

tial judgments, as victors, too much impugned. To take the position that leaders of enemy nations are criminals because they opposed us is to allow the megalomania of a very powerful nation to distort our sense of justice.

Unfortunately we do not have an organized world, and do not yet possess completely impartial instruments of justice. We must do the best we can to punish those who have defied the most widely accepted standards of humanity. We shall be the more successful if we do not attempt or claim too much, and if we remember that the decisions of men and nations who "are judges in their own case" are viewed with considerable cynicism by those who are too weak to defy such judgments.

Liberals have generally hailed Justice Jackson's achievement in establishing, as one standard of justice for the international court, the definition of aggressive war as a criminal act. The Russians had the honesty to resist this idea for a while, knowing that it made them guilty in the case of Finland. They finally yielded, probably having decided to make this not too costly concession to Anglo-Saxon cant. More Nazi criminals than we can ever execute are guilty of the most obvious crimes against generally accepted stand-

ards of humanity. Why, then, should we engage in the dubious business of making a war of aggression an *ex post facto* crime, before the world has been organized upon a basis of universal law and before an international community has set up instruments for assessing guilt?

We have lived, and may still be living, in a state of international anarchy. Under such conditions some wars are more overtly aggressive than others; the war just ended certainly placed our foes in the category of overt aggressors. But all wars are expressions of the anarchy in which the nations live; and a vanquished nation is always able to satisfy its own conscience that it was prompted by the necessity of meeting covert aggression with overt action. It will be less inclined to do so if the victors refrain from too simple and too self-righteous judgments.

On this as on every issue under discussion American liberalism has failed to exercise the kind of restraint upon the pride of powerful and victorious nations which it is the traditional function of liberal intelligence to exercise. Such restraint is desperately necessary at the present moment as we move with unaccustomed and untried power into the complexities of world politics.

## *Revolt in Asia: II—Indonesia*

BY ANDREW ROTH

(Author of "Dilemma in Japan")

**S**IGNS have a mocking quality in sweltering, tense Batavia. Splashed high on the buildings in large, clear letters are excerpts from the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and other stirring American protests against the servitude of man to man. But in the streets hostile Indonesians see trucks on which the letters "U. S. A." have just been painted over carrying Netherlands soldiers clad in American uniforms and nervously fingering American-made guns.

A train pulling out of the Batavia station bears a more contemporary slogan. "We don't want a second Dutch treat!" The feeling behind it is grim rather than humorous, for even through the bloody veil of the recent Japanese occupation the Indonesians remember that the Dutch have always considered the Indies a *bedrijf*, or business concern, to be exploited as efficiently and profitably as possible. Before the Japanese invasion three-fourths of the total capital investment in the fabulous Indies—the world's second richest colony—was in the hands of the Dutch. And from this investment was derived a profit amounting to more than a fifth of the Netherlands' national income. In bitter contrast the vast majority of the 72,000,000 Indonesians were ill fed and ill housed on their average wage of 20 cents a day.

Dutch political administration was authoritarian and paternal. Laws and decrees emanated from one man—the Governor General. The carefully stacked *Volksraad*, or People's Council, was a debating chamber which could criticize but not control. Indonesian petty officials governed the native population through an ingenious system of indirect

control of native institutions. These officials, kept loyal by handsome salaries, were given the duty of collecting taxes so that the Indonesian masses would not feel directly the weight of Dutch demands. The Dutch encouraged such manifestations of native culture as Balinese dancing, but their educational policy was utterly colonial: after 350 years of their rule the illiteracy rate in the islands was 92 per cent. They were not so race-conscious as most European colonial administrators, and intermarriage with Indonesians was condoned and even favored. But this liberal attitude had its origin in the need for enlarging the governing class. Eurasians were given the status of Europeans so that they might be set off against their pure Indonesian relatives, who had no citizenship rights.

During the past thirty years Dutch rule has been challenged with increasing fervor and strength by the swelling ranks of Indonesian nationalists. Roughly speaking, the nationalist movement has three main streams. One group favors a moderate, gradualist approach, with emphasis on native education and on slow progress toward independence in collaboration with the Dutch authorities. Another group is inspired by religious nationalism. Indonesia is 85 per cent Moslem, and the powerful Moslem nationalist organizations ask their followers as Indonesian colonials to resist Dutch imperial rule and as Moslems to rise against the Christian "infidels." The Moslem leaders look to the Islamic world for support in their struggle. A third group of all-out, non-religious nationalists embraces both middle-class elements and left-wing workers. Its leaders are drawn largely from the intelligentsia, but its

mass support is furnished by the burgeoning trade unions, peasant organizations, cooperatives, and women's and youths' groups.

The turbulence that marked the early twenties culminated in widespread insurrectionary outbreaks in 1926 and 1927. In February, 1933, the Indonesian crew of the Seven Provinces, the flagship of the Dutch navy in the Indies, staged a mutiny. The Dutch responded by further curtailment of liberties. Thousands of the rebellious natives were arrested and sent to concentration camps in New Guinea and Banda,



Dr. Soekarno

where the sea, the jungle, and the malarial swamps took the place of barbed wire. The secret police was strengthened, and all workers, particularly those in factories, were fingerprinted. Censorship of the press was tightened, and no outdoor meetings were allowed without a special permit. In one instance the police declared an indoor nationalist meet-

ing illegal on the excuse that the roof had holes and was therefore open to the sky!

Despite these repressive measures nationalism continued to grow. In 1941 some five million nationalists of all varieties united in the *Madjlis Rakjat Indonesia* (Supreme People's Movement of Indonesia). The movement had its own newspapers, a news agency, Antara, and a national song, "Indonesia Raya."

During the late thirties Japan's consuming interest in the oil, bauxite, and other wealth of the Indies and its evident intention to drive southward focused interest on the problem of the defense of Indonesia. A narrow fringe of the nationalists succumbed to Japan's blandishments, but the majority recognized that Japan offered only another and more virulent form of imperialism. The Batavian Students' Federation sent ambulances to the Chinese victims of Japanese aggression. Indonesian delegates to the second World Youth Congress, held at Vassar in 1938, strongly supported its anti-fascist program. The *Madjlis Rakjat Indonesia* demanded that the people of Indonesia be armed and that the nationalists be given responsible posts in the government to insure mobilization of the people for the defense of Indonesia. The Dutch refused and tightened security restrictions against both the Indonesians and the Japanese. After the fall of Holland to the Germans in 1940, the Indies were put under complete martial law. All nationalist meetings were forbidden, nationalist leaders were arrested, nationalist newspapers were closed down. When Japan attacked the islands in 1942, the Dutch forces, unsupported by popular mobilization, were quickly overwhelmed.

The Japanese conquest substituted economic rape for Holland's systematic economic exploitation. Pressing military needs and the consuming avarice of the militarists and *Zaibatsu* monopolists resulted in ruthless looting of the

country and despoiling of the people. Soon the food and clothing shortage became acute. Men were pressed into labor gangs and women dragged off to the horrors of Japanese army brothels.

The Japanese sugar-coated their ruthless economic spoliation with slippery promises of political independence. In Sumatra they found Dr. Achmed Soekarno, the leading figure of the nationalist movement. Soekarno had been arrested by the Dutch in 1940 for the third time and exiled to Sumatra. Although he had adequate reason to hate the Dutch, there is no indication that he was in any sense pro-Japanese. Indeed, the Dutch admit that he asked them to evacuate him from Sumatra because of his anti-Japanese record. The Dutch, however, decided to leave him to the tender mercies of the invaders, who offered him an important post if he would cooperate and may well have threatened him with a dire fate if he would not. The well-known intellectual Dr. Susilo and two hundred other prominent Indonesians who refused to collaborate were killed by the Japanese.

Soekarno's assumption of the presidency of the Java Central Council in 1942 initiated a period of uneasy and mistrustful collaboration. The Japanese exerted pressure on the nationalists to provide economic and political support; the nationalists insisted that the Japanese pay off on the promise of independence which they dangled before the people. Indonesian nationalists claim that Soekarno, under the very nose of the Japanese secret police, began organizing guerrilla bands as early as 1943, telling the Japanese the bands would be used to resist Allied landings. Radio Tokyo admitted that Japanese-trained Indonesians had fired on Japanese forces "by mistake." As the Japanese faced defeat in the first half of 1945, they were forced to yield more and more to the nationalists in the hope of gaining military support.

The capitulation of the Japanese in August, 1945, immediately brought a nationalist uprising; the Indonesian Republic was established on August 17. The Japanese dropped the reins and allowed the nationalists their head, knowing that the results could only be embarrassing to the victorious Allies. In an incredibly brief time the Indonesians dominated Java and began to operate the public services and to arm Indonesian troops with weapons seized from the Japanese. Three radio transmitters and the nationalist paper *Merdeka* blared both anti-Dutch and anti-Japanese propaganda. Indonesian seamen on Dutch ships struck in ports all over the world. In the islands the movement acquired such momentum that Soekarno and other leaders frequently seemed to be borne along on it rather than to be directing it. They have found it hard to control young racial-minded Moslem fanatics, who, incited probably by the Japanese, are trying to start a "holy war" against Dutch and Eurasian "infidels."

The Indonesian National Committee, the high command of the nationalist forces, is dominated by Holland-educated Socialist intellectuals led by Vice-President Dr. Mohammed Hatta. The left is represented by Raden Iwa Koesoema Soemantri, Minister of Social Affairs. Soemantri was Indonesia's delegate to the Comintern in 1925, studied at the Eastern Peoples' University in Moscow, and is the author of "The Peasants' Movement in Indonesia." Soekarno himself holds no very clear-cut politico-economic views. At least one or

two members of the committee have clean records of resistance to the Japanese.

The nationalists are making a strenuous effort to capture world opinion and isolate the Dutch. Soekarno has invited the Indian leader Pandit Nehru, Foreign Minister Evatt of Australia, Mme Chiang Kai-shek, and General Carlos Romulo to visit Indonesia and judge conditions for themselves. Dr. Hatte has demanded that Dutch troops be withdrawn until the question of Indonesian independence can be reviewed by a competent United Nations committee.

Large sections of the colonial and labor worlds have responded. In Singapore 7,000 dock workers paralyzed the port in sympathy. Transportation of Dutch soldiers, armaments, officials, bullion, and records was seriously delayed by a series of Australian strikes. Nineteen Australian trade unions refused to load, repair, or supply ships destined to suppress the Indonesian nationalist movement. Chinese and Indian seamen joined striking Indonesians in refusing to man them.

The reaction to all this on the part of the Dutch has been compounded of fear, fury, and frantic disagreement. They know that Indonesian independence would convert Holland into a third-rate power and bring to an end tens of thousands of profitable colonial jobs. They see Indonesian graduates of Dutch prisons in positions of power and daring to disbelieve Queen Wilhelmina's 1942 pledge of eventual dominion status. They feel a growing sense of frustration at having to rely on British forces and American equipment. And they disagree violently among themselves on how to regain their empire. The stiff-necked aristocrat Jonkheer van Stargenborgh Stachouwer resigned as Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies in protest against negotiations with the nationalists. More farsighted colonial officials admit the necessity of negotiating and concede that the Indies should obtain dominion status in twenty or thirty years. These, however, are attacked as "leftists" or publicly contradicted.

When he first landed in Java, Sir Alexander Christison, commander of the British occupation forces, declared somewhat surprisingly that it was not the British intention to pull Dutch chestnuts out of the fire. Because of their own difficulties with Moslems elsewhere, the British were inclined to be conciliatory with the Javanese Moslems, particularly in view of nationalist strength, the weakness of available Allied forces, and the explosive potentialities of the entire colonial situation. "You must meet with these chaps and give them a clear-cut statement of future status," Sir Alexander said to Dutch officials. Subsequently, in fear of the spread of the nationalist contagion and eager to weld their Western European bloc, the British became friendlier to the Dutch. "To support—or tolerate—local nationalist movements in this hour of confusion would lose Britain the friendship of its nearest neighbors," the influential London *Economist* asserted.

American policy in Indonesia has been characterized by the *Hindustan Times*, published by Gandhi's son, as "utter moral cowardice." When Soekarno protested against the use of American equipment to suppress the Indonesian independence movement, Secretary of State Byrnes suggested only that American labels be removed from the equipment. This

seemed a far cry from the ringing words of President Roosevelt in April, 1943: "We know that the day of the exploitation of the resources and the people of one country for the benefit of any group in another country is definitely over."

## *In the Wind*

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**EDUCATION** The University of Minnesota is offering a course in scientific and technical Russian. The prospectus says, "The publication of numerous important scientific contributions in Russian makes it essential for scientists in this country to have at least some rudimentary reading knowledge of the Russian language."

**GUIDANCE** "My point is," said Paul Mallon in a discussion of the atomic bomb on October 9, "we should not be guided politically by scientific advice."

**BARGAIN BASEMENT** The United Ships Corporation, New York, has Canadian corvettes for sale. "For a minimum of \$29,000 each," says an advertisement, "in quantities of ten, we offer you these famous vessels costing originally over \$650,000 each."

**FORTISSIMO** *Editor and Publisher's* special supplement on syndicated columns lists Dorothy Thompson's "On the Record" under Music.

**POPULARIZATION** Hearst's San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* of October 6 announced serialization of Sinclair Lewis's "Cass Timberlane" "in easy-to-read picture-strip form."

**TEAM! TEAM! TEAM!** A chapter of the Alumni Association of Georgetown University has been established in Tokyo.

**SACRIFICE:** The Combined Resources and Production Board announced on October 20 that per capita purchases of civilian goods and services in the United Kingdom fell 15 to 20 per cent below the 1938 level during the war, but in the United States and Canada rose 10 to 15 per cent.

**O. C. S:** "Chicago department stores," said the *Wall Street Journal* of October 25, "don't know what to do about former salesmen who went into the services and became captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels. 'You can't expect them to be happy selling socks or shirts,' says one merchant. The stores feel kind of cheated, too. They say it was their training that taught the salesmen how to sell themselves along the road to success in uniform."

**EXPLANATION.** H. R. Cullen, chairman of the board of regents of the University of Houston, Texas, in an address on October 19 said the trouble with the country "is a misunderstanding, not between capital and labor, for we are all capitalists, for to own a house, a cow, a farm, a home, is to be in possession of capital; so the misunderstanding must be between the masses of people and corporations."

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*. One dollar will be paid for each item accepted.]