takuana
JURNAL PENDIDIKAN, SAINS, DAN HUMANIORA

e-ISSN: 2829-4831 | p-ISSN: 2829-4955

Vol. 4 No. 3, October-December 2025
Pages 1149-1160

War Economy: The Untold Logistics of South Sulawesi's DI/TII Rebellion (1950-1965)

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A B S T R A C T

This study reveals that the resilience of the DI/TII Movement in South Sulawesi (1950-1965) was not solely based on ideology, but on an independent war economy system. At the core of this system was control over copra commodities, which were exchanged for weapons through a regional black market smuggling network that reached Tawao and Singapore. A special agency, the Contact Post (CP), served as the logistical and fiscal operator that regulated trade, taxation, and currency within the movement's de facto territory. Another crucial finding is the symbiotic relationship between this network and individuals within the state apparatus (see Andi Sose's archives about the Army's copra foundation 1956). However, the system eventually collapsed due to a combination of logistical blockades by the Regional Military Command, internal divisions, and acute weapon shortages. This study concludes that in protracted conflicts, sovereignty over logistics and economic supply chains is often a more vital determinant than ideological factors alone.

Keywords
DI/TII, War Economy, Copra, Arms Trade, Smuggling Networks, Contact Post, Conflict

Article History
Received: 2025-10-23
Accepted: 2025-12-10

Published by MAN 4 Kota Pekanbaru
DOI: 10.56113/takuana.v4i3.387

1. INTRODUCTION

In the narrative of Indonesia's national security history, post-independence internal conflicts are often remembered as monolithic political-ideological events. Armed resistance movements (from DI/TII to PRRI/Permesta) are often placed within a simplistic framework: ideological resistance against the Republic, regional unrest, or the lingering embers of a revolution that has not yet been extinguished (Maulida, 2018). The dominant historiography, especially that which developed under the shadow of the discourse of a unified state, tends to emphasize the aspect of 'rebellion' with a focus on central figures, battles, and ultimately suppression by the Indonesian National Army (TNI). However, this approach leaves a very large and critical void: how did an armed resistance movement actually survive physically, logistically, and economically over a long period of time amid state pressure?

This question is not merely a matter of military technicalities, but touches on the heart of what is known as the 'war economy'– a concept that recognizes that the continuation of

modern armed conflict is highly dependent on the capacity to finance, supply and maintain an independent economic system, often outside the structure of the legitimate state. (Kasych, 2023). The study of war economics is not new in global conflict studies; from the American Civil War (Liani et al., 2023) to contemporary conflicts in Africa (Wijanarka et al., n.d.) and the Middle East, analysis of funding sources, logistics networks, and control of commodities has provided a deeper understanding of the roots of the resilience and vulnerability of an armed movement (Fitriyah et al., 2024). However, in the Indonesian context, this dimension is still largely overlooked. Our security history still too often revolves around 'who shot whom' and 'who defeated whom', rather than delving into 'how they survived' and 'where the resources came from'.

Addressing the theme of war economics in the context of the DI/TII Movement in South Sulawesi (1950-1965) is not merely an attempt to complete the historical narrative, but rather a methodological and intellectual necessity to fully understand the complex phenomenon of Indonesian national security. The first urgency lies in the need to deconstruct the single narrative that has been constructed so far. The dominant state narrative often depicts movements such as DI/TII as groups of 'rebels' or 'gangs' acting based on narrow fanaticism, making it easy for the public to understand them as a threat that must be eliminated (BS Harvey, 1989). This narrative, despite having a basis in political truth, oversimplifies the social, economic and network complexities that enabled such a movement to survive for fifteen years. By ignoring the economic aspect, we fail to see DI/TII not only as a military-ideological entity, but as an adaptive system capable of building parallel economic infrastructure, negotiating with the black market, and even interacting (both conflictually and cooperatively) with the legitimate state economy (Fachriyadi & Yani, 2024). Without this understanding, the state's efforts to tackle similar threats in the future will only be reactive and superficial, as they do not address the root causes of its logistical and financial resilience.

Secondly, the study of the economics of war has strategic urgency for the development of Indonesia's national security theory (Rianto et al., 2024). National security is not only about territorial defense against external military aggression, but also about economic resilience, sovereignty over resources, and the integrity of the national supply chain (Sutrasna, 2023). Prolonged internal conflicts such as DI/TII clearly demonstrate how gaps in economic sovereignty (such as rampant smuggling, weak maritime border controls, and corruption within the bureaucracy and military) can be exploited by non-state actors to build and maintain their armed forces (Subair, 2018). By analyzing how DI/TII financed its war through export commodities (copra), how it established a black-market trade network that crossed national borders (to Singapore and Tawao), and how it sometimes formed symbiotic relationships with individuals within the state apparatus itself, we are actually dissecting the structural weaknesses of the young Indonesian state in the areas of economics and security (Rianto et al., 2024). The lessons from this history are highly relevant for understanding contemporary security challenges, such as the illicit arms trade, terrorist financing, and resource conflicts in the region, whose underlying patterns may not be so different.

Third, the war economy approach provides a more humane and grounded perspective on conflict. Heroic narratives on the one hand and criminalizing narratives on the other tend to dehumanize historical actors (Watkins, 1949). By looking at how they organized logistics, negotiated with farmers, administered "taxes", and ensured the survival of thousands of followers and their families in the forest, we see DI/TII as a complex social organization,

with real managerial problems, economic needs, and survival strategies (Nurbaity & Tundjung, 2023)This allows us to move beyond the dichotomy of 'hero versus traitor' and understand the internal dynamics, pressures, and pragmatic decisions made by the actors involved. Such understanding is important not only for historical accuracy, but also for the process of reconciliation and post-conflict peacebuilding (Krawatzek, 2020). By understanding the economic motivations and material pressures behind an individual's involvement in armed resistance, the approach to conflict resolution can become more comprehensive, offering not only political amnesty, but also economic solutions and social reintegration (Kurniawan et al., 2023).

Fourth, this theme connects local history with global dynamics and international political economy. South Sulawesi in the 1950s was not an isolated island. Its copra commodity was part of the global commodity market (Asba, 2015). The weapons flowing to the guerrillas came from the post-World War II international black market, involving actors such as European arms dealers, remnants of colonial networks, and foreign interests (Simpson 1985). By studying the war economy of the DI/TII, we are tracing how local conflicts are connected to global capital and commodity networks. This enriches Indonesian historiography, which is often too Java-centric and focused on national politics in Jakarta (Aura Putri et al., 2024).

Fifth, raising the issue of war economics is a form of rectifying military and security history methodology. Traditional military history often focuses on tactics, strategy, and generals. Traditional economic history often ignores the dimensions of violence and conflict. War economics bridges the two (Rianto et al., 2024). It forces us to ask: what is the actual cost of maintaining a guerrilla fighter in the jungle? How does the command structure allocate limited resources? What is the relationship between military leaders and the 'businessmen' or smugglers who finance them? These questions shift the focus from the heroic to the administrative, from the epic to the everyday, and it is precisely there that the real explanation for the resilience or collapse of a movement often lies (Azizah, 2020). In the context of DI/TII, which lasted for almost 15 years, the question of logistical sustainability is far more fundamental and interesting than simply counting the number of battles.

Finally, academically, the exploration of this theme contributes to a more critical and interdisciplinary approach to the disciplines of history and security studies. It invites historians to engage with theories from political science (particularly studies of the state and conflict), political economy, economic sociology, and illicit trade studies. Such an interdisciplinary approach can produce a stronger and more multidimensional explanation of the phenomenon of national security. In addition, by utilizing local archival sources (financial reports, smuggling reports, port documents) that are often overlooked in the writing of central political history, this kind of study also empowers regional archives and opens up space for a more pluralistic and decentralized writing of history.

Therefore, focusing the study on the "war economy" of the DI/TII in South Sulawesi is not merely a matter of choosing a different perspective, but rather an attempt to fill a critical gap in the historiography of Indonesian security (Husna, 2024). This is an attempt to answer a fundamental question that is often overlooked: an armed resistance that lasted for a decade and a half could not have relied solely on ideology and courage. There must have been an economic engine (perhaps primitive, but effective) working behind the scenes, transforming natural resources into weapons, turning loyalty into networks, and converting

geographical isolation into logistical advantages. Understanding this engine will provide a true historical lesson: that national security is highly dependent on economic sovereignty, that conflicts are often triggered and sustained by economic injustice, and that a country's resilience is tested not only on the battlefield, but also in the marketplace, in ports, and in the integrity of the institutions that manage its resources. Thus, bringing the theme of the economics of war into the center of historical security studies is not only relevant for understanding the past, but also important for framing Indonesia's current and future security and economic policies in a more robust and comprehensive manner.

2. METHOD

This study systematically applies historical research methodology through four main stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography, enriched by a relevant economic theory approach to analyses the dynamics of the illegal trade in weapons and copra. The Political Economy of Conflict Theory used in this study refers to the greed and grievance framework developed by Collier and Hoeffler (2004). According to Collier et al. (2003), armed conflicts in resource-poor countries tend to be prolonged not solely due to political injustice, but rather due to the existence of economic opportunities that benefit armed actors. The concept of dark market networks in this study draws on Duffield's (2001, 2002) analysis of shadow economies and transborder trade in new wars. Duffield argues that contemporary conflicts are no longer centered on states, but rather on non-state networks that combine illicit trade, militias, and cross-border business actors, creating emerging political complexes that are difficult to address through conventional development approaches.

In the heuristics stage, data collection was carried out by searching through primary archives at the South Sulawesi Provincial Archives and Library Office, specifically security reports, trade documents, military correspondence, and civil government records from the period 1950–1965. Oral sources were also explored through structured interviews with historical actors involved, such as former members of the DI/TII, middlemen traders, and eyewitnesses who were aware of the movement's economic activities. Secondary sources included academic works, dissertations, and previous research reports discussing regional conflicts and economies (Kuntowijoyo, 2005).

To analyze the collected data, this study applies an economic theory approach that focuses on the concepts of conflict political economy and black-market networks. Conflict political economy theory is used to understand how the DI/TII managed limited resources, implemented a system of taxation and extortion, and built independent funding mechanisms within its territory. Meanwhile, the black-market network framework helps map key actors, distribution routes, and transaction patterns that connect local copra producers with arms dealers in international markets such as Tawao and Singapore (Subair, 2018). This approach enables analysis of the barter mechanism that converts agricultural commodities into military defense tools.

The interpretation stage is carried out by linking historical facts that have undergone a critical process with the economic theory framework. The analysis focuses on reconstructing the DI/TII war economy model, including the organizational structure of the Contact Post (CP) as a semi-secret logistics agency, the strategy for setting copra prices at the farmer level, and the symbiotic relationship pattern with state apparatus officials.

Network theory is used to identify critical points in the supply chain, such as the role of couriers, transit ports, and protectors within military institutions. Thus, the interpretation not only describes events, but also explains the economic logic behind the movement's resilience over 15 years (Subair, 2018).

Finally, the historiography stage was carried out by compiling an integrative historical narrative between empirical findings and economic analysis. The writing was designed to present a coherent narrative of how the DI/TII war economy operated, while also evaluating its impact on regional security and economic stability. This multidisciplinary approach allows the research to not only contribute to the historiography of Indonesian conflict but also offer an academically applicable perspective for contemporary security studies, particularly in understanding the links between the informal economy, illicit trade, and the sustainability of non-state armed movements (Islam & 2018, n.d.).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Control of Strategic Commodities (Kopra)

In-depth research into local archives, security reports stored at the South Sulawesi Archives Office, and testimonies from historical actors reveal a reality that has been overlooked in the historiography of Indonesian conflict: the DI/TII movement in South Sulawesi survived for fifteen years not solely because of the strength of its ideology or religious militancy, but thanks to the development of an independent and integrated war economy system. This system was based on three main pillars: control of strategic commodities (especially copra), the formation of a special logistics agency (Contact Post), and integration into a regional black-market network that connected villages in Sulawesi with the arms markets in Singapore and Tawao. This finding shifts the perspective that DI/TII was merely an ideological rebel movement towards an understanding that it was a hybrid political-economic entity capable of performing state functions (such as tax collection, market regulation, and black-market diplomacy) within its sphere of influence. (Ganggong, 1992)

The first pillar of this war economy was the control and monopoly of copra. Copra became the foundation of the movement's currency. The DI/TII systematically seized control of copra production and distribution in rural areas through a dual strategy: offering higher prices and facilitating transactions. Amidst national economic fluctuations, the official government agency, the Yayasan Kopra or Coprafonds, was only able to purchase copra at around 100 rupiah per quintal and required farmers to deliver it to the warehouse. In contrast, the DI/TII network offered prices of 120 to 170 rupiah per quintal, with direct pick-up service from the plantation. (Saleh Lahade, 2025a).

This strategy was not merely an economic practice, but a political instrument to impose an economic blockade on the Republic's government. As reported by KPN Mamuju in 1955, copra-producing ports such as Tapalang, Mamuju, and Kalukku were practically deserted by official merchant ships, as commodities had been diverted to the DI/TII network (Saleh Lahade, 2025a). As a result, the government almost lost its source of regional income, while the DI/TII collected vital foreign exchange to finance the war. (BS Harvey, 1989). This dominance was reinforced by the establishment of a de facto territory through the Makkalua Charter, which set a 5-kilometre boundary from the city as the line of sovereignty for DI/TII, where their laws and economy applied (B Mattalioe ,1965,)

To operationalize this economic control, DI/TII established the Contact Post (CP), a semi-secret logistical body that functioned as a 'ministry of trade and finance'. The CP was divided into three: CP I was based in Mamuju, CP II in Bulukumba, and CP III in the Sinjai-Bulukumba region. This agency regulated all economic activities, from purchasing copra from farmers and storage to negotiations with middlemen. It is important to note that the CP operated separately from the military structure of the Indonesian Islamic Army (TII). As stated by A. Syamsuddin, former Commander of Company IV Division 40,000, 'The TII was not allowed to trade... the only trading companies allowed to enter TNI areas were those that had been assigned to do so' (Interview with A. Syamsuddin, 2018). This separation of roles demonstrates a high level of specialization and professionalism within the movement. The CP also issued its own currency by cutting up Japanese money left over from the occupation period, stamping it with 'Darul Islam' and authenticating it with the signature of the representative of the Minister of Finance (Mattalioe, 1994, h. 201-202 dalam Subair, 2018). This step not only created a legal currency within their territory but also symbolized economic sovereignty and an attempt to legitimize themselves as a legitimate governing entity.

3.2. The DI/TII Shadow Economy

The second pillar driving this trade was an institutionalized barter system. Collected copra was not sold through conventional means but exchanged directly for weapons through a network of intermediaries known as *Kongsi Dagang* (trading companies). This illegal trade route primarily led to two main hubs: Tawau (now in Sabah, Malaysia) and Singapore. These two ports, under British administration, were thriving black markets for weapons after World War II. Legendary arms dealers like Sam Cummings of the Interarms Company were known to control 90% of the small arms trade in the region (Simpson, 1987, h. 32 in Subair, 2018). Ships belonging to the DI/TII trading company, which were usually lambo or wooden boats, transported copra to Tawao. There, the copra was exchanged for infantry weapons such as M1 carbines, Bren light machine guns, Sten guns, and automatic pistols, along with ammunition. Dutch intelligence reports (Marechaussee) even revealed the involvement of international actors such as Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, who, through Pakistani diplomat Shidar Ali, was suspected of being involved in arms smuggling for Islamic groups in Indonesia, including DI/TII West Java (Maasdijk et al., 2009, h. 79). Although direct evidence to Sulawesi still needs to be traced, the pattern of cooperation between DI/TII West Java and Sulawesi opens the possibility of weapons flowing through this network. The shipment of weapons from 'Portuguese Timor' to Qahhar Muzakkar in early 1954, as reported by the Keng-Po newspaper (24 March 1954), was most likely the result of this complex regional black-market network (Dinas Arsip Sulsel, 2025).

The third pillar, and the most astonishing one, is the symbiotic network with actors within the state. The findings show that the DI/TII war economy did not operate in isolation but often intersected and symbiotically interacted with individuals within the TNI and the civil bureaucracy. This phenomenon occurred mainly due to two factors: instructions from the Army Headquarters (MBAD) for each territory to seek additional funds on its own, and the unstable national economic conditions following independence. (Asba, 2003, h. 269). As a result, there were instances of military personnel protecting or even partnering with smuggling traders. The most notable example was Lieutenant Colonel J.F. Warouw, a commander in Eastern Indonesia, who was known to grant permission and protection to

copra smuggling ships. (Asba, 2003, h. 275). At the local level, Andi Selle, a former subordinate of Qahhar who became Commander of Battalion 710 of the Indonesian National Army in Mandar, became the ruler of the copra business that dominated trade (and smuggling) in his region. He established close business ties with Saleh Lahade, an Opsir Pekerjaan Istimewa (OPI.X) official in Makassar, using the familiar term 'Kanda' in official correspondence requesting trade permits (Saleh Lahade, 2025c). This relationship shows how blurred the line between friend and foe was in the war economy. In the city of Makassar itself, DI/TII agents such as Nurdin and S. Homan actively purchased weapons on the black market from TNI personnel who had access to the weapons depot at Tangsi Mariso (Saleh Lahade, 2025a). Thus, the DI/TII logistics machine was partly supplied by its own enemies, creating a mutually beneficial dark economic circle (mutualistic symbiosis) between the rebels and elements of the state apparatus.

However, the resilience of this war economy system eventually reached its breaking point due to intense external pressure and, above all, internal divisions. The climax was the conflict between Qahhar Mudzakkar and Bahar Mattalioe, Commander of the 40,000 Division that controlled the southern region. This dispute was triggered by Qahhar's formation of the elite Mobile Force (Momoc) Ansharullah, which took the best personnel and weapons from each battalion. Bahar viewed this as an attempt by Qahhar to centralise power and weaken other commanders (Mattalioe, 1994, h. 251-252). This conflict ended with Bahar Mattalioe and his 12,734 followers surrendering 2,056 firearms to the government at the end of 1959 (Corhas, 1982, h. 296, dalam Subair, 2018). This event was a devastating blow to the logistics and military strength of DI/TII, as it lost half of its troop base and resources. On the other hand, the central government began to implement a more integrated strategy by forming the South-Southeast Sulawesi Military Regional Command (KDM) in 1957 under the leadership of a local figure, Lieutenant Colonel Andi Matalatta. The KDM not only exerted military pressure, but also opened the door to amnesty and reintegration, as well as imposing a stricter economic blockade on the DI/TII region. Gradually, the copra-producing areas that were the economic lifeblood of the movement were recaptured (Rerung & Susanta, 2024).

From the above findings, it can be concluded that the resilience of DI/TII South Sulawesi was the result of sophisticated and realistic wartime economic management. This movement successfully transformed itself from a mere military force into a quasi-state with independent fiscal and logistical capacities. They created a circular economic system: controlling copra as a source of foreign exchange, exchanging it for weapons via regional black markets, and using those weapons to defend copra-producing areas (Miftahudin & Kusdiana, 2020). More interestingly, this system was flexible and able to adapt to its 'enemies', creating a relationship of economic interdependence with individuals within the state. This finding revises traditional historiography, which placed too much emphasis on ideological aspects (Nurhuda & Syaputri, 2023).

The narrative that DI/TII survived because of religious fanaticism needs to be supplemented with the fact that they survived because of their expertise in managing economic resources and trade networks. The lessons from this case study are highly relevant to the contemporary understanding of non-state armed conflicts. It shows that in protracted conflicts, logistics and economics are often more crucial determinants than ideology (Sukardi, 2023). Efforts to counter non-traditional security threats in the future must therefore include approaches that target not only military forces, but also (and perhaps more importantly) sever the economic, financial and logistical chains that sustain

them. In other words, victory over an armed movement is not only achieved on the battlefield, but also in the marketplace, in ports, and in strengthening sovereign economic governance. (Azizah, 2020).

3.3. The Blockade and the End of the Rebellion

The defeat of the DI/TII movement in South Sulawesi in 1965, marked by the death of its leader Qahhar Mudzakkar, cannot be separated from a series of collapses in the logistics and weapons supply system that was the lifeblood of their movement. Research into archives and testimonies shows that although the DI/TII had built a sophisticated war economy, this system was ultimately highly vulnerable to the pressure and strategic blockade systematically applied by the government through the South-East Sulawesi Military Command (KDM). This defeat was not merely the result of the TNI's combat superiority, but rather the logical consequence of the severing of the black-market trade artery that connected Sulawesi copra with weapons from the international market (Subair, 2018).

The peak of pressure began with a change in central government strategy in 1957, namely the dissolution of Territory VII and the formation of the South-East Sulawesi KDM under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Andi Matalatta, a local man who understood the terrain and local dynamics very well. (Dam XIV Hasanuddin, 1982). The KDM not only launched conventional military operations, but also, and more decisively, launched a total economic and logistical blockade. They aggressively recaptured copra-producing areas that were sources of foreign exchange for the DI/TII, such as Mamuju, Mandar, and the coastal areas of West Sulawesi. By controlling production points and coastal ports such as Pambuang, Tapalang, and Kalukku, the TNI effectively cut off the flow of commodities from farmers to the DI/TII Contact Post network. The 1955 KPN Mamuju report described how these areas were previously controlled by the DI/TII and devoid of official ships, but after the KDM operation, illegal trade activities were significantly reduced. This blockade was reinforced by naval operations conducted by the Indonesian Navy (ALRI), which monitored the waters of the Makassar Strait and Bone Bay, restricting the movement of smuggling vessels belonging to the DI/TII trading consortium that were heading to Tawao or Singapore (Saleh Lahade, 2025b).

The immediate impact of this blockade was a financial and logistical crisis within the DI/TII. Without sufficient copra as a medium of exchange, their ability to obtain weapons and fresh ammunition from the international black market declined dramatically. The supply of weapons that had previously flowed from Tawao through traders such as Sam Cummings (Simpson, 1987) practically ceased. This situation was exacerbated by the surrender of Bahar Mattalioe, Commander of Division 40,000, along with 12,734 followers and 2,056 weapons at the end of 1959. This surrender not only resulted in a significant loss of personnel, but also the loss of the largest weapons depot owned by the southern wing of the DI/TII. Qahhar's forces now relied solely on the remaining weapons and very minimal supplies, while the channels for obtaining them were almost completely closed (Corhas, 1982, h. 296, dalam, Subair, 2018)

This logistical crisis triggered a chronic shortage of ammunition on the front lines. Weapons without ammunition were nothing more than scrap metal. The testimony of A. Syamsuddin, former Commander of Company IV, reveals how difficult it was for the DI/TII troops at the end of the struggle. They had to be very economical with every shot, and often

had to rely on captured weapons or those purchased on the black market, which were very limited in number (Interview with A. Syamsuddin, 2025). This situation was in stark contrast to the early 1950s, when, through agents such as Nurdin in Makassar, they were able to obtain supplies relatively easily from unscrupulous members of the TNI. The imposition of military zone status and strict surveillance by the KDM made it increasingly difficult for underground networks in cities such as Makassar and Pare-Pare to operate. (Saleh Lahade, 2025d).

The pressure of the blockade and scarcity then accelerated internal disintegration and a decline in troop morale. The commanders' inability to provide basic logistics, including food and ammunition, led many members to choose to take advantage of the peaceful path and amnesty offered by the KDM. The amnesty program promoted by Colonel Andi Muhammad Yusuf proved effective as a psychological and political tool to accelerate the disintegration of the DI/TII forces. The hungry and exhausted troops, with empty magazines, saw surrender not as treason, but as the only way to survive. Qahhar Mudzakkar himself, in a desperate situation, sent his wife Van Corry to meet Colonel Andi Muhammad Yusuf in September 1961, carrying a message of desire for peace, partly driven by acute logistical difficulties (Dam XIV Hasanuddin, 1982, dalam Subair, 2018).

Finally, the death of Qahhar Mudzakkar on 3 February 1965 marked the end of the collapse of this logistics system. His isolated, besieged and poorly supplied troops were no longer able to mount any meaningful resistance. They moved in small groups that were easier to neutralize. KDM, with a strategy now focused on severing supply chains, succeeded in transforming a guerrilla war that relied on mobility and hidden supplies into a war of attrition that favoured the side with centralized and legal logistical resources—in this case, the state (Druce, 2020).

Thus, it can be concluded that the logistical blockade and the scarcity of weapons and ammunition were direct factors that destroyed the operational resilience of DI/TII. The war economy, which had been painstakingly built up and relied on the conversion of copra into weapons, collapsed when the commodity production base and distribution channels were cut off. The defeat of the DI/TII proves a paradigm in conflict studies: an armed movement, no matter how strong its ideology, cannot survive if its economic lifeline is cut off. The victory of the TNI and KDM was not only achieved on the battlefield, but was first won in the tightly guarded seas, in secured ports, and in sterilized black markets. This historical lesson underscores that in the context of national security, logistical sovereignty and control of strategic supply chains are as important, if not more important, than military victory itself.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on an in-depth analysis of primary archives and historical sources, it can be concluded that the resilience of the DI/TII Movement in South Sulawesi for fifteen years (1950-1965) was essentially supported by an independent and structured war economy system. This system transformed the movement from a mere ideology-based armed resistance into a hybrid political-economic entity with mini-state capacity. The key to its success lay in its ability to control, manage, and monetize strategic commodities (especially copra) as the main medium of exchange for obtaining weapons through a regional black-market network that reached Tawao and Singapore. Its operational pillar, the Contact Post

(CP), functioned as an effective logistical and fiscal body, regulating everything from the purchase of agricultural products, the implementation of its own tax and currency systems, to negotiations with international arms dealers.

However, the robustness of this system also revealed its flexibility and fatal fragility. On the one hand, this system formed a mutualistic symbiotic relationship with individuals within the state apparatus, where certain segments of the TNI and bureaucracy were involved in smuggling networks. On the other hand, the system ultimately collapsed due to a combination of aggressive logistical and economic blockades by the Regional Military Command (hereinafter referred to as KDM), internal divisions among the leadership that paralyzed half of its forces, and acute shortages of ammunition and weapons after supply lines were cut off. The collapse of DI/TII proved a fundamental theorem in conflict studies: sovereignty over logistics, supply chains, and economic bases is the ultimate determinant of the survival of a non-state armed movement. This finding not only revises the overly videocentric historiography of Indonesian conflict, but also offers strategic lessons relevant to contemporary national security policy in dealing with asymmetric threats (Husna, 2024).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our gratitude to the sources who provided information for our research, as well as to the South Sulawesi Archives Office, which granted us access to security documents from South Sulawesi covering the period from 1950 to 1965. Some of this information was extremely helpful in reconstructing local economic and security events.

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