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WWU - 20

INDONESIA: Again the Military

Tjikini Raya, 95 (pav.)
Djakarta
June 5, 1959

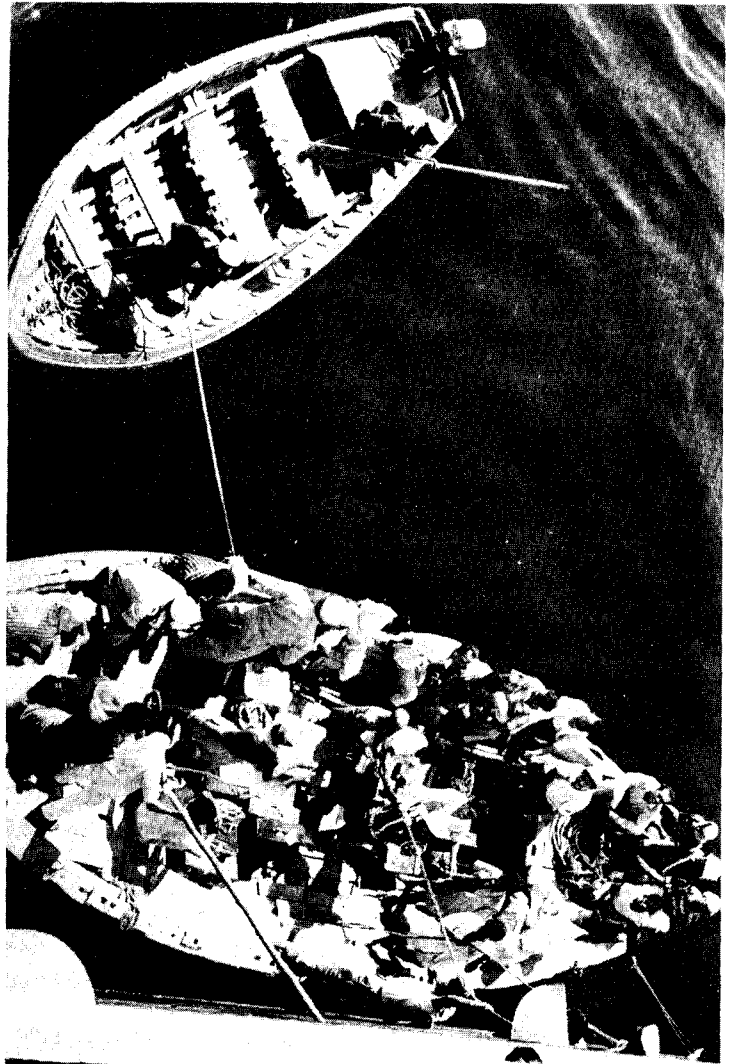
Mr. Walter S. Rogers.
Institute of Current World Affairs.
366 Madison Ave., New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I wasn't expecting martial law in easy-going, docile Indonesia. But just as I found to be the case in Burma and Thailand, the Army here thinks it knows what's best.

The moment I arrived here two months ago, I was aware of the State of Emergency regulations which had been proclaimed two years ago. Cameras should not be seen at the airport (much less, should they see). Disembarking passengers were asked to make out a detailed accounting of money brought in. Indonesians and Chinese were then separated by sex, taken into a disrobing room and frisked by guards and matrons. Somehow the holders of U.S. and British passports were kept at the end of the line and spared the mauling.

Within a day or two after my settling in Djakarta, a good amount of the Nation's press had shut down. The Army had decided to suspend seven newspapers and one of the three wire services for discussing a forbidden court case (more of this later).



Smuggled silver, Army ammo cases, confusion

Several weeks ago as I came out of my cabin on a Dutch ship prepared to greet fabulous Bali in the morning sun, I was instead greeted by a score of soldiers with tommy guns. Bars of silver had been smuggled aboard (in Army ammo cases, aboard an Army vehicle, destined for an Army post in Makassar) and they were casing the decks for the civilian culprits. I doubt that my photograph would have been published since there never has been a public report.

In Makassar itself, a Central Government city in the Rebel-harassed Island of Sulawesi (Celebes), the Rotterdam-Lloyd office manager (an

Indonesian, not a Dutchman) was too disturbed to talk to me. The Army had given out a press release declaring three of his company's ships had been siezed for carrying out contraband copra from forbidden Rebel ports. He didn't know that his company had any of its ships in Sulawesi waters. When he asked to learn the ships' names, the Army told him to call back in a few days: General Nasution (the Army Chief of Staff) was in town and they couldn't take time out to run an answering service. (Later, the Army conceded that the whole thing was a hoax, that only one of the three ships originally reported was Rotterdam-Lloyd, and that it was outside of Indonesian territorial waters anyway.)

In order to be flown in a Stanvac plane to the company's Palembang refinery in Southern Sumatra, I needed a security clearance from the Army. Stanvac could then present this to the civil aviation authorities for their own clearance for Stanvac to carry me. It took an entire Saturday morning of battling the Indonesian Army at its downtown headquarters here but, unarmed with everything except Yankee brass and temper, I left victorious. If the Army had had its way, I would have been compelled to submit my request several weeks in advance (the plane was leaving in two days) in order to give Military Intelligence a chance to look me over (maybe to send back to Washington to see what they had on me). And then I would have had to wait until General Nasution's press spokesman, Major Harsono, was in town in order to gain his personal approval.

In Bandung, all the public "benzine" (gasoline) stations have cars queued up for several blocks which owners park and leave there in the pre-dawn hours. Depending upon your license number, benzine is sold in regulated quantity, at regulated (and ridiculously low) prices, every other morning. That is, if your car is far enough up the queue. And if you don't have half of every other day to spare for queueing up, you drive into a back street where a fellow in an Army uniform sits in front of a stack of jerry cans ready to sell you five gallon's worth at the blackmarket price.

The other day I read in the Times of Indonesia that "many residents of the capital were summoned by the Djakarta City Garrison Command for not flying the national flag on the occasion of the commemoration of National Awakening Day on May 20. Press Officer Lieut. Eddy Djadjang Djajaatmadja announced that for the first time the offending residents were only given a warning. If the next time they would again fail to hoist the two colours, steps would be taken against them," he said." There also was some mention a while back that hereafter hula-hooping would be forbidden on all school grounds. But the Ministry of Education promulgated that one, not the Army. And anyway, I think the Army could have been indulged in this instance.

The Army is helping President Soekarno run today's Indonesia. And the Army is here to stay. I got that straight from the source, Lieut. Gen. Abdul Haris Nasution. This boyishly handsome (he is still 40 and looks 30) hero of Indonesia's Revolution is the name most frequently associated with the voice of the military and, specifically, the Army. But even Nasution must "negotiate with," rather than order, many of his district commanders pocketed throughout this 3000-island archipelago. The Indonesian Army is an outgrowth of local recruitment and local decisions taken during the Revolution and the military allegiance is still in good part to the local Colonel -- somewhat in the vein of China's old warlordism. But negotiate or no, Nasution is every inch the General. Even if I had no other indication, I could have gained this impression from counting the frequency of "I"s as I interviewed him in his Djakarta home on May Day. (He stayed at home, granted interviews and finished up odds and ends while his subordinates were stationed

around the country making sure that the May Day celebrants (specifically the Communists) conformed to Army regulations.)

There were four of us during my hour-long chat with the General. He thought it best to include both Major Harsono (the Indonesian military's Jim Hagerty) and Rudy Gontha, the personable, Westernized spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The General's command of English was so firm that he really needed no assistance. But for particular phrases, he sought Rudy's guidance. I have already told you about Nasution's "I will restore the 1945 Constitution" comment regarding the Return to 1945 and "Guided Democracy" (WWU-19). But we batted around this theme of the military in civilian life a bit more. I mentioned that it is somewhat easier to get rid of politicians who didn't perform than it is to get rid of military leaders who carried their authority around in their hip holsters. Nasution didn't disagree. But neither did he show any indication that the Army was anything but here to stay. "The corruption danger is always," he declared, "but it is necessary that the Army have its share in the Government. I am aware of the dangers and so in the transition period I am requiring that every soldier must again sign his contract with the State. We are screening, and I think many will not be admitted back into the Army."

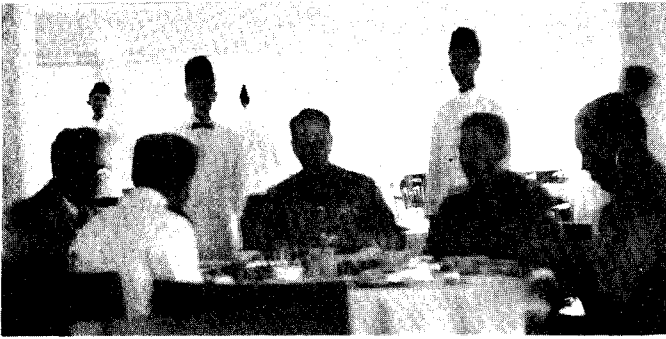


"I have more than 200,000 men..."

He made it plain that, contrary to some here in Indonesia, he thinks economic development should have first priority -- "because if we fail this we cannot go ahead in the military." The General said that he has been detailing some of his officers to jobs in the civilian economy. The Commissioner of Economic Stabilization, for instance, the man who coordinates economic planning between departments, is an Army man. But Nasution also said that he is aware that this can go too far: "I am well aware of South America and its generals where they have Cabinets of 25 Ministers and each Minister is a sovereign commanded by 24 men. When we return to 1945, only one man will be commanding, that is the President."

I asked the General how it is that the military in Indonesia is always represented by the Army. He smiled indulgently and came right to the point: "I have more than 200,000 men. That is a big community. They (the Air Force and Navy) have 15,000 each."

Until the recently announced U.S. agreement to sell 60 planes to the Indonesian Air Force (WWU-16), America has been identified almost wholly with the Army and Nasution; and the Communist bloc with the Air Force and



THE CHIEFS: Vice Adm. Subyakto (back to camera), Marshal Suryardarma (center) & Gen. Nasution (second from right) ignoring my camera as they breakfasted in Bandung.

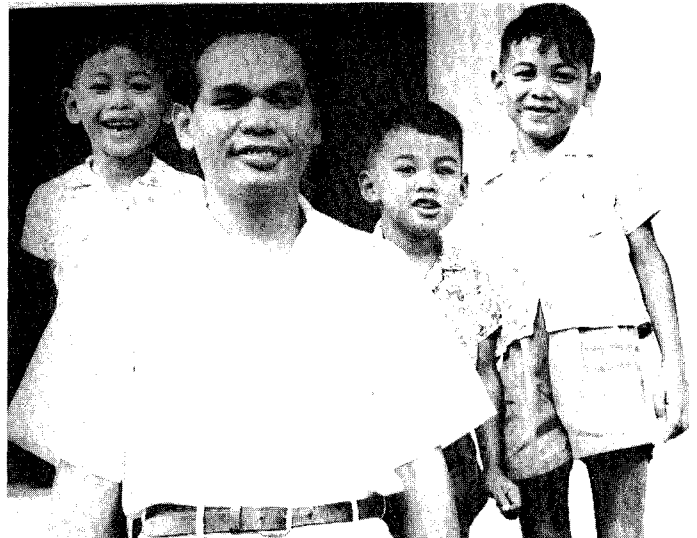
him and play host, dispatched a General fourth or fifth down the line. And Suryardarma also has been grieving over a curt turndown he had from a U.S. Air Force Colonel, a personal friend. Suryardarma had written him a confidential letter pleading for more planes so that Indonesia's Air Force could help stabilize the Rebel situation.

Now I am familiar with inter-service rivalry in Washington and how one service plays and is played off against the other. Therefore I have been wondering who is protecting Indonesia, the so-called beneficiary of foreign military aid, from being torn asunder by an Air Force cheered on by the East and an Army cheered on by the West. (The Indonesian Navy, with no ships to speak of, just isn't in the running.) "The Army is more politically understanding than the other services," General Nasution declared. "We are only a tool of our National Revolution. We will not become a tool of the Cold War. And in the other services, we also have that understanding."

(Actually, I gather U.S. officialdom here is itself aware of the problem. America's flirtation with Indonesia's Rebels last year came to an end after the decision that Nasution personally was the one element in the country most conscious of the dangers of communism and therefore the right anchor for American foreign policy objectives. But the embrace became so public that the U.S. now has decided to get Nasution off the spot a bit by also aiding the Air Force -- despite that Madam Suryardarma and her parlor pinks.)

But though General Nasution is not worried about inter-service rivalry getting enmeshed in the Cold War, another Indonesian General is. He^{is} Maj. Gen. Simatupong, former Chief of Staff of the entire Armed Forces and now benched and merely an "adviser" to the Ministry of Defense. (WWU-19).

"The individual armed services will always be open to any party which can sell arms to them under easy conditions," Simatupong told me. "Japan's Navy used to be British-oriented and her Army German-oriented. As Chief of Staff I said we must not repeat this. But



SIMATUPONG AND THREE ARMED FORCES

its Chief of Staff, Marshal Suryardarma. Nasution is known publicly to be not "pro-communist" and privately to be most definitely "anti-communist." Suryardarma, I have been told by Indonesian officials, is a basically weak man with a wife who is greatly influenced by her numerous Communist friends. Moreover, these officials also told me that Suryardarma nurses two grudges against the U.S.: He was snubbed when he accompanied President Soekarno to Washington in 1956 because the U.S. Air Force, instead of sending out its Chief of Staff to greet

I'm powerless now."

Simatupong is 39, a year younger than Nasution, and yet he was ahead of Nasution in their military class at the Dutch University of Bandung. He was acting Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces at the age of 28. He also was Nasution's boss in the military set-up until Nasution resigned as Army Chief of Staff in 1952 (following an abortive military attempt to bypass Parliament which involved them both) and Simatupong had his own job abolished in 1954. The two men, with this competitive history, are understandably not close. However, Simatupong still lives in the spacious Armed Forces Chief of Staff residency on Djakarta's Cathedral Square (there is no other claimant), writes thought-provoking columns for Pedoman, Indonesia's best and biggest newspaper, and dashes off private memos which, I am told, even Soekarno reads.

Simatupong is not only a charmer personally, he is a philosopher. Listen to him:

"The main thing is can a military government bring progress to a country, and history has not given the proof. There is no military government that has been successful up to now in this sense. Maybe Ataturk, but his was not a purely military government. Why does it fail? It cannot tolerate opposition — in intellectual life, in the university, in the free press, in politics. So it must become oppressive. And also it becomes a leaning force and the tendency is to buy it. Every political leader will, more or less, buy the support of his followers, give them more arms. The economy, if it is organized, is more or less an extension of Army rule: buy more and more arms. The military has to tolerate some corruption because it has no alternative. The weakness of a military power is that it must control itself, and that is a very hard thing to do. If there is some strong difference in the Army and the other factions are not strong enough to hold the country together, political forces join the rupture. Nowadays there is a tendency for the Army to have a bigger role in the underdeveloped countries. All try to modernize and the Army, being a small and disciplined organization, is ahead of the country. The Army is the most modernized, most efficient. And in these underdeveloped countries where this takes place you have no strong counter-force as you do in the developed countries."

The man saying all this had opened the door for me personally after I had poked my head into the window wondering if I had the right address. He now sat talking to me in an open-necked white shirt, comfortably slumped in his chair. He was still a young man, and looked it. Could he really have once been Indonesia's top militarist with all this unorthodoxy?

Incidentally, Simatupong had some interesting things to say vis a vis Indonesia and the U.S.: "Maybe not the U.S. Government officially, but definitely U.S. arms, new and in quantity, and some personnel for training, were supplied the Rebels last year. I think it may still be going on. (Simatupong is one of the main intermediaries between the Central Government and the Rebels during the many negotiations for a settlement of demands and rapprochement.) But I'm not anti-American. I realize that without you there'd be no counterpoise to communism. And I'm anti-communist."

I mentioned at the beginning of this letter about arriving in Indonesia and being greeted by a newspaper blackout. Here is what happened:

A Dutch Army Captain named H.C.J.G. Schmidt, a member of a diehard faction working for the restoration of colonial control, was sentenced

to life imprisonment in 1954 for giving aid to the enemy in time of war. He appealed, but the Indonesian Government couldn't have been less interested. The years flowed on with Schmidt still in prison. Earlier this year, A.H. Hesselman, the head of the Dutch Diplomatic Mission here, told me he went to see Prime Minister Djuanda and said, how about it, perhaps the Schmidt case could be settled amicably by having him declared a "mental" victim. Djuanda supposedly told Hesselman: "Let me handle it." Action followed. The Indonesian High Court suddenly took up the case and ruled that Schmidt had been guilty of only one of the three counts and since he had already served the five-year maximum term on that count, he could no longer be held. Five days before the decision was handed down, the Dutch had purchased a Quantas Airline ticket for an unnamed "courier" on a plane scheduled to leave Djakarta the day after the decision. As soon as the decision was actually handed down, the Dutch were informed that they might apply for an exit permit for Schmidt and that the office would stay open beyond its usual 2 p.m. closing time in order to expedite matters. Schmidt was out of Indonesia at dawn the next day, March 19, occupying the "courier's" seat. A good time later, the public suddenly learned that Schmidt was no longer in the country. The old anti-Dutch battle cry was now combined with a suspicion of incompetence and/or graft in the Government. The Central Immigration Office head said the granting of the exit permit was not his doing; it was done by the Attorney General, Soeprapto. The Minister of Justice, who is over both Immigration and the Attorney General, also pleaded innocence. The Attorney General was then suspended. He immediately called a press conference, declared he was being made the political fall guy and strongly implied that the exit permit very definitely was approved by the Minister of Justice.

Well, early in the game, General Nasution dispatched a letter to all newspaper editors reminding them that he had the power, as Central Martial Law Administrator, to suspend publication. He said he didn't want to use it and so would they please cooperate and not mention the Schmidt case? It was highly inflammatory and might cause uprisings against the foreign community. Then, immediately after the Attorney General's press conference, the Army again dispatched a letter saying no mention of the Attorney General's remarks either.

The first to break the military's ukase was Pedoman, a vernacular paper of large circulation. Pedoman had gone into the matter indirectly by defending the court's action, which also was being bandied about in oral criticism. It also suggested interrogation of the Minister of Justice. Pedoman was shut down the day its editorial appeared. (In the past, the Army had taken four or five days to move, but this order came from the Cabinet.) Then it was pointed out to the Army, which was considered sympathetic to the Attorney General, that six other newspapers and PIA, the Government-subsidized wire service, had also mentioned the Schmidt case. The Army then saw to it that the other publications were given equal treatment. After a week, they all were permitted to go back into business. But the warning was inescapable. It is also well known (but never printed) that the Indonesian Chinese stringer for Time Magazine has been in jail for more than a year and the Dutch-born correspondent for Agence France Presse for several months. And as for the editor of Indonesia Raya, once Indonesia's best newspaper, he has been under house arrest for several years and his paper no longer exists. However the mass ban which followed the Schmidt case has set a local record for ensemble action.

I'll give you three reactions to it:

Suwito Kusumowidagdo, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and therefore the top career man in Indonesia's international matters, generalized his views in referring to the need for reorganizing the Government under the Soekarno-Army concept of "Guided Democracy": "In a liberal democratic situation where there is freedom of speech, freedom of everything, they can say anything they like. In a 'Guided Democracy' this competition can be limited. We in Indonesia feel that our liberal democracy has favored the Communist Party. It is always more militant, better organized and has more chance to advance. It is difficult for us to check. What we need is political stability. Now, with a liberal democracy, there can be no stability."



Communies exploit

Charlie Tambu, managing editor and owner of the Times of Indonesia (WWU-17), makes it plain that he sympathizes with the Army's views on newspaper control: "The Schmidt case could mean mobs, beating up of the Dutch. You must remember that we are in a State of War. It has been proclaimed. And we never had freedom of the press. There was no Indonesian press to speak of under the Dutch."

Ironically, Tambu himself, although not closed down by the Schmidt case, was closed down on another issue last December: "I wrote an uncomplimentary editorial about Nasser and called him 'a lackey of the Soviet Union.' You must remember that our Criminal Code has an explicit statement saying nobody shall insult the head of a friendly state. The UAE Ambassador protested to Prime Minister Djuanda who, in his capacity as Minister of Defense, closed me down without even consulting the Cabinet. I went to Nasution. He said my editorial had nothing to do with national security and if the Government wanted to act it should bring its action before a court of law. Nasution went to Djuanda and I opened again after missing only three days."



"I wouldn't dare..."

Well, I got a different view on Army press control from Rosihan Anwar, the founder and for the past 11 years editor of Pedoman, the paper whose closing down in the Schmidt case started the local chain reaction. Pedoman has a circulation of 48,000 to 50,000 daily and it is now considered Indonesia's best as well as largest vernacular paper.

"The Government considers Pedoman as an opposition paper," Rosihan told me. "But we are not. I wouldn't dare to write any editorials criticizing the Government, except in a very mild way. There are three things we should not touch: The President, the Army and, to a certain extent, the Judiciary. So I write editorials on international affairs pointing up what happens elsewhere in a coup d'etat. If we return to the 1945 Constitution and they say, 'No opposition papers,' then we are finished. But if for the sake of a show they refrain from this, then we exist."

I found Rosihan as bright as he is affable. We had an unhurried coffee session on his front porch a few mornings back. He said that even though Pedoman is often identified as the organ of the Socialist Party (PSI), and that he personally is close to Sjahrir (and Sjahrir certainly looks to Pedoman as the main outlet for Socialist counsel), the Socialists have nothing to do with Pedoman's operations. It is actually owned by its working newspapermen. Rosihan also said that he joined the Socialist Party himself only after the Socialists had been badly defeated -- and he conditioned his joining on the party having no say in the paper. I found it a bit ironical to learn that General Nasution, Rosihan's across-the-street neighbor here in Djakarta, used to write a military column for Pedoman when, as resigned Chief of Staff (1952-1955), he had nothing else to do. And even now, General Simatupong is a regular Pedoman columnist -- when the paper is allowed to appear.

Well, in none of these three views have you found anybody really crying out for freedom of the press. And in none of the papers I've been reading have I found any protest about the mass publication ban involved in the Schmidt case. Not from the politicians -- either in or out of favor. Not from the universities -- either faculty or studentbody. There was one "discussion" by a journalist society here several weeks after the event. But it was so muted it all but passed unnoticed.

And while Schmidt is presumably now safely back in Holland, there may be one long-range repercussion of the affair which has yet to be mentioned. Allan Pope, the U.S. aviator shot down and captured while on a bombing mission for the Rebels (WWU-16), regularly can be seen sunning himself on the porch of a blue house outside Jogjakarta in Central Java. He is under house arrest and convalescing from a broken thigh bone. Since the Air Force captured Pope he is their prisoner and presumably will be tried by the Air Force. The Communists have made no secret about urging a speedy trial and the maximum penalty for Pope's part in aiding the Rebels. But the Government has also been sunning itself regarding the Pope case. It has been basking in the increasing warmth of U.S. relations. It is in no hurry to raise a cloud called "Pope." However, now I am told that the furor over the Schmidt affair has ruled out any leniency in the Pope case -- at least until political memories begin to fade.

Well, I now wind up a little more than eight weeks in Indonesia. If I have any firm conclusion in leaving it's that the Indonesians are a thoroughly delightful and instinctively kind people, a people whose ready smile has squelched my American impatience the moment it begins smouldering. Because of the warmth of the people, the richness of their fertile, well-watered land, I find it tragic that Civil War continues to harass this new Nation from ever really getting started. Now I've tried to tell you about Indonesia's non-alignment, or "independent and active foreign policy," from the perspective of Indonesia's history, and from the perspective of some of the people who experience it today. I've devoted two letters to the Return to 1945 and "Guided Democracy" because this is eminently the news of the day here and because it too may affect non-alignment. That is, if it raises the power of the Army and diminishes the power of the political parties, notably the Partai Komunis Indonesia. And I've also included a letter on the military itself because as an ex-Army enlisted man, a veteran of 38 months of picking up cigarette butts and washing officers' dishes, I'm slightly allergic to the idea of entrusting everything into the hands of a Military-Which-Knows-Best.

Cordially,



Warren W. Unna

P.S.:

I was afraid that I would be tripped up one day for post-dating these letters a little on their original draft so as to have them mailable on the date of retyping. Now see what Nasution and the Army have gone and done! Is this really IT, the Army takeover with Soekarno still out of the country to remain above the dirty work? Nobody seems to know, including U.S. Ambassador Howard Jones, with whom I've just had lunch. And just as I had to pull out of India with the outbreak of the Tibet crisis, now the discipline of an itinerary (and the ambition to really make it around the world in 13 months) compels me to move on to Ceylon. Well, Boyd Compton, your old alumnus now with the Rockefeller Foundation, has just moved into the second guest bed here at Tjikini Raya. And so, as I would tell my editor in the parlance of newspapers, you're "covered."



All Political

Indonesian Activities

Observer

Banned

DJAKARTA, DAY, JUNE 3, 1955

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Gen. Nasution Decrees

Djakarta, Wednesday. —

LIEUTENANT General Abdul Haris Nasution, Chief-of-Staff of the Army and Central Martial Law administrator has issued a military decree last night banning all political activities throughout Indonesia effective as of 06.00 hrs today, Wednesday, June 3, 1959.

The ban has been issued to avoid that political differences and "fanaticism" continue to drag on and on indefinitely among the community and connected with the current discussion before the Constituent Assembly of the government proposal for reenactment of the Constitution of 1945.

The decree was announced late last night by the chief of the Army's Information Department, Major Harsono, who added that the debates before the Constituent Assembly had caused the occurrence of political activities among the general public which might result in undesirable consequences disturbing public safety and order in view of intimidations and threats.

The Central War Administrator's decree also said: "the ideological differences among these organisations which automatically will result in differences of views and goals, roused fanaticism and other development which may cause disunity among the people and also will create confusion in public order and safety".

"If no immediate and firm measures are taken against these political activities, the efforts towards bringing normalisation in the situation will be obstructed or delayed," the decree declared.



Lt. Gen. Nasution

Powers to Army

In view of these considerations and possible developments, the Chief-of-Staff in his capacity of Central Martial Law Administrator has been given full authority and powers for the temporary ban of activities which according to the Central War Administrator/Chief-of-Staff of the Army, were threatening the safety of the State and public security and order.

These activities have indicated the existence of signs for converging strength which normally have been endeavored by way of political effort, and which might lead towards abuse and disunity which are against the interest and safety of the State and nation, and specifically might disturb public order and safety, the

The decree also stressed that the decree said.

the Central Martial Law Administrator fully realised that the Provisional Constitution provides protection to human rights, freedom of ideology, freedom of joining one or other political trend, freedom to become a member of a political party and freedom to conduct political activities. However, in view of the current discussion of the proposal for re-enactment of the Constitution of 1945 before the Constituent Assembly, those political activities have clearly shown undesirable developments against the interest of maintaining public order and safety since there have been intimidations and threats made.

Ban Indefinite

Major Harsono continued by giving an article by article explanation of the military decree. The six-article decree was concluded by putting emphasis on that the ban on political activities was not aimed at dissolution of political parties and organisations but was solely aimed at temporarily prohibiting political activities for an indefinite period throughout the country.

"The Central War Administrator/Chief-of-Staff of the Army after considering the situation now prevailing throughout the nation, considers it not yet necessary to enforce his full powers entrusted to him, and considers the temporary prohibition of political activities will suffice," the decree added.

The decree also outlined that under political activities were included the holding of meetings and assembly, both public or closed, the holding of demonstrations or processions, printing of pamphlets, publications, advertisements, announcements and other such publications or printing of pictures, whisper campaigns and the like of political character.

Not included under political activities were activities in the field of culture, social, religion and education which have no foundations, influence, or aim at influencing the course of the State.

(PIA)

And here's Charlie Tambu again, editorializing all's right in its Heaven.



Thursday, June 4, 1959

A necessary step

At first glance the army decree banning all political activities, and as a corollary interdicting the press from publishing news politically inflammable, would appear to be an intrusion by the armed forces into civilian life, yet for those who are prepared to face facts it will be easily discernible that Lieutenant General Abdul Haris Nasution, the Army Chief-of-Staff, was left without an alternative. Debates in the Constituent Assembly, plus the inconclusive voting on the motion for a return to the 1945 Constitution, have brought tempers to flash-point: individuals or political parties could easily engineer and trigger disturbances leading to anarchy. As the armed forces bear the responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, they have taken the only possible step in the circumstances obtaining. The measure, as Major Harsono of the army's press section stated yesterday, is meant to be temporary, and we are confident that there will be a return to the status quo ante as soon as President Sukarno and/or the Constituent Assembly end the crisis. No honest newspaper need interpret this ban as an attempt to muzzle it. That it is not, but rather an appeal by the army to the press to help in preserving the peace. Responsible Indonesian newspapers should give the armed forces their full backing.