

Letters to The Times

Indonesia's Government

Right to Speak for All Races of Archipelago Challenged

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Mr. Soemarman's letter appearing in your Dec. 13 issue in which he attempts to clarify the West New Guinea question as he sees it, and to justify Mr. Sukarno's claim that West New Guinea ought to be handed over to the Republic of Indonesia, with or without the consent of the Papuan inhabitants of West New Guinea, is misleading. He bases his views on the assumption that Mr. Sukarno duly represents the will of the entire Indonesian people, including those in West New Guinea.

If what Mr. Soemarman writes in his letter is true, let us have an honest and truly democratic election through which can be proved to the whole world that Mr. Sukarno is, indeed, what he pretends to be, the one and only spokesman for the "so-called" Indonesian people; that his Government rules with the consent of the sixty-five or more races in the vast archipelago, and not by the consent of just one group, the Javanese. And beyond all, that Mr. Sukarno is a President elected by the people.

The insidious part of Mr. Soemarman's letter is the way he dismisses the right of self-determination and the inalienable rights which men have as their divine heritage; the right to be free and happy, the right to decide for themselves. This is the nucleus of the current problems in Sukarno's Indonesia.

If indeed all is well, as Mr. Soemarman would have you believe, there is only one way to convince the world. Let the Moluccans, the Sundanese, the Madurese, the Menadonese and many other races in Sumatra and other islands speak for themselves. Thus far, the Javanese race, to which Mr. Soemarman belongs, is the only group in Indonesia that has claimed and exercised that right while denying it to the others. Question: Javanese colonialism?

KAREL J. V. NIKIJULUW.

New York, Dec. 13, 1961.