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Onderwerp:

West Irian - Indonesian Army's Attitude.

Referenties:

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Bron:

Van bevriende zijde.

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.

Iran/Indonesië

GEHEIN

WEST IRIAN - INDONESIAN ARMY'S ATTITUDE.

However reluctant NASUTION may have been to go along with the new ideology expressed by NASAKOM, his surrender to present policies was dictated by a realistic appraisal of the fundamental weaknesses of his group, both within the officer corps and in facing a political coalition of SUKARNO backed by the P.N.I., N.U. and the P.K.I., and having the support of the minority parties and the so-called functional groups.

The Army-controlled F.N.P.I.B. has been discredited by its failure to rally all forces for a satisfactory solution of the prestige issue of West Irian. NASUTION is aware that the political parties wish to reduce the political power of the Army and he is determined at all costs to retain for himself and the Army some measure of political power and influence in shaping policy. The P.K.I. has emerged from the political manoeuvring, subsequent to the action in the "Three Souths", in a stronger position and, by virtue of its active policy at the time of the "Karel Doorman" affair and a propaganda drive through its press, has largely captured the leadership in the demand for a speedy solution of the West Irian affair. The P.K.I. has been firmly entrenched by SUKARNO as a nationalist patriotic party and it is recognised as such by a subservient press; it is sure that NASUTION would be removed from his offices by SUKARNO were he to countenance diversion of the Army's efforts from the West Irian issue to harrying the P.K.I.

It would be expecting too much of the Indonesian military liaison for them to come clean on an operation which is, after all, an expression of a national patriotic urge among the politically significant strata of Indonesian society. It is certain that Army Headquarters has played a vital role in planning and carrying out infiltration operations in West New Guinea in recent years, of necessity in consultation with SUKARNO and the Naval Staff. Indonesians are obsessed with a morbid hatred of the Dutch.

Regardless of the existence of any long-term master plan to recapture West Irian, the Indonesian armed forces will make a substantial show of force in the area within

a few months, possibly just prior to the 17th August. The operation may be restricted to the occupation of the islands forming the boundary of the old West New Guinea Residency and which the Indonesians claim to be disputed areas, but the possibility of a large-scale operation on the mainland of New Guinea cannot be ruled out, as the "retooled" Indonesian press is adopting an increasingly belligerent and threatening attitude towards the Dutch.

It is sure that such Army leaders who are capable of thinking beyond next week, men such as JANI and SUBROTO, are aware of all the implications of aid from the bloc. NASUTION clearly understands the probable consequences but it is doubtful that, even should a reconciliation be effected between NASUTION and his former cronies, any effective resistance could be put up to the President and the NASAKOM group, particularly on an issue such as West Irian which unites the vast majority of the mutually hostile leaders of the politically significant sections of the community.

It is probable that a majority of the officer corps in positions of power in the Army or seconded to civil affairs services are either loyal to SUKARNO, or belong to parties, groups and factions which are opposed to the NASUTION group, for a wide variety of reasons. Should SUKARNO replace NASUTION as Chief of Staff by a nominee of the left-wing of the P.N.I., such as SUNGKONO, the outlook for the future of moderate groups in Indonesia, which at present is not promising, would be hopeless. It is not sure, for this reason, that SUKARNO wishes to further circumscribe his already reduced ability to juggle political forces in Indonesia by replacing NASUTION by a left-wing Army man. NASUTION also realises that his interests and those of the Army lie in support of the President, and having unsuccessfully miscalculated his strength in 1952 in defying the President's policies, he will not venture defiance at a time when his position is much weaker.

There is no reason to believe that NASUTION admires the West. He is impartial in his xenophobic dislike of all foreigners. As a man who made his reputation as a fighter against the Dutch, he must be in sympathy with Indonesian aspirations to regain West Irian. It is probable that he has approved and supported infiltrations by Army personnel into West Irian in recent years.