

New documentary exposes West German and ex-Nazi role in Indonesian genocide



MS

Suharto in his office as the commander of Kostrad, 1963

WEST Germany not only backed and bankrolled Indonesia's Suharto regime in its massacres of the left in the late 1960s, but

deployed ex-Nazis to Jakarta to monitor it, a new documentary has revealed.

Indonesia's 1965 Genocide: Germany's unknown war against communism was released by Redfish last Friday and its findings have been reported in the Morning Star's German sister paper *Junge Welt*.

General Suharto led a coup against Indonesia's left president Ahmed Sukarno in 1965 with a project of wiping out the country's left — particularly its powerful Communist Party, then the world's third-largest with half a million members.

An estimated two to three million people were arbitrarily executed over the next few years — and documents exposed in the new film show Bonn was at the forefront of supplying weapons and communications equipment to the killers.

Every West German ambassador to Indonesia between 1952 and 1970 had established their foreign office careers in the Nazi era under Joachim von Ribbentrop, the investigation shows — Hilmar Bassler, who represented Bonn in Jakarta from 1968-70, had been in charge of Nazi propaganda across east Asia during the second world war, while Werner Otto von Henting, the first West German ambassador to Indonesia, helped spirit the former mufti of Jerusalem, Nazi collaborator Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, out of Berlin in April 1945.

West Germany continued to provide weapons and funds to the regime despite detailed knowledge of the massacres. A report from its military attache in Jakarta, surnamed Meyer, in January 1965, ahead of the coup, says the army tested the water by arresting 1,400

plantation workers “as a precaution and an experiment” to gauge the strength of the Communist Party’s reaction. Mr Meyer’s report says that “400 were later released and the rest buried.”

Other Foreign Office documents studied show instructions to disguise the German origin of pistol grips sent to the Indonesian military, and a 1966 note stating that refusing weaponry orders from it would “weaken the forces we want to support and indirectly work into the hands of remaining communist elements.”

Many former Nazis took high office in West Germany, most notoriously Adolf Heusinger, the Wehrmacht chief of staff under Hitler who became head of Nato in the 1960s.

The documentary can be viewed at <https://mstar.link/waragainstcommunism>.