

6 september 1961

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Onderwerp: Political situation in Indonesia, July 1961.

Referenties:

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Informant: Een betrouwbare Indonesiër met goede contacten in PKI-kringen.

Opmerkingen:

Verzonden aan: de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken.

GENEIM

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

Plein 1813 no. 4

's-GRAVENHAGE.

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INDONESIA

Political

GEHEIM

Political Situation in Indonesia, July 1961.

1. During the absence of General NASUTION, the Indonesian Minister of National Security and Army Chief of Staff, in Europe in June and July, 1961, the P.K.I. (Partai Komunis Indonesia - Indonesian Communist Party) stepped up its propaganda attacks on the Army. This campaign, which was particularly strong in West and Central Java, took the line that President SUKARNO was dissatisfied with military misrule and determined to reduce the Army's influence. It was accompanied by demonstrations and protests against the Army by trade union and peasant organisations.
2. In support of this broad attack, the P.K.I. launched a whispering campaign aimed at General NASUTION himself. He was, they said, studying Fascist methods in Europe and negotiating secretly with the Dutch. When, owing to sickness, he did not return to Djakarta as expected, they claimed that he was afraid to do so.
3. All these rumours, by design, reached the ears of President SUKARNO who had returned from his world tour to find that a number of decisions of which he did not approve had been taken in his absence. For example, Colonel PRANOTO, the military commander in Central Java who had been regarded as adopting a weak attitude towards the communists had been replaced by General SARBINI who is strongly anti-communist, and Mochtar LUBIS, a journalist with well-known dissident sympathies had been released from house arrest and permitted to go abroad.
4. He then learned that the Congress of the Army sponsored I.P.K.I. (Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia - Union of Supporters of Indonesian Independence) had resolved on 11th July to press him to abandon NASAKOM (representing the co-operation of Nationalist, Religious and Communist groupings) in favour of another slogan POLKAR standing for co-operation between Political and Functional Groups. This would have

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accorded: the Army, as by far the most significant functional group, greatly enhanced status in the State and threatened to upset the political balance on which SUKARNO's position so neatly rests.

5. He was further concerned by the circumstances surrounding the surrender of the dissident General KAWILARANG in Sulawesi; and, in particular, by a report that at the insistence of KAWILARANG, General JANI, Second Deputy Chief of Army Staff, who had accepted the dissident surrender in Sulawesi, was canvassing the return of the former Vice-President, Mohammed HATTA, to the Government.

6. He did not approve of the favourable terms granted to the Sulawesi dissidents, which JANI had taken upon himself to announce in advance on Makassar radio and which had subsequently been embodied in a decree signed by DJUANDA, who was then acting President.

7. The recurring dispute between First Minister DJUANDA and President SUKARNO on the economic and financial measures required to bolster up the Indonesian economy resulted soon after the President's return to Djakarta in a more than usually violent quarrel between the two men.

8. The last fortnight of July 1961, was a period of intense activity in the Palace and mounting communist rumour-mongering. In a speech on 18th July, the President had "required government officers who did not feel equal to their task to step aside" and this together with communist propaganda touched off considerable speculation about impending Cabinet changes.

9. The President is known to have sent for Chairul SALEH, Minister of National Development and acting Chairman of the Peoples' Consultative Assembly (M.P.R.S.) and offered him the post of Vice President, which carries with it the appointment of Chairman of the M.P.R.S., but neither Chairul SALEH's reactions to this proposal nor the degree to which the President was prepared to push him are clear.

10. After a few days the quarrel with DJUANDA was patched up (although the basic disagreement on economic matters remained) and by the time that General NASUTION returned on 31st July, the rumours of impending Cabinet changes had abated. On the preceding day the President had condemned the idea of POLKAR in a heated speech in Medan. Subsequently, DJUANDA's unpublished decree which besides guaranteeing that the dissidents would be permitted to retain their Army ranks, may have provided for greater regional autonomy for Sulawesi, was withdrawn and replaced by Presidential Regulation 15/61 which granted the rebels only a general amnesty provided they surrendered before 5th October. Cabinet ministers were told that they had a further 10 months to prove themselves, and on 3rd August the President felt secure enough to go off to Bali to prepare his 17th August speech.

comment

11. Once again the President appears to have worked his trick and to have restored the political balance in Djakarta which was in danger of being upset in his absence, but conflict between the Army and the P.K.I. is if anything sharper, noticeably in the provinces.

12. The communist agitators arrested during the President's absence in East Priangan (West Java) and those already under arrest in South Sumatra and South Kalimantan have not yet been released, and anti P.K.I. dissidents are still being transferred to the communist stronghold of Central Java. On the other hand, anti-Army demonstrations inspired by the P.K.I. continue notably in North Sumatra where in defiance of the Regional Commander's orders a large strike was declared in the second week of August.

13. Although on the face of it the President's attack on POLKAR and his opposition to the return of the dissidents is directed against the Army, his attitude towards the P.K.I. is not uncritical. Addressing a recent Army conference, the Foreign Minister, SUBANDRIO, whose publicly expressed views always reflect those of the President, declared that communism was an ideology opposed to nationalism.