

# DUTCH TO EXPLORE NEW GUINEA AREA

Remote Section of Disputed  
Territory Will Be Object  
of Intensive Research

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UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., March 5—The Netherlands has begun an ambitious scientific expedition into an unexplored area of Netherlands New Guinea.

Indonesia has laid claim in the United Nations to Netherlands New Guinea under an agreement in 1949 that turned over some Dutch territory in the western Pacific to the new republic.

The Dutch project is attracting some notice here because of its scope and purpose. The expedition, largely anthropological, will penetrate, and perhaps develop, territory where no white man has trod before. Preliminary measures to establish bases and recruit staff already are being made and the advance guard of the expedition is expected to leave this month.

The area to be explored is close to the border between the Australian part of New Guinea and the Dutch holdings demanded by Indonesia. The territory is known as the Central Highlands.

Aerial surveys since World War II have shown that an ancient civilization apparently existed there. Photographs indicate that drainage and irrigation systems have been constructed. The elaborate system seemingly was built by thousands of men using wooden "digging sticks." So far as is known, there are no other tools in the area.

## Scientists to Participate

The expedition will include archaeologists, botanists, geologists and anthropologists. Its purpose is primarily scientific.

Another aspect is that considerable alluvial gold has been found in the streams flowing from the unexplored territory into the Arafura Sea. The Star Mountains, into which the expedition hopes to penetrate, may be the source of the gold.

Preparations for the expedition have been going on for some time. In earlier days, the hinterland of New Guinea could be penetrated only by elaborately equipped labor parties, cutting their way through thick jungle. This time, however, several air bases have been constructed and the advance stages will be supplied largely by light planes and helicopters.

Forty tons of supplies have been sent to an advance base near the border. Included are beads and clothing for the Stone Age indigenes and scientific instruments for the explorers.

The Netherlands is to report soon regarding her trusteeship of the nonself-governing area in New Guinea to the United Nations. Further details of the expedition may be given then by Dr. J. Victor de Bruyn, head of the office of Native Affairs in Netherlands New Guinea, who will make the report.

Because of the use of helicopters and the building of advance airfields, the new expedition will be easier than others. The scientists will take no more than twenty marines, twenty Dutch policemen and twenty guards.

The last time the Dutch tried to penetrate the area there were about 200 supernumeraries. But there were no helicopters then.