

Political Communication Between the House of Representatives and the Ministry of Defense in Discussing the Republic of Indonesia State Defense Policy

Yusa Djuyandi, Margynata Kurnia Putra, Haris Faozan

Abstract

The desire to optimize all potential resources available to support national defense, including making the people as a supporting component, needs to be regulated in law. Political communication between the Commission I of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) and the Ministry of Defense in order to ensure that the discussion of the National Resource Management Bill (PSDN) for National Defense does not encounter obstacles is something that needs to be done. This study uses a qualitative method, where primary data is obtained from observations on political dynamics in the discussion of a draft state defense policy which is then outlined in the PSDN Bill, while secondary data is obtained from various literature studies. The results of this study show that between the House of Representatives and the Ministry of Defense has established a good political communication process in the discussion of the PSDN Bill; this condition has led to a good understanding and synergy between the two institutions in formulating the PSDN Bill for defense. It is important for political communicators to build effective political communication by making clear and precise



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political messages, this is certainly so that the political message can be easily understood by the communicant.

Keywords: political communication, House of Representatives, Ministry of Defense, PSDN Bill, defense

Yusa Djuyandi

*Margynata
Kurnia Putra*

Haris Faozan

Introduction

A country needs to have a clear concept of a defense system in order to maintain its sovereignty, without clarity on this matter it will be difficult for a country to take strategic steps or policies in the defense sector, such as how the state through the government is able to optimize all resources to support the defense.

Indonesia, as stated in Article 30 of the second amendment to the 1945 Constitution, has established the enactment of the universal people's defense and security system to maintain state sovereignty in the form of unity. Although geographically the country of Indonesia consists of many archipelagic clusters, because the Indonesian Nation has determined the form of the state of Indonesia is unity, then to maintain it is needed the support from all components of the nation.

The enactment of the universal defense and security system of the people is considered in accordance with the characteristics of the territory of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) in the form of an archipelago, with all the people in various islands can have and take an important role in maintaining the integrity and sovereignty of the nation and state. When the country on the other hand also has a limited number of soldiers to protect the entire island in Indonesia, especially on islands that have direct borders with other countries^{1,2,3,4}, the people can be encouraged to participate in efforts to maintain the national defense. The essence of the universal people's defense and security system is to place the community as a supporting force after the main defense force held by the Indonesian National Army (TNI).

The placement of the community as a supporting component or reserve of the main state defense tool, namely the TNI, is also believed to have a positive impact on the growing sense of community responsibility to maintain the integrity of the nation and the state. However, the emergence of the desire to optimize all potential resources available to support national defense, including making the people as a supporting component, needs to be regulated in law. Related to the need for a law that is able to become a legal umbrella for the estab-

lishment of a reserve component and the implementation of its program, the government together with the Commission I of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) has agreed to encourage the passage of the National Resource Management Bill (PSDN) for National Defense^{5,6,7}.

The PSDN Bill is a simplification of several draft laws and laws, namely the State Defense Bill, the Supporting Component Bill, the Reserve Component Bill, and Law No. 27/1997 concerning Mobilization and Demobilization. The basis of the unification and establishment of this draft law by the Ministry of Defense is in response to the emergence of various forms of non-military threats that have been very varied and complex, both with ideological, political, economic, social and cultural dimensions. In addition, there is also an idea that coaching and empowering national resources in support of Nirmiliter Defense must consider the characteristics of non-military threats and the functional competencies of the institutions that handle them⁸.

The achievement of an agreement between the Commission I of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) and the Directorate General of Defense Potential from the Ministry of Defense to encourage the enactment of the PSDN Bill could certainly have a positive impact on the efforts to implement the mandate of the 1945 Constitution, which is related to the implementation of the universal defense and security system of the people. The agreement reached between the two institutions, namely the DPR RI and the government, shows the success in the process of political communication. It is undeniable that the discussion regarding the draft component reserve policy often encountered conflicts of interest until finally the discussion of the policy plan was halted. An example of this was the postponement of the discussion of the Reserve Component (Komcad) Bill by the DPR in 2012 for an indefinite period. The problem was that the DPR and the government at that time did not find common ground in some of the fundamental issues in the Reserve Component Bill, such as the legal basis of the Reserve Component Bill, the mobilization procedure in a peaceful state, and the reserve component status^{9,10}.

Although in 2018 an agreement was reached between the Commission I of the Indonesian Parliament and the Ministry of Defense to more seriously schedule the ratification of the PSDN Bill, but as long as a policy plan has not legally become a policy then any possibility of a change in political decisions could occur. The success of political

communication between the House of Representatives Commission I and the Directorate General of Defense Potential from the Ministry of Defense is still the first step of a political process, that the government still needs to ensure that the discussion of the draft policy at the next stage does not encounter obstacles, especially if the DPR RI later finds there are problems in the substance or content of the PSDN Bill.

The process of drafting the PSDN Bill for national defense by the Ministry of Defense itself began in 2015, where the Ministry of Defense was targeting this bill to be discussed together with the DPR in 2017^{11,12}. In other words when in 2018 between the government, especially the Ministry of Defense and the Commission I of the House of Representatives has agreed to encourage the ratification of the PSDN Bill, so it shows that the political communication process in the context of the discussion of the PSDN Bill can run well. It could be that the two institutions have established an understanding of the importance of the state having legal protection in implementing the establishment of a reserve component, one of which is carried out through a state defense program. However, as previously stated that this understanding is still the initial stage of the next discussion of the PSDN bill.

Based on experience in the discussion of the Comprehensive Reserve Bill (Komcad), in which the draft policy was finally terminated by the DPR, the government must be able to anticipate the possibility of stalling the discussion of the PSDN Bill due to substantial problems. During the discussion of the Komcad Bill at the time the DPR later found out that there were shortcomings and weaknesses in the draft policy, in addition to the emergence of pressure from several Non-Government Organization (NGO) groups so that the DPR RI did not ratify the Komcad Bill who was more impressed by the government's desire to realize military service¹³. Substantive matters as stated in the PSDN Bill must also receive an intense portion of the discussion with the people's representatives in the parliament because if the discussion was not conducted intensively and then led to a halt in the ratification of a policy then there lies the failure of political communication between executives with the legislature.

Based on the problems mentioned above, this paper intends to analyze political communication between the government and the DPR RI in the discussion of the National Resource Management Bill (RUDN PSDN) for national defense.

Literature Review

Political communication

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Communication and politics have a close and special relationship because they are in the political domain or by placing communication in a very fundamental position. As Laswell's¹⁴ view of Politics: Who Gets What, When, How? Then helped develop a communication model based on several questions, namely: who says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect? What has been formulated by Laswell¹⁴ which later became one of the signs that between political science and communication science has a connection, where politics requires communication to achieve its goals. As later emphasized by Robert E. Denton and Gary C. Woodward¹⁵ who say that "*the crucial factor that makes communication is 'political' is not the source of a message, but its content and purpose*".

Denton and Woodward¹⁵ also previously revealed that the characteristics of political communication in America could be seen from the way and message senders' intensity in influencing their political environment. Things that later included were public discussions (about political speeches, media coverage, and public discussion) which influenced the considerations of the authorities in giving sanctions, allocating public resources, and influencing the authorities to make policies¹⁵.

Roelofs also once stated that "politics is talk, or to put the matter more exactly the activity of politics ("politicking") is talking ..." or in other words that politics is a talking activity. Not just talking or talking because not all talks are also political, but nature and political experience and basic conditions are communication activities between people¹⁶. In practical politics itself, communication occurs when politicians bargain with their political opponents, or in forming coalitions, or seeking consensus¹⁷.

From some of the perspectives above, it can be understood that even though communication and politics are related, but when the focus of the study is deepened on the scientific aspects of political communication, then there is something that distinguishes it from other scientific communication disciplines. As Cangara¹⁸ states that clear political communication is a communication process that has implications or consequences for political activity. Political communication has a politically charged message.

To see the success of the political communication process, then political communication experts learn the most prominent charac-

teristics of political messages, backgrounds and attitudes brought by the recipient to interpret the message, the form and substance of the message, the impact of various types of communication channels on messages that are channeled through their networks, and ultimately the impact of political processes within individuals and society¹⁹.

Yusa Djuyandi

National security

*Margynata
Kurnia Putra*

The discussion on the management of national resources for national defense, which includes a draft on the deployment or assistance of human resources from civilians for national defense, cannot be separated from the existence of an effort to achieve national security. Speaking of the concept of national security, there is a dimension of things that are then attached to it, namely the first dimension of defense which includes an effort to counter military attacks from outside the country, and the second is the security dimension which includes an effort to create orderly and safe conditions of society from the interference or security threat that is originating from within the country.

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Talking about the concept of national security, there are a number of experts who have formulated the concept of national security, namely among them are from Prihatono et al.²⁰, which formulates that national security is a general concept of defense, national security is a very complex problem. The term “national” has a broad meaning, not only includes the state as a single subject or object but also encompasses various entities in it. Therefore, efforts to create national security require the involvement of various elements within the state, be it the government, military, police, and the people themselves²⁰.

Furthermore, Prihatono²⁰ reveals that etymologically, the concept of “security” (security) comes from the Latin “*securus*” (*se* and *cura*), which has the meaning of being free from danger, free from fear (free from danger, free from fear); this word can also be meaningful from a combination of words that mean without and *curus* which means uneasiness. When combined, the word will mean “freedom from trouble, or a peaceful situation without danger or threat”²⁰.

National Security can be interpreted both as a *condition* and as a *function*. As a *function*, National Security will produce and create a sense of security in a broad sense, which includes a sense of comfort, peace, tranquility, and orderliness. This kind of security *condition* is a basic need of humanity in addition to welfare. Understanding the

meaning and substance contained in it will vary depending on the values, perceptions, and interests.

Oatley theoretically said that national security was defined not just military defense. At the very least, it is a fundamental part of the survival of society. Furthermore, this definition relates to efforts to create a political, economic, social and environmental condition in which society lives²¹.

Laswell¹⁴ as quoted by Romm²², reveals that national security can be simply meant as freedom from foreign orders or colonization. Referring to Laswell's¹⁴ view, it means national security is also free from threats, which can be similar to what was stated by Wolfers as quoted by Paleri²³, namely "National security objectively means the absence of threats to acquired values and subjectively, the absence of fear that values will be attacked".

A clearer and more detailed view of national security, with the elaboration of the conditions of national security, was stated by Brown as quoted by Watson²⁴ namely "National security is the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to preserve its nature, institution, and governance from disruption from outside; and to control its borders".

Based on Brown's perspective above, it can be emphasized that national security is a condition that includes a sense of freedom from threats that come from outside and inside, that can also be seen from the concept proposed by La Ode²⁵, which reveals that National Security contains more meaning which includes overcoming threats to the survival of the country, both from inside and outside, that would help us to divide national security into two meanings, namely the meaning between security (for internal threats) and defense (for external threats).

Methods

This study uses a qualitative method. The techniques are through the document from a text document, electronic data, or online data. The use of data or documents to keep the study is consistent with the assumptions that are owned by the research subjects. In this work, the literature is used as a tool of analysis and documents is used as the subject of analysis²⁶. Therefore, this study uses data management, analysis, and interpretations that are intertwined with empirical theories, concepts, and indicators²⁷. While the data collection procedure used

was by collecting documents throughout the study, including public documents on several [online-based] media channels²⁸.

Discussion

State defense policy

Some parties have previously stated that the potential for open warfare in this century is considered minimal, even though the fact that happened later shows that the potential threat of war is open again. The occurrence of war in the Middle East region, both between countries in the region or with the involvement of other countries from outside the region, and the existence of tensions in several other regions such as the South China Sea region as a result of the struggle and expansion of the influence of the major countries have opened the paradigm that war can occur anytime and anywhere. With the emergence of these conditions, it cannot be denied that the dimension of defense remains one of the most important dimensions of national security in a country; if this dimension is weak, it will be at risk for the security of the nation and state.

For a country that implements a democratic political system, strengthening the defense dimension needs to be carried out through an appropriate procedure, namely through a defense policy-making that considers democratic decision-making procedures. Although the realm of defense intersects with the existence of military power, a democratic country is built on the basis of the political power of civil society, that represented by the existence of legislative and executive institutions. Both of these institutions are civil, political authorities who have the authority to make policies in the defense sector; while in making defense policies they need to pay attention to the conditions and needs of the nation and state. If the defense sector policies that they take together are considered appropriate, then it will support the strengthening of the country's defense potential, but the country's defense will be weak if the policies made are not appropriate.

Since the reform era in Indonesia, both the government and the Indonesian House of Representatives have actively jointly made several policies in the defense sector, namely Law No. 3 of 2002 concerning National Defense and Law No. 34 of 2004 concerning TNI. However, over time and paying attention to national and international situations and conditions, the existence of the two laws is not enough to strengthen the potential for national defense. At least between the government

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and the House of Representatives once discussed the emergence of new policy designs in order to strengthen national defense, such as the Bill on Reserve Components and the National Security Bill (National Security), but attempts to ratify the two draft policies failed because there were many multi-interpretation articles potentially misused by the political interests of the ruler. As an example, in Article 27 paragraph 1 of the National Security Bill which states that the TNI Commander can establish operational policies and military strategies based on policies and policy strategies of National Security organizers. So instead of for the sake of defense, this policy plan is precisely considered only to benefit the political interests of the ruler.

Although some policy designs that were previously drafted to be able to strengthen the defense sector must eventually stop, between the government and the House of Representatives still try to jointly discuss the design of new policy alternatives in the defense sector. The results of the political communication between the two, namely Commission I of the Indonesian House of Representatives and the Ministry of Defense, was an agreement to encourage the ratification of the Draft Law on the Utilization of National Resources (RUDN PSDN) for National Defense. Although the draft policy is considered a new transformation of the draft policy on the Reserve Component, in which the Reserve Component Bill is deemed to fail to continue the discussion, the perspective of the PSDN Bill on defense is considered more acceptable by both institutions.

The efforts to build the strength of the national defense need to be supported by an appropriate defense policy, a policy that makes the TNI a professional military by keeping it away from political and economic elements is a positive breakthrough that emerged at the beginning of reform. With the existence of professionalism, the TNI is able to focus on its main task in maintaining national defense. However, in the conception of universal people's defense that is applied by our country, where the state then places the TNI as the core of the defense force, it means that the state on the other hand also puts the presence of other forces that are expected to be a supporting force of the national defense.

The dynamics that occur in global security politics and the development or expansion of the dimensions of the threat of national defense, which are not only related to physical attacks but also non-physical attacks such as cyber-attacks, ultimately demand the role of other na-

tional components to be able to be involved in maintaining national defense. This condition is needed because of the limitations in quantity and quality of our military strength, as for example in quantity is the limited number of TNI personnel when compared to the area of Indonesia that they must guard.

As of 2017, it was noted that the number of active military personnel was 435.750 personnel²⁹, and the quantity deficiencies also apply to TNI supporting equipment. Quality deficiencies are the lack of technology in the main weaponry system (defense equipment) owned by the TNI.

The emergence of initiation to encourage the ratification of the PSDN Bill for national defense, which should be based on the need to strengthen the country's defense amid the ever-expanding spectrum of threats of national defense and a fluctuating global security situation, so efforts to encourage the endorsement can be considered necessary. With this policy, in the future, the country is expected to be able to jointly prepare the people to face all the worst conditions that threaten the sovereignty of the nation and the state.

Executive and legislative political communication related to the PSDN bill

The state defense will not reach perfection if there is no support from all components of the nation and state, including among them from the government and the House of Representatives (DPR) as state institutions. In relation to the executive and legislative existence, the two institutions are expected to work together in drafting defense policies that are able to encourage the strengthening of the national defense system. But if what happens is the opposite, when the politicization of a policy plan occurs, there will be a tug of interest that can lead to a halt in the discussion of the draft policy. As has happened to the politicization of interests in the discussion of the National Security Bill, which in the end made the draft policy halted halfway³⁰.

In making policy, especially with regard to matters concerning national defense affairs, the executive body and the legislature need to sit together to discuss matters considered important. The sitting of these two institutions together when discussing important matters in a policy formulation is based on the provisions in our country's constitution, namely as clearly stated in Article 20 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution that each bill is discussed by the House of Representatives and the President for joint approval.

Yusa Djuyandi

*Margynata
Kurnia Putra*

Haris Faozan

When there are two political institutions, namely the government and the House of Representatives, while discussing a draft policy, there is a process of political communication in it. This is what has been said by Denton and Woodward¹⁵ that the characteristics of political communication can be seen from the way and intensity of the sender of the message in influencing the political environment, which then includes a public discussion that influences the considerations of the authorities in make policy¹⁵. From what was said by Denton and Woodward¹⁵, there is a meaning that can be taken namely the message conveyed in a political communication process has a very significant role to influence the attitude of a person or a lot of people so that they will eventually accept the proposed policy.

In developing an ideal defense policy, good political communication is needed between the government and the DPR, especially the Ministry of Defense and Commission I. The existence of good political communication between the two institutions not only creates a sense of mutual understanding but can also encourage good synergy between the two institutions in formulating appropriate defense policies, such as those currently being discussed namely related to the PSDN Bill for defense. With such conditions, ideally, the government and DPR can complement or fill in the shortcomings that might arise from the design of national resource management policies for national defense.

In building a good political communication between the two institutions to create synergy in order to strengthen the national defense system, especially through the formulation of appropriate defense policies, not an easy matter. Both the government and the DPR need to ensure that the policy design in the defense sector proposed by one of the parties to be discussed together does not contain political elements that can harm the public interest. It is not uncommon for a policy plan to stop because it is considered to only benefit the parties in power, and on the other hand it is precisely detrimental to the public interest or violates the principle of democratic political life. The DPR's political voice, on the other hand, was also influenced by the voice of factions from political parties, where often between factions of parties supporting the government had a different political attitude from the faction of the opposition parties. For parties supporting the government, of course, the policies taken by the government, especially in the defense sector, need to get full support, but this condition can be different for opposition parties which will precisely look more closely at the draft policy.

Because the drafting of defense policy, especially in the form of legislation, is also influenced by the political situation in the DPR, building effective political communication will be important for the initiator or proponent of the draft policy. The policy initiator plays the role of a political communicator who will convey a message in the form of the intent and purpose of formulating a policy plan. It is important for political communicators to build effective political communication by making clear and precise political messages, this is certainly so that political messages can be easily understood by communicants, such as other parties or audiences.

In the case of reaching an agreement and a joint commitment between the Ministry of Defense and the House of Representatives Commission I to continue the ratification of the PSDN Bill, it can also be caused by effective political communication due to the ability of political communicators to increase their political commitment to existing political groups. The thing that might be emphasized is that the PSDN Bill has a greater national interest in the framework of strengthening the national defense system in the form of the concept of the universal defense system (Sishanta). Thus political communication goes as expected. The achievement of an agreement between the Ministry of Defense and the House of Representatives Commission I to continue and encourage the ratification of the PSDN Bill shows that political communication is not solely as a tool to gain power, but also has the function to achieve mutual agreement in finding common goals.

Conclusion

For each country, the dimension of defense plays a very important role in the sustainability of the country. Strong or weak defense in a democratic country is not only determined by the number of military personnel but also influenced by the support of policies made by the government together with the parliament. Likewise, the government represented by the Ministry of Defense together with the DPR, especially Commission I, has agreed to encourage the ratification of the PSDN Bill for national defense. The achievement of an agreement between the two parties to encourage the passage of the PSDN Bill is the result of an effective political communication process, wherein the policy initiator as a political communicator is able to make political messages clear and precise and easily understood by the communicant. On the other hand, the success of political communication in the discussion

of the PSDN Bill also shows that political communication is not solely as a tool to gain power, but also has the function to achieve mutual agreement in finding common goals.

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Yusa Djuyandi

Margynata
Kurnia Putra

Haris Faozan