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Land: Indonesië.

Onderwerp: The threat to Dutch New Guinea from Indonesia over the next six months.

Referenties:

Datum van waarneming: Medio december 1958.

Bron: Verenigde Britse Inlichtingendiensten.

geheert administratief

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- Opmerkingen: 1. Deze aantekening werd ten behoeve van de Britse Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken Selwyn LLOYD samengesteld ter gelegenheid van de NATO-conferentie medio december te Parijs.
2. Deze aantekening is geen commentaar op het rapport samengesteld door het C.V.I.N. over hetzelfde onderwerp.

Verzonden aan: de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken.

Aan Zijne Exoellentie Prof. Dr. L.J.M. BEEL  
Minister-President

Plein 1813 no. 4

'S-GRAVENHAGE.

ZEER GEHEIM

## Indonesia

THE THREAT TO DUTCH NEW GUINEA FROM INDONESIA OVER THE  
NEXT SIX MONTHSMilitary capability

Indonesia has already received large quantities of Soviet Bloc arms and more are on order. By April 1959, their armed forces will be materially powerful but they will not be able to make operational use of that equipment for some time after this.

The Indonesian armed forces are now almost wholly occupied in the suppression of rebel activity and the maintenance of internal security generally. Given no political settlement, we do not believe that the rebels can be suppressed in six months and it will probably take much longer. We do not consider that, in present circumstances, the Indonesians could mount an operation of the size required to invade Dutch New Guinea. In the unlikely event of a political settlement with the rebels, the Indonesians would find it easier to raise such an invasion force but, even so, for reasons given below, we do not believe that such an operation is likely, even less that it would succeed.

The Indonesians have mounted successful amphibious operations in both Sumatra and the Celebes and have become increasingly proficient in this technique. However, they have so far only had spasmodic opposition from the land but none from the sea or air.

A force of the size required to mount a successful operation against Dutch New Guinea, for which they have ample shipping, would be detected either in the assembly stage (if mounted from islands close to Dutch New Guinea) or during transit if launched from further afield (e.g. Java). It is likely, in any case, that some intelli-

gence of a projected operation of this size and importance would be received earlier.

An Indonesian amphibious operation would be particularly vulnerable on passage to naval and air attack, especially since the force would be outside Indonesian fighter cover owing to the lack of suitable airfields within range. The Indonesians have the aircraft available to mount an airborne operation: they have never, however, previously mounted an attack of the scale required and we consider the possibility of such an operation extremely remote.

As explained above, the main deficiency of such operations would be the lack of fighter cover owing to the absence of suitable airfields within range. Bloc "volunteers" could not alter this situation and we therefore do not believe that their presence could materially alter the Indonesian military capability.

To sum up, we do not believe the Indonesians, with or without the help of Bloc "volunteers", have the military capability of mounting an operation against Dutch New Guinea within the next six months.

#### Political considerations

There are conflicting reports of President SUKARNO's intentions with regard to direct military action against Dutch New Guinea. He is reported to have twice stated during a tour of East Indonesia last month that Indonesia will not take "West Irian" by force of arms. Dr. SUBANDRIO told Mr. Selwyn LLOYD during his recent visit to London that

no aggression was contemplated and Lt. Col. SUKENDRO (the Indonesian DMI) repeated this assurance in London during the past few days. On the other hand, a previously reliable secret source has reported a conversation with SUBANDRIO in October who indicated then that a direct attack was being planned for March 1959.

The governing group in Indonesia (at present an alliance of President SUKARNO, Major-General NASUTION and Prime Minister DJUANDA, in that order of importance) are becoming increasingly authoritarian, and in their continued political and economic difficulties they will need all the popular enthusiasm they can rally from a "forward" policy on New Guinea. It is beginning to be clear that the tactics of economic expropriation have failed, and new ideas for "other courses" are no doubt being canvassed. There are various moves which could be taken short of actual invasion (e.g. infiltration of guerillas, sabotage and assassination) and vague threatening remarks by those in positions of influence should not necessarily be taken as good evidence of plans for an invasion.

The Indonesians appear to have made small attempts at infiltration in the past. We have no reason to believe that any future attempts would be likely to gain support among the native population except for the small Indonesian minority (only 11,000 out of a total population of about 750,000).

While the instability of SUKARNO's personality is such that we cannot altogether rule it out, an invasion seems unlikely for the following reasons:

- a) SUKARNO must realise that the chances of achieving a decisive military success are remote, even if the operation was assisted by

Communist "volunteers" (see para 7 above). He would be likely to calculate that failure to achieve this would have drastic repercussions on his own political future, as well as ruling out any possibility of defeating the rebels in Sumatra and the Celebes within the foreseeable future.

- b) While SUKARNO might manage to obtain the sympathy and some political support of certain Afro/Asian countries, he must realise that the use of force would provoke hostile reactions from the Western powers, in particular the U.K., Australia and the United States. Moreover military and civil aid from the United States is becoming increasingly important to the Indonesian Government. Apart from any independent action they might take, the Western powers would probably be able to obtain sufficient support in the U.N. to prevent SUKARNO achieving his objective.
- c) Although the Sino/Soviet Bloc would in all probability give SUKARNO initial propaganda support (including possible references to sending "volunteers"), we do not believe there is any likelihood at present of his obtaining a promise in advance of direct military support from either the Soviet Union or China, without which a military adventure of this kind could not succeed.