

## TRAGEDY IN INDONESIA

The real trouble in Indonesia is not that there seems to be an unbreakable deadlock between Indonesians and Dutch as to which should exercise sovereignty over western New Guinea. It is not even the deplorable fact that the Indonesian Government is taking over valuable property without due process of law, condoning private confiscation and holding out no hope of recompense to lawful owners, except on its own terms. This is raw blackmail, of course, but it is not the worst part of the picture.

What hurts worst is that the innocent bystander is made to bear the brunt of the suffering. In some cases he is a little Dutch or Eurasian official who must now plan to get out of the country and try to find a new home for his family. But in many more cases the person who suffers from Jakarta's irresponsibility is the poor Indonesian who simply can't get enough to eat.

President Sukarno and his regime should have realized that they could not destroy inter-island transport in an archipelago such as Indonesia without cutting off food supplies from many areas that had to rely upon regular shipping. They should have known that they could not seal up warehouses for rice because they happened to be Dutch-operated without pushing the rice price above the ability of the poor to pay. It was no more than common sense to recognize that a paralysis of the Indonesian economy would hurt the Dutch, but that it would hurt the Indonesians even more.

So there are reports of food riots, violence, separatism, armed clashes. We talk about these problems, usually, in the broadest generalities, with references to "colonialism," "sovereignty" and "nationalism." The people of Indonesia cannot think in those terms and it is they who have been made hungry by their leaders' obduracy.