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Opmerkingen:

Verzonden aan: de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken.

Aan Zijne Excellentie Prof. Dr. J.E. de QUAY
Minister-President

Plein 1813 no. 4

's-GRAVENHAGE.

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INDONESIA

Political

Political Developments in DJAKARTA - March 1959.

GEHEIM

The position of Lieutenant-General Haris NASUTION.

1 Brigadier-General DJATIKUSOMO, Indonesian Consul-General in SINGAPORE, said (in private conversation on 14th April, 1959) that relations between President SUKARNO and NASUTION, the Chief of Staff, were so close that they amounted to an alliance. The President of the National Assembly should constitutionally become acting President when SUKARNO left at the end of April 1959 on his tour abroad, but NASUTION, whether formally acting President or not, would be the effective ruler of Indonesia at that moment. No change would meanwhile take place in the Government.

NASUTION would be able to use, entirely at his own discretion, the powers given to him under Martial Law.

2. When a new Government was formed on the return of SUKARNO and under the 1945 Constitution, it was probable that Dr. DJULANDA would again be Prime Minister. DJATIKUSOMO estimated that two-thirds of the Cabinet members would be military officers, and that NASUTION himself would at least occupy a Cabinet post. He might even become Vice-President.

During his absence abroad SUKARNO would have his suspected tumour examined. This might lead to a prolonged absence, in which case NASUTION would be confirmed in his power.

3. According to information from DJAKARTA obtained between 3rd and 10th April, 1959, the Central Government will remain the same for the time being. NASUTION is determined that the country will revert to the 1945 Constituent Assembly at once if it resists this change. NASUTION will wield the real power in Indonesia during SUKARNO's absence.

Attitude towards the Rebels.

4. DJATIKUSOMO said that although President SUKARNO still insisted that he would not permit any amnesty to be offered to rebel leaders in order to bring about a truce, his words were meaningless. He was privately ready to defer to NASUTION's desire for conciliation, provided his own face were saved. NASUTION felt that he must reach an agreement with the military leaders of the "Revolutionary Government" (PRRI). The difficulty posed by SUKARNO's announced stand would be overcome by encouraging the rebels' officers and other ranks to "rally" to the Central Government forces, and not to surrender. In this way they would cease to be "rebels" and their reintegration into the army could take place without prejudice to SUKARNO's declarations. For this to happen, NASUTION must first negotiate

with Colonels MALJUDDIN SIMBOLON and KAWILARUNG, and get them to accept exile without further punishment for two or three years, on the understanding they would later be reinstated. Rebel demands for regional autonomy would be met slowly, as and when local cadres were trained who could give it effect and run the provinces efficiently. A senior rebel representative said in SINGAPORE on 27.3.1959 that NASUTION was also trying to get into contact through intermediaries with Dr. SUMITRO (rebel Finance Minister).

5. DJATIKUSOMO said that it was hoped that the rebel leaders would be prepared to negotiate. They were in financial difficulties, for they were not finding it easy to export copra from CELEBES, or obtain satisfactory payment for it once it was got overseas. They were also short of food for their troops and civilian population in the areas they controlled. "They could not eat copra". However, they were enabled to continue the struggle for longer than was expected as they were receiving food and arms from FORMOSA. "Unfortunately, Indonesia cannot declare war on FORMOSA."

Meanwhile negotiations were being opened with the Darul Islam in ATJEH, on the basis that the Achinese Commander in Chief, Colonel HASSAN SAILEH, would be given the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indonesian Army (he was formerly a Captain). This might set an example for other rebel movements in Indonesia to follow.

6. According to information from DJAKARTA, NASUTION is contemplating extending the amnesty offered to the rebels, once SUKARNO has left the country. Under the present offer junior officers and rank and file of the PRRI can rally to the Central Government forces and thereafter either resign with impunity or remain in the army if they swear allegiance to Pantja Sila. A black-list of between 15 and 18 senior rebel leaders are not offered these terms, and would be arrested and charged if caught. NASUTION may now offer these last safe-conducts and no further reprisals if they will agree to leave the country at once and remain away for some years. They could return any time after two years as ordinary Indonesian citizens. They include the leaders of the revolution and the commanders of the battalions which deserted to the PRRI (such as Major NAINGGOLAN).

7. Meanwhile NASUTION is having the greatest difficulty in ordering battalions to go to CELEBES. In addition to the eight added to those in the MENADO area, he has been reinforcing the MAKASSAR area with a further six battalions. But battalion commanders are making every possible excuse not to accept these movements. The United States Consul in MEDAN has recommended to his Ambassador that American families should be evacuated, or plans at least prepared for their evacuation, in view of the worsening situation and the increasing insecurity on estates due to rebel activity. Estates now estimate that they are losing 50 per cent of their output through rebel action and illegal tapping, and the Ministry of Finance

in DJAKARTA adds to this figure a further 25 per cent loss in revenue from rubber.

The Army.

8. The conscription plan for the army will come into force on 1.6.1959. Fifteen thousand conscripts will be called up. The average age of the army is now over 30 and conscription will help to remedy the situation. While in Europe, Colonel JANI, Deputy Chief of Staff, will seek to buy in Germany equipment which will enable the small arms plant at BANDUNG to double its output for the Army. The army is assuming increasing power - its latest move is to force shopkeepers to sell their goods at December 1958 prices at the point of the bayonet. According to DJATIKUSOMO, NASUTION now has effective control of the Army.

The Position of the Communists.

9. The Army denies that NASUTION has played into the hands of the Communist Party (PKI) by posting left-wing officers from DJAKARTA to the provinces to get rid of them. It was reported that these officers were active in organising village defence militia who would be loyal to the PKI, and at the same time trying to win from the General Staff in DJAKARTA maximum independence of action for local commanders down to subdistrict so that they would be able to pursue this task the more effectively.

10. The pro-Communist command in the Air Force has been demanding that it should have full control of all airfields and its own ground troops to be exclusively responsible for their defence. These should be drawn from the Army. This move was seen as an attempt by the left-wing to strengthen the air force at the expense of the Army. Officers in the entourage of NASUTION dismiss this claim as of no importance. The Chief of Staff has no intention of acceding to the airforce request, and if the air force attempted to revolt, would at once immobilise it by occupying the airfields and cutting off petrol supplies. This would effectively end any air force threat in 24 hours, it is estimated.

11. DJATIKUSOMO said that SUKARNO was not fundamentally pro-Communist, but was ambitious to hold on to and increase his power and had been forced to rely on the loyalty given him by the PKI, especially as opposition mounted to his policies among other political groups. His attachment to the left-wing had been consolidated when the Masjumi and Socialist (PSI) parties had refused to participate in the present Government. SUKARNO was prepared to turn away from the Communists if he saw greater stability and advantage in this for himself. He was now leaning increasingly on NASUTION, since in the last analysis the army held the immediate physical power in Indonesia. The PNI had also turned against the PKI and had influence - at least to some degree - over the President. In the race for favours, the PKI were losing ground therefore. SUKARNO had realised that they tended to perpetuate the division and consequent

weakness of Indonesia, while the Army had the power to reunite the country.

12. Informants from DJAKARTA state that early in April 1959 SUBANDRIO, Indonesian Foreign Minister, confided that SUKARNO had realised that the PKI was a "divisive" influence in Indonesia, and that he would do better to ignore it and to base his future on co-operation with the Army.

Comment:

Para. 1. The formal acting-President is SARTONO, (PNI - Indonesian National Party) the Speaker in Parliament.

Para. 2. No mention has been made in official statements of a predominantly military cabinet, but the intimate interdependence of SUKARNO and NASUTION makes this a possibility.

Para. 3. The Constituent Assembly will almost certainly resist certain aspects of "Guided Democracy" perhaps backed by Parliament. This might impel action by SUKARNO and the Army tantamount to introducing a dictatorship.

Para. 4. There is so far no collateral information on NASUTION's intentions to permit compromise with the PRRI or to meet SIMBOLON and KAWILARANG. All indications are to the contrary and the official theme of "no compromise" has been reiterated lately in further statements by both the Prime Minister DJUANDA and NASUTION himself.

Paras. 9 - 12. Much of this is questionable. It should be remembered that DJATIKUSOMO probably expected his remarks to be spread abroad and that he would wish to minimise the extent of the Communist threat.