) in the Islamic theological system, but there are other systems beyond the text can cover. Human beings have evolved in their system of belief and religious system much longer than the Semitic tradition teaches us. And *tawhid* is part of monotheism, which has later developed in Islam. The NDP text does not provide better information about this. Nor does the NDP provide any information outside Islamic tradition. Thus the text needs revision and updated with the current development of history, archeology, biology, and evolution theory.

In the second part of the NDP, we read the ideas of humanity as follows:

Seorang manusia sejati (insan kamil) ialah yang kegiatan mental dan psikisnya merupakan suatu keseluruhan. Kerja jasmani dan kerja rohani bukanlah dua kenyataan yang terpisah. Malahan dia tidak mengenal perbezaan antara kerja dan kesenangan, kerja baginya adalah kesenggangan dan kesenangan ada dalam dan melalui kerja.

True human being consists of mental and physical parts. Physical and spiritual parts are not separated parts. The two do not differentiate pleasure and work; work is pleasure can be felt pleasure through work.

The above concept seems to clearly reflect Muhammad Iqbal's concept of a 'perfect human being/*insan kamil*', a Indian philosopher who combines various elements of Islamic Sufism, Quran, and Western philosophy.¹⁶ Iqbal as a modern thinker realized his sources and took many works of many Western thinkers, especially existentialists German thinker Friedrich Nietzsche who wrote about the concept of *Übermensch* (superman). Nietzsche is known as an atheist thinker in his works he denies, or at least questions, the existence of God and the role of religion in humanity. Rather, he highlights the existence of human being in building civilization. For Nietzsche, human being is responsible to this world without relying too much on God or religious dogma. Nietzsche

¹⁶Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* ([Lahore], 1965).

encourages us not to escape from the duty and responsibility of being mankind who builds this world. Man should be a perfect being in creating civilization. Man should be the main actor on earth holding responsibility of his own, the cultivation of earth, and making history. Nietzsche questions the role of religion, religious institutions, and other societal structures. His famous words "Got ist tot" (God is dead) represents his rebel against institutionalized belief and faith.¹⁷ Iqbal harmonized the concept with Islamic tradition taken from the Quran, particularly about the concept of *khilafah* (leadership) on earth. Iqbal took the word leadership to mean what more or less superhuman, or *Übermensch*, in Nietzsche's thoughts. However, the effort to link the Islamic modification of existentialist movement in Europe and a new interpretation in modern Islamic tradition is absent from the NDP text, but it rather gives a simplification that the concept of *khilafah* is truly Islamic without knowing the way in which the concept is blended with various sources. Indeed, the text should admit its eclectic and syncretic approach in taking the tradition of the East and West. If the NDP fails to explain what it is, the readers (HMI cadres) have the duty to do so.

The dualism concept of spiritual and physical, good and evil, believer and infidel, should be returned to the history of religions in anthropology and sociology. The idea of dualism has existed since a long time ago in the Iranian tradition, which influenced later religions, particularly religions emerging in the Middle East, such as Islam. The Quran mentions the opposition of the dark and light in various occasions. This idea of dualism should be traced back to the relation between the current concept and previous religions: Mazdak, Mani, Zoroaster, etc. Greek and Rome tradition should also be presented. Thus, HMI activists should be aware of world religious traditions not only limited to the history of the late antiquity, where Islam emerged in the Arabian peninsula. This remains far from ideal and true reality as many HMI still hold conservatism and Islamism, where Islam is the only and the most perfect religion, whereas

¹⁷Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra; ein buch für alle und keinen mit Peter Gasts einföhrung und einem nachwort* (Leipzig: A. Kröner, 1930); Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra a Book for All and None* (New York: Algora Pub., 2003), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10476889>; Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sabda Zarathustra* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2000).

the history of other religions is simply ignored. The instructors or trainers of the LK in the HMI should start the history of religions for the sake of knowledge which should become a common knowledge in HMI circles. It is true that Indonesians mostly do not realize the history of world religions, but the HMI as an elite intellectual circle should proliferate this knowledge for the sake of education of the younger generation.

In the third part, the freedom of human being in his/her free-will can be read in the following message:

Manusia tidak dapat berbicara mengenai takdir suatu kejadian sebelum itu menjadi kenyataan. Maka percaya kepada takdir akan membawa keseimbangan, jiwa tidak terlalu berputus asa karena suatu kegagalan dan tidak pula terlalu membanggakan diri karena suatu kemujuran. Sebab segala sesuatu tidak hanya terkandung pada diri sendiri, melainkan juga kepada keharusan universal itu (al-Hadid: 23).

Human being cannot talk about destiny (taqdir) before the reality comes and happens. Thus belief in destiny will bring balance, human being spirit should not give up hope as failure comes and avoid arrogance due to fortune. All happens not due to event itself, but to universal law which regulates (it).

The text about free will and determinism reflects the most common theological perspective which most Indonesian Muslims embrace, that is Asharite, a part of Sunni mainstream theology. However, the text fails to give an explanation about the history of this theological stance. The readers just know what to believe, but they are not told why the Asharite belief has transformed into such a faith. In fact, the Asharite is not the only belief in Sunni Islam. Asharite is a later compromise between two opposing positions of pre-destination of Jabaraiyah and free will of Qadariyyah, whose debate was later continued in the Mu'tazilite. The later school of theology combined the tools of thoughts of Greek, Persian, and Islamic traditions. In the Mu'tazilite the science and knowledge in Islamic tradition particularly under the Abbasids flourished. Philosophy, science, and other branches of knowledge reached the peak in this era. Asharite (which came later) synchronized, and compromised, this stance of liberalism with orthodoxy in Sunni Islam. Whereas Mu'tazilites went beyond the Arabic traditions in contributing to Islamic civilization, the Asharite returned the debate to Islamic orthodoxy and in particularly in the hands of al-Ghazali through whom many free Muslim thinkers were easily defeated and silenced for a long time in

Sunni Islam. Islam was born in Hijaz of the Arabian peninsula, particularly in the two cities of Mecca and Medina, but later Islamic civilizations sprang from Syrian and Persian traditions in the two cities of Damascus and Baghdad. The debates of early Islamic theology reflect this plural situation of early Islamic science and dogmas. Islamic theology is a combination of many elements coming from outside the Arabian peninsula, such as the older civilizations: Byzantium, Persian, Greek, and other older elements.¹⁸ The HMI cadres should know this. Islamic theology, that is 'new monotheism,' held by the Asharite, comes to what we know was not an overnight product, nor was it a simple dogma coming from Mecca and Medina. The HMI cadres should be taught the complex process of becoming an Islamic theology, not only about the Islamic theology which they believe in. If the HMI cadres in Indonesian politics is pragmatic and easily moved from one political party to another, their knowledge should also be reformed and reoriented to master not only what they believe or their own faith, but also other faiths which they do not believe in.

The fourth section of the NDP which we can read as follows:

Dalam perbendaharaan bahasa dan kulturil, kita sebut kebenaran mutlak itu Tuhan. Kemudian sesuai dengan uraian Bab I, Tuhan itu menyatakan diri kepada manusia sebagai Allah (Luqman: 30). Karena kemutlakan-Nya, Tuhan bukan saja tujuan segala kebenaran (Ali Imran: 60). Maka Dia adalah Yang Maha Benar. Setiap pikiran Yang Maha Benar adalah pada hakekatnya pikiran tentang Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.

In the vocabularies and cultures, we called the absolute truth as God. As explained in the first section (of the NDP), God said to human being about Himself as Allah (Luqman: 30). Due to His absoluteness, God is the destiny of all truths (Ali Imran: 60). He is the Truth. All thoughts of the truth is in fact the thought of the One God.

The above message about God dominating the truth represents the notion which gives a center role to God in universe and human being, a notion which is called "theocentric" theology, which, however, has been criticized by Fazlur Rahman,¹⁹ a mentor to both Nurcholish Madjid and Syafi'i Ma'arif (a Muhammadiyah leader and important intellectual remaining influential in today

¹⁸Makin, *Keragaman dan Perbedaan, Budaya dan Agama dalam Lintas Sejarah Manusia*.

¹⁹Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Minneapolis, MN: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980).

Indonesia) when both studied in Chicago. Rahman becomes a symbol of awakening Islamic thought with its roots in modern Western philosophy.²⁰ It is also noteworthy that most of classical Islamic theology offers a rather theocentric perspective when dealing with the relation of God, human being, and nature. Many Muslim thinkers including those in Indonesia revisited this idea. Some proposed a more anthropocentric perspective, by which we should give human being a more central position in the relational position of human being, God, and universe. An example of this idea is the existentialist thinker Muhammad Iqbal, as mentioned above. By his thought of khilafah as a central understanding leadership of human being on earth entrusted by God, Iqbal highlights the position of human being for his/her responsibility in managing earth. Human being is important actor and held responsible for what happens on earth. Others also proposed cosmos centric position, in which nature or this universe plays a greater role in the theological discussion. The latter is more pertinent in the discussion of nature and man, in which nature should be given a greater attention, as man did damage to nature due to economic and political greed. Forest and jungle are diminishing. Ocean becomes polluted. Nature should receive more attention in Islamic theology, particularly for the student activists, such as the HMI cadres. If the existentialist thinkers such as Iqbal has successfully brought the attention of the role of human being in civilization and responsibility of the world, today concept of 'cosmology' should attract our attention due to the current concern of the world about global warming. The NDP text does not cover the issue yet. Nature and human being should be related in order to create a better understanding of the role of human being in guarding the environment.

Ironically, the above message does indeed contradict Madjid's later explanation of the importance of inclusivism, or inclusive theology, which covers the issues of other faiths and religions in human salvation in the hereafter. In short, monotheism is not the only system of religious belief and tradition. Monotheism came in the late antiquity later after a long evolution of

²⁰Al Makin, *Antara Barat dan Timur: Batasan, Dominasi, Relasi, dan Globalisasi: Melampaui Jurang Masa Lalu untuk Meniti Jembatan Penghubung* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2015).

human civilization. Nor is monotheism the peak of theological evolution. We witness the plural Indonesian Islam with a deeper root of Hinduism, Buddhism, and local cultures. Inclusive theology is the dream that Madjid holds. It is time for the HMI cadres to learn not only about Islamic theology but also the roots of Islam in Indonesia which can be returned not only to the Middle Eastern tradition but also to the local roots through which we will learn how the process of becoming Indonesian Islam is different from other Islam in other Middle Eastern or other parts of the world. HMI cadres should be given a sufficient knowledge and a broader understanding than merely Sunni Islam, Asharite theology, and particularly the current wave of Islamism. The HMI cadres should learn the broader history of religions in the world and particular the history of religions in Indonesia.

The fifth part of the NDP text reads:

Namun inilah kontradiksi yang ada pada manusia dia adalah makhluk yang sempurna dengan kecerdasan dan kemerdekaannya dapat berbuat baik kepada sesamanya, tetapi pada waktu yang sama ia merasakan adanya pertentangan yang konstan dengan keinginannya yang terbatas di bawah sadar yang jika dilakukn pasti merugikan orang lain. Keinginan tak terbatas sebagai hawa nafsu. Hawa nafsu cenderung kearah merugikan orang lain (kejahatan) dan kejahatan dilakukan orang karena mengikuti hawa nafsu (Yusuf: 53 dan al-Rum: 29).

This is contradiction in human being as an individual with a perfect intelligence and freedom enabling him/her to do good deeds to others, but human being also felt contradiction in her/himself hidden under sub-consciousness driving to do deeds harming others. The latter is a mere desire or lust. The desire can harm others, harming others is crime driven by the desire (Yusuf: 53 and al-Rum: 29).

The text covers the role of individual, in his/her freedom to do what one wants, but freedom can also be misused to harm others. The theme reflects the sociological debate about the place of individual in society; freedom is limited to the extent of society applies norms and rules. This text is progressive in a way that the issue of the relational individual and society remains relevant today. Collective and individual life becomes the center of attention in almost all disciplines of social and humanities studies. However, the concept contained in the above quotation is too simplistic, as today life in the era of globalization cannot be solved merely by discussion of the relational role of individual and

society. The term society itself is now much more complicated than what the text conveyed fifty years ago when composed. Society refers to collective individuals in the Indonesian context of village, organization, or country. The current situation demands us to rethink society as collective life of many societies, an idea which questions the border of the states. In the era of globalization, cooperation among states can go beyond their borders. Citizens of a state can demand high mobility crossing the boundaries of other states. This needs our attention, and for this, Europe and Asia have implemented a free market and are bound to agreements among them to allow the citizens to seek for careers in other countries. The European governments formed the European Union, whereas the Asian governments formed ASEAN, which since 2015 implemented a free trade agreement. Many states in today world are seeking for cooperation; and the definition of society and community should thus be revisited. The changes in nowadays society are real, the challenges are now different from the past. The HMI text needs renewal. Recently, in the democratic wave hitting Indonesia after the reform period, we are faced with many problems, and indeed new terms, such as 'public sphere', 'public debate', open market, decentralization, local autonomy, trans-nationalization, etc, are introduced. The text of the NDP born in the era of the New Order--during which democracy was controlled by the regime and political parties were limited to three--cries for serious amendments.

Justice is defined in the NDP text in part six, which reads:

Perwujudan menegakkan keadilan yang terpenting dan berpengaruh ialah menegakkan keadilan di bidang ekonomi atau pembagian kekayaan di antara anggota masyarakat. Keadilan menuntut agar setiap orang dapat memperoleh bagian yang wajar dari kekayaan atau rezeki. Dalam masyarakat yang tidak mengenal batas-batas individual, sejarah merupakan perkembangan dialektis yang berjalan tanpa kendali dari pertentangan-pertentangan golongan yang didorong oleh ketidakserasian antara pertumbuhan kekuatan produksi di satu pihak dan pengumpulan kekayaan oleh golongan-golongan kecil dengan hak-hak istimewa di lain pihak (al-Hadid: 20).

To materialize justice which is pivotal and influential (to society) is to enforce justice in economy or fair distribution of wealth among society. Justice demands every individual to get fair share of wealth or fortune. In a society in which border (among classes) is unknown, history is a dialectical

development running without control of class conflict driven by disharmony between the growth of production in one hand and the accumulation of wealth in the hands few with special privileges on the other hand (al-Hadid: 20).

The above message sounds Marxist. This is not surprising as in the era of nationalism and patriotism during the end of the Dutch colonial rule Marxism became a common knowledge particularly among Indonesian leaders. Writings by Indonesian activists who promoted new identity of Indonesia often cited Marxist ideas. It is common to see protests of injustice found in the practices of colonial government using Marxist ideas. To put simply, Marxism was common in the writings of many nationalist Muslim leaders during the struggle for independence.²¹

The message above perhaps is the most relevant which can be retained today as it reflects early process of nationalism, which retains plural and accommodative approaches of rich ideas in the past Indonesian society by the end of colonial period. Ironically, communism was later banned during the New Order, a policy which is still in place in the reform period. In fact, Marxism remains relevant today to counter globalization and capitalism which dominates the global market. Marxism can be used as voice for those who are unfortunate due to political or economic competition. Marxism can also serve as a tool of analysis developed in anthropology, sociology, and philosophy, an idea which inspired the formation of the school of Frankfurt in Germany. However, due to political factor Indonesia does not give a proper place to the contribution of Marxist and socialist ideas to many Indonesian intellectuals in the early struggle of the nation independence. The HMI as a student movement can revisit the issue.

Justice is also defined in the NDP text as follows:

Sebagaimana ada ketentuan tentang bagaimana harta kekayaan itu diperoleh, juga ditetapkan bagaimana mempergunakan harta kekayaan itu. Pemilikan pribadi dibenarkan hanya jika digunakan hak itu tidak bertentangan. Pemilikan pribadi menjadi batal dan pemerintah berhak mengajukan konfiskasi (penyitaan) (al-Furqan: 67).

²¹Al Makin, "Are there any Indonesian philosophers? Dealing with a common question and possible answers," *Ulumuna*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2016), pp. 1-28.

As there is a norm of how the wealth is accumulated, so is there a norm of how to use the wealth. Individual ownership of the wealth can be justified by wise use and distribution. Individual ownership can be wrong and cancelled by the government's right to regulate the wealth, by confiscation if necessary (al-Furqan: 67).

Marxist terms in wealth and accumulation of capital can be clearly seen in the above message. The terms used to describe the border of individuals' right and society reflect the spirit of Marxism. The discussion of course remains relevant in today Indonesia and Islamic theology: in the relational individual and society, ownership and the authority of state, and the role of power and human being. This is the second message of the NDP which remains worth contemplating and considering. However, the discussion should be further developed by relating the theme to the most current theory in sociology and humanities of post-Marxist thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu, or English sociologist Anthony Giddens. The two proposed theories of society and the role of individuals. Particularly, Bourdieu coins the term habitus and social capital. Giddens, on the other hand, pays attention to the meaning of identity, which remains important in today discussion. The HMI activist cannot stop thinking of the NDP text without relating it to new development of new social theories.

Epistemology becomes an important part of the NDP which reads as follows:

Ilmu pengetahuan ialah pengertian yang dipunyai oleh manusia secara benar tentang dunia sekitarnya dan dirinya sendiri. Hubungan yang benar antara manusia dengan alam sekelilingnya ialah hubungan dan pengarahan. Manusia harus menguasai alam dan masyarakat, guna dapat mengarahkannya pada yang lebih baik. Penguasaan dan kemudian pengarahan itu tidak mungkin dilaksanakan tanpa pengetahuan tentang hukum-hukumnya yang agar dapat menguasai dan menggunakannya bagi kemanusiaan. Sebab alam tersedia bagi umat manusia bagi kepentingan pertumbuhan kemanusiaan.

Knowledge is definition acquired by human being correctly about the world and him/herself. The relation of human being and the world surrounding him/her is the relation of management and leadership. Human being controls nature and society in order to lead and manage it to become a better place. Control and leadership is impossible without knowledge of the natural law which can be beneficial for humanity. Nature is available and made for the purpose of human being's interest and growth.

The text above sounds existentialist. Iqbal's influence upon HMI cadres can be seen in the centrality of human being in nature and the responsibility of human being to nature. Indirectly, Nietzsche's concept of free will, superhuman, and will to power can be seen above. The role of human is further given a greater role in cultivating nature and society. God in this sense is absent. Thus, the spirit of Marxism can also be felt in the text. The message in this part is the most progressive of all messages in the NDP text.

The above message also echoes the spirit of modernism, a spirit which was also developed by later Indonesian thinkers, such as Harun Nasution. This is in line with the effort of renewal of Islamic theology in Indonesia. In doing so, Nasution recalled the spirit of Muhammad Abduh and Mu'tazilite elements. Indeed, Nasution's works reflect the spirit of rationalism. In Yogyakarta, Mukti Ali cultivated inter-religious dialogues. His famous doctrine of 'doctrine-cum-knowledge' means the combination of Eastern wisdom and Western knowledge in the spirit of accommodation and eclecticism by which Islamic tradition should welcome foreign elements or extra Islamic thoughts, such as Western knowledge and theories. This also mirrors the earlier history of Islamic mysticism in Nusantara in the previous era, where Hinduism and Buddhism, local and Middle Eastern, and Western and Eastern were combined in the formation of new Islamic tradition succeeding previous Indian tradition of spirituality.

The NDP text needs a deeper reflection. Today we realize that human being cannot control nature, as our knowledge about nature is too little. The idea of human's control of nature, or universe, is too hyperbolic, particularly with regard to the expansion of the knowledge of astronomy suggesting that universe is much broader, or even borderless or limitless, beyond our previous imagination. In fact there are multi-verses, due to the unlimited universes, but our knowledge is too limited to perceive. To know and control little part of the earth is possible but to what extent we are not certain. Many livings, or dead, on earth remain mysterious and enigmatic. Our vast universe keeps expanding in terms of our knowledge and in terms of the growth of the universe itself. We are living on earth, which is a tiny dot of million stars of the milky way galaxy. Our galaxy is part of galaxies cluster, and so on. This universe is unlimited and

perhaps eternal as claimed by classical Muslim philosophers a long time ago in Baghdad. The philosophers whom al-Ghazali condemned admitted the eternity and un-limitedness of the universe. Earth is too small compared to the whole universe. Human being is only dust in the vast uncontrollable universe. The NDP of the HMI offers an existentialist theology which, however, needs some update and adjustment. Nowadays knowledge is expanding so fast beyond the imagination of 1960-1980 HMI generation, where the NDP was composed based on ideas of Madjid and his friends. The current cadres need to update the HMI theology and ideology based on the most current knowledge and scholarship.

D. Conclusion

After reading the NDP text we can highlight some important ideas: 1) The text echoes an orthodox theological stance, an exclusive theology which does not pay attention to the history of human being and religions of other cultures and civilizations. The NDP text, however, limits itself to the history and theology of Islam, giving no explanation about other systems of beliefs or faiths. This needs rethinking and updating to the current knowledge and scholarship development. 2) The NDP text is under the influence of existentialist ideas, which give a greater role of human being in his/her relation to God, and nature (anthropocentrism). The HMI activists, however, should consider a greater role of nature (cosmos) in their theology, given the current problem of ecology facing human being. However, knowledge about nature and universe has developed fast lately, so that the HMI activists should update their theological stance based on the newest scholarship. 3) The only relevant ideas contained in the NDP text is Marxist ideas in paying attention to the relational role of individual, society, and justice. However, as social and humanities studies, like other disciplines of science, have developed fast, the HMI cadres need to catch up. It is indeed urgent to revisit the NDP text, or at least to reread it with a fresh perspective.[w]

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