

# Mass Action

Tan Malaka (1926)

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Tan Malaka : Father of the Republic

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

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**Alles was besteht ist wert,  
dass es zu Gruende geht.  
(Mephistopheles)**

Asia has awakened!

Sooner or later, the enslaved nations of Asia will surely gain freedom and independence. But not a single person can say when or where the first flag of independence will fly. Whoever investigates deeply into the economies of the east, politics, and sociology will be able to point out the weakest link in the long chain that binds the east in slavery. Indonesia is that weakest link. In Indonesia, the first bastion of Western Imperialism can be fought successfully.

Dutch imperialism is older than British and American imperialism, divided by the great valley that could not be crossed from its colonies. The Netherlands, because it does not have resources for its industries, from the beginning only focused on agriculture and trade

The spread of their capital from the beginning of the century to all of Indonesia are enormous

The industrial centre of the Netherlands now is located in Indonesia, while the centre of trade and finance is in the Netherlands. Bankers, industrialists, and merchants live in The Netherlands, while the workers and peasants in Indonesia. If we pay attention to the 2 oceans that divide

The Netherlands and Indonesia, while also not forgetting the differences of culture, religion, tradition, and language between the colonisers and the colonised, between the exploiters and the exploited, we see a remarkable comparison in the world of imperialism which we live in today. Remarkable, because the indigenous capital does not exist. So the bridge between The Netherlands and Indonesia breaks completely

The lack of a national bourgeoisie that have the same characteristics as Dutch imperialism (both want to exploit the workers and peasants) caused Dutch imperialism to find it very difficult to resolve the economic crisis in Indonesia. Where in Indonesia are the indigenous landlords like in Egypt, India, and The Philippines, that can support the imperialists for the sake of their economic interest? And where are the strong national bourgeoisie that ask for more political and economic power like in India

The lack of Indonesian capitalists means for long they have been slaves! Europeans, Chinese, and Arabs have controlled all big, middle, even small trades! The medium or small Indonesian producers have withered away from the Island of Java for the last few years from the introduction of European industrial products

The case of education is intentionally ignored by the Dutch, the intellectual class became small. Even if the national bourgeoisie like in India wants to support them to establish an industry, it will not succeed

The lack of a national bourgeoisie makes all parliamentary actions from a national party useless

How will the “sugar daddies” in The Netherlands be able to give the Indonesian people the right to vote? Or in other words: entrusting political power to the poor workers and peasant supposed representatives? If behind the intellectuals, stand the landlords and the national bourgeoisie that they will represent in parliament, of course, the situation will be different. And rumours about “changes in the government in Indonesia” do have some merit. The Dutch imperialist gradually, but slowly will hand over governmental authority to the Indonesian people that are honest and competent. Isn't protecting the national bourgeoisie, also means protecting foreign capital? Under the current situation, every type of government in Indonesia has to be subjected to the whims of foreign capital. And a government like that will never be recognized as, from the people and by the people

In short, Indonesia has no economic, social, or intellectual factors to liberate itself from economic and political slavery within the sphere of Dutch imperialism. At the same time, the chances of achieving independence in the fullest sense by controlling half, three-quarters, or seven-eighth of parliament is impossible. The dream of Noto Suroto<sup>1</sup> and the likes that dream of “The Great Netherland” will remain the daydreams of the wicked

Indonesia can only raise its economy if political power lies in the hands of the people. And Indonesia will only gain political power only through well-organised revolutionaries, who does not seek compromises

The People’s Council *Volksraad* can sometimes be entered! But it is not to be used as a legitimate weapon to obtain a fully responsible national government by means of the People’s Council in co-operation with the Dutch imperialists. But to extend the revolutionary effort into the chambers obtained by means of parliamentary actions is akin to someone in the Sahara Desert chasing apparitions. But whoever puts all his knowledge to use in organised mass action will win the victory like a ”chicken coming home to roost”

The matter of independence is not limited to just Indonesia, which can be solved through congressional meetings in the people’s council, not to mention the discussions of economic and cultural jokes in the coffee shops. Such matters are closely interlinked with western hegemony towards the people of colour in Asia

One of the reasons - and this is not the least of the problems - why the United States has not also granted independence to the Northern Indonesians (the Philippines) who, according to the words of friends and foes, have long been ripe (as the American Imperialist newspapers in Manila say) is that Philippine independence would mean a general revolt and slaughter in Asia against white authority (a general revolt in Asiatic countries against white authority, the uprising being attended by slaughter). The independence of Indonesia (the centre of Asian geography and warfare, five times more populous than the Philippines and with international trade) could only mean like a pistol aimed at the heads of western, especially British, power in Asia

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<sup>1</sup>Noto suroto was one of the earlier Indonesian intellectuals, being one of the founding member the Indische Vereeniging and was a supporter of integrating Indonesia into the Netherlands

Not long ago the former crown prince Willhelm explained to a representative from the United press in Locarno which announced by radio to the world, that if the millions of people in Asia one day beat the Anglo-Saxon (British, French, and Dutch) surely it would be the nations of Malaya who first caused it. What kind of imperialist expectation and insinuation were meant by the irritating crown prince, for us it remains to mean: that Indonesia now is not Indonesia from a few years ago. Indonesia has taken a special position in the ranks of millions of people in Asia

Therefore, the victory obtained by peaceful and parliamentary means should not be thought of at all. Wouldn't such a thing not exactly disturb the capitalist tranquillity in the East? If Indonesia one day breaks free and defends its independence from its domestic and foreign enemies, it will be determined by its revolutionary nature, that is, by mass action: from the masses and for the masses

If the 300 years of Dutch colonialism were not in the form of robbery (killing indigenous industry) surely the degree of intellectuals would be far different from where we are today! And we would of course have the intellectual fervour (intelligentsia) according to our origins, education, and loyalty to the leaders of the national bourgeoisie, industry, merchants, and indigenous officials. There will also be a movement for democracy and national liberation that is cooperative (compromising) with The Netherlands with the help of workers and peasants as in India, Egypt, and in some ways The Philippines

The lack of national bourgeoisie makes the intelligentsia weak. They hover between the people with the government. They don't have a sense of self-sacrifice like other nationalists have shown in other countries. They don't have the necessary connection, way of thought to bring themselves closer to the masses. Caused by imperialists, they made our class of intellectuals disconnected from the masses

They do not have the necessary power to influence and attract the hearts of the people. Our intellectual class doesn't have the trust and sympathy from the masses to mobilise them, organise actions, and lead them. In addition, due to the small number of intellectuals, they still live in their own classes and have not become educated workers

For the time being, they can watch from afar. If, on the other hand, there were many of them, they would be roaming around and experiencing



the misery of industrial labour with the "joy" of the struggle.

The speed in which the intellectual class emerged, the disillusionment of Budi Utomo (B.U)<sup>2</sup> and the National Indische Party (NIP),<sup>3</sup> and the brutality of reaction, have clawed away their sights to another direction. Although now still stands a few miles apart from the masses and political participation, politics is very much backward compared to comparable colonies of other nations, but they have surely awakened from their slumber. "The cloak of an angel" from Noto Suroto has been tossed away by them and starts to go in the path of revolutionary actions. Now from several universities in the distant Netherlands, their voices echoed all the way to the intellectuals in Indonesia

But the hope of the workers and peasants of Indonesia does not just stop at agreements in words from the intellectuals. They demand actions and evidence

As long as our intellectual class still sees our struggle for independence as nothing more than an academic matter, such promises and demands for action are nothing more than empty promises. Let them step out of their study rooms and immerse themselves in active revolutionary politics

The wave of strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations grow larger and larger every year, through national congresses towards the Federation of the Republic of Indonesia, this is their way, nothing else!

Tan Malaka

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<sup>2</sup>Budi Utomo was one of the early indigenous organisation mainly consisting of Javanese intellectuals and aristocrats

<sup>3</sup>The NIP was an organization and noted for its focus on political work and support for independence

# Chapter 2

## Revolution

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Revolution is not a magical idea, or even special, nor is it born on the orders of great men. The competency and great traits of an individual in building revolution, carrying out and leading it to victory, is not created on their own. A revolution is caused by material conditions, specific conditions caused by the masses. Or in a more dynamic word, revolution arrives as a consequence of specific conditions and is inevitable, which is caused by class contradiction that sharpens day by day. The intensification of contradiction is determined by multiple factors: economics, social, political, and psychological. The concentration of wealth on one side causes the suffering and slavery of the other. In short, the greater the inequality between the ruling class and the ruled, the bigger the spectre of revolution is. The goal of a revolution is to determine which class will hold state power, politics, economics, and such revolution will be executed “violently”.

On top of the old, arise a new order that has won. Thus, feudal society is pushed by the capitalist society, which now is fighting desperately against the working masses that aims to achieve “A classless communist society”, otherwise, if all human beings that exist now are completely destroyed surely there will be a process of *werden und vergehen*, that is a perpetual class struggle until we reach a classless society. (according to Karl Marx).

In prehistoric times, when knowledge (*wetenschap*) was still young, every struggle in darkness (classes) were illuminated by various religions; The struggle resembles that of religion; for example the contradiction of Brahmanism and Buddhism, Ahriman, Zoroastrian with Ormus (light and dark), Mosaicism with Israelism, then Catholicism with Protestantism. However,

in reality, it is all a class struggle for economic and political power.

Then after science and experiments have been perfected, after humanity has discarded some or even all of their dogma, after humanity has become more intelligent and could think about human interaction, and class contradiction has been integrated into the consciousness of the masses. In the struggle for justice and politics, humanity will no longer have the need to pursue God, or verses in holy texts, but go straight to the logical material reasons that worsen or improve life. It is only around this that people's minds dwell and it is called the ideals of state government. To that problem, all political activity is directed.

When life was still simple and mainly dependent on artisans and agriculture, in short feudalism, a person with the blood of kings, even if they are as dumb as a bull, "could ascend the throne with the help of priests and nobles", controlling the fate of millions of people.

Such a way of government becomes insignificant when techniques of production progress and feudalism have become obsolete and it too will hinder the progress of industry. A new class, the "bourgeoisie" that controls the new mode of production (capitalism), feels discontent because of the lack of political rights. They demanded the government be handed over to those who were more competent and the government could be "appointed" or "relegated" by the people. The political dream of the bourgeoisie is democracy and parliamentarism. They demanded the abolition of all special feudal privileges and demanded the establishment of a system of income and distribution (capitalist distribution).

If the king's court and his priests insist on keeping their power they will surely be destroyed in the fire of revolution. The "bourgeois revolution" of 1789 as the fruit of relentless conflict between feudalism and capitalism made France the pioneer of so many revolutions that later broke out throughout Europe.

The fate of the French king (that was overthrown) was also suffered by the king of Russia that tried to suppress the bourgeoisie and workers through superstitious powers and violence in the captivity of decaying feudalism.

The revolutionary ideals went on without regarding the suppression, bullets, and torture that can't even be described by the pen of Dostoyevsky. In

the dark caves, in the mines of Siberia, in the filthy, freezing, and cramped prisons, the revolutionary ideas and wills learned are invaluable. The empire, church, and Duma (Russian parliament) in a short amount of time were swept away by an unstoppable wave of revolutionaries. In the worker's revolution of November 1917, it was clear that the working class had the power and will to go beyond the bourgeoisie.

The king of England, George III, who ignored the history of his nation thought that a strong fleet and the greatness of his wealth could hinder the growth of social progress. The nation of North America, despite its small number, lack of experience in the matter of enlightenment, money, and other material means, was able to achieve their independence after such relentless struggle.

Only after the economic and political shackles were broken from British imperialism that North America could step into a wealth of power and culture that is truly unique in its history.

Had they not twice embarked on a revolution (in 1860), North America would not have been known to the world other than as another Australia or Canada.

Social revolution is not solely limited to Europe, but it's a universal phenomenon that does not depend on a nation or state. Didn't Japan 60 years ago (1868) destroyed all the privileges of the feudal lords through revolution? After the civil war, The Empire of The Rising Sun disappeared.

In short, the path of revolution and national liberation (which can be included in social revolution), that all big and modern nations without exception, breaks free from the confines of class and colonialist society.

Revolution is not only to punish all vicious acts, deceit, and tyranny but also to achieve the full reparation of wrongdoing.

It is in the period of the revolution that the peak of moral strength will be reached, the intelligence of the mind and abilities are born and achieved to establish a new society.

If the class of a nation is unable to destroy the obsolete old society and slavery through revolution, it will surely be destroyed or cursed to be eternal slaves.

Revolution creates!

## Chapter 3

# Overview of Indonesian History

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### 3.1 Foreign Influence

The history of Indonesia is not easy to read, let alone write. The history of our nation is full of mysticism, legends, stories, and contradictions. No historian from the Majapahit Empire or Mataram has come close to the historians of Rome more or less 1400 years ago, like Tacitus or Caesar. We are forced to admit that we have never known an honest historian.

At best we have fairy tales, legends, and bootlickers of the king that tell all sorts of beauty and brilliance to attract the listener's heart.

Even then there is a limit to stories and twists of real events. We don't have to go far to the limit, surely we will meet the truth. So is the history of our nation. Among the clutter of stories, we can see the truth, the Indonesian archipelago, its kingdoms, cities that rose and fell, the armies that roared, fought, lost, and won, wealth, peace, the ups and downs of our culture, and so on. It's undeniable that in Malacca, Sumatra, and Java stood great nations. In Central Borneo stood kingdoms that are no less prosperous and impressive than the Majapahit. There stood great cities full of buildings and beautiful jewels, as evidenced by the objects found in the fossils and ancient temples up to today.

We can also confirm that Indonesia never stepped out of its feudal society, and one that is far removed from feudalism in Europe. Greek society

is far above Indonesian society - in this case, if the Majapahit is considered as the highest level - in terms of state government, politics, law, and culture. Yes, the people of Majapahit have never known the ideals of state government. For centuries the government was not for or owned by the people, a proverb: *"For my sir, yes, my lord, independence, mine and my life,"* once and repeatedly said the Indonesian people to their kings! There is no Orachus, Magna Charta, and no knowledge that the likes of Aristotle, Pythagoras, and Photomeus used to advance their societies. The knowledge of architecture and medicine for us is still in the stage of experimentation. The miracle of our Borobudur is not as miraculous as the triangle of Pythagoras, because the former means the path of death while the latter leads people to various kinds of knowledge. Nowhere are such traces of knowledge and pinnacle of intelligence!

That said, let's not talk about Eastern Mysticism! This is beyond our material knowledge; moreover, the Western nations in the Dark Ages (Middle Ages) have known it for long. After all, mysticism is not based on material truth, our society has always obtained from foreign influences and never has its own ideals. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam are imported goods, not the product of our society.

In addition, these ideals did not grow as much as Christianity in Western Europe. The driving force behind the entry of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam up to the time of the arrival of Dutch capitalism, and all civil wars at that time were abroad. Indonesia had always been the puppet, and the masters are always abroad.

## 3.2 The Original Indonesian Nation

In ancient times, when the indigenous Indonesians were pressured by the Chinese and Hindus coming from their land - the Indies - and fled to the Indonesian Archipelago, they already had established civilization. The peasants of the time turned into pirates who were ferocious and feared by the people. With their Vintas (a small type of boat), they sailed across the islands between two large oceans, between America and Africa. The Indians and Oceania were conquered by them. The jungle to the top of the mountain was turned into their new home. Those homes they made, games, and knowledge. When the Western and Eastern nations worshipped the sword of Genghis Khan and Timur Lang and fled in fear, at that time they not only resisted but were also able to repel the Mongol army. The pirates

named Pakodato from the Kingdom of Singapore in the Malay peninsula 500 years ago were able to shake the Kingdoms of China and India with their mighty fleets and swords.

### 3.3 Hindu Influence

In the strong and famous Kingdom of Daha ruled by King Jayabaya, a smart and clever, even yet wise, there was a fortune teller named Empu, who was always upset because he was very suspicious of foreign influences that were getting relevant and relevant. In his writings, it mentioned: “A revolution in Java will arise, led by yellow people and will gain victory for some time”. In his sarcastic words, it’s written “it will reign for a lifetime”.

Isn’t that prediction then proven by the victory of a Chinese Javanese named Mas Garendi that for a short time controlled the city of Kartasura?.

In the time of Empu Sedah, the influence of China gradually increased. It is logical for Chinese people to use the Javanese nobility as a tool to fulfil their economic interests as much as possible!

If this goal does not succeed with their influence, sometimes by way of revolution then try to seize the state government. But, in order for them to keep their power, they must be stronger or establish their own class. They must be natives or inter marry with the indigenous people. Only then could they conquer the kingdom through the displeased peasants. Because the Chinese socially remained with their Chinese heritage and did not receive military assistance from their motherland, they were soon able to maintain the victory of the Javanese kings.

Empu Sedah understood how much hatred the people and the revolution had if it were to break out. While their power nationally is not strong enough to withstand the social revolution. That’s what made him nervous.

In the Majapahit Kingdom stood several batik, tiles, and ship companies with considerable capital. Some companies employed several thousand workers. Some of its captains had sailed as far as Persia and China with their ships. It can be because they had such a big capital, even foreign capital. The rich merchants in cities such as Gampel, Gresik, Tuban, Lasem, Demak, and Cirebon were probably foreigners or who had intermarried with the Javanese. Nakhoda Dampu-Awang, according to his exaggerated



story, had a ship whose sail was as high as Mount Bonang, and his wealth described as such, they feel like Chinese-Javanese.

One statistic at that time we did not have! But the nationality of peoples living on the island of Java can be proven by the words of a Majapahit poet, named Prapanca, “consistently people came in droves from various nations. From the Mainland-Indies, Cambodia, China, Annam, Champa, Karnataka, Guda, and Siam with ships accompanied by many merchants of renowned Brahmana clerics, scholars, and priests, ready to come to be entertained and to stay”

Of course, the inhabitants of the increasingly developed cities felt they were gaining resistance to the nobility in the capital. As in European countries, urban dwellers were demanding further political and economic rights. From the contradiction between the coast and the land, trade, and agriculture, the population and the government, a revolution arose that brought the island of Java to the pinnacle of economy and government.

If the city had a strong national industry and trade, Java would surely experience a social revolution that is raised, broken, and led by a social revolution that is raised, broken and led by national progressive forces as happened in Western Europe, the bourgeois revolution against the feudalists. But Java was indeed bound by Empu Sedah’s prophecy: “foreigners will rule”.

A Hindu named Malik Ibrahim in 1419, brought a new religion not yet known in the Island of Java, came to Gresik where at that time the residents were mostly foreigners. Quickly he gained a number of followers. So it can be said, with the arrival of Islam at that time, the indigenous people as if gaining “the fallen durian”, because at that time there was a fiery conflict between the coastal population and the capital.

The situation became more complicated, and eventually reached its peak, the attack on the king led by a Chinese-Javanese, named Raden Patah. By his actions, Raden Patah destroyed the existing kingdom. It shows again that a foreigner, by bringing a new understanding (Islam) and to maintain the position of foreign merchants on the coast, succeeded in overthrowing the half-hindu aristocratic kingdom. The kingdom of Demak stands by its fame! But it was eventually torn apart by a merchant war ignited by cunning foreigners.

Jipang was hostile to Pajang, Demak to Mataram. All these civil wars, large or small, for the benefit of foreign nations, in a short time ended with the victory of a Chinese-Javanese named Mas Garendi.

### 3.4 Tarunajaya

As in the Roman Empire and China, the mounds of government officials who did not match the truth in the capital were swept away by new powers from the regions; thus, the blood of the Mataram Kingdom will be cleansed and strengthened by Tarunajaya and his friends.

An Indonesian prince who came from Makassar knew the soul of the Javanese people got a large following, and managed to defeat the King of Mataram who came out of the true line. Java in particular and Indonesia in general will have a different history if a new power does not come to Java. Empu Sedah's other prophecy now seems to be proven, "The government of a foreign nation, namely a white buffalo with eyes like a cat's eyes" (*kebo bule siwer matane*).

With the advent of Dutch rule, everything resembling independence disappeared. The influence of foreigners and the mixing of blood with other Asian nations caused a great deal of tension. All economic and political rights were "swallowed" by the Netherlands with violence and fraud, as the Indonesian nation has never known! Extortion of the lowest form (barbarism) and tyranny have become a daily habit!

Tarunajaya could not resist the Dutch rule using foreign weapons. So the cat saw this situation and for the first time used the political path of *divide et impera*, splitting and dominating that worked wonderfully for the colonialist. After the King of Mataram promised the East India Company to give them power and land, the demons began to work.

Panembahan in Madura, a friend from Tarunajaya, was stuffed by the East India Company with diamonds and sweet words until they could get along. Now Tarunajaya stands between the "three fires": the Dutch, the king, and old friends. This is what caused the defeat of Tarunajaya witnessed by the East India Company itself!

The indiscriminate Mataram government received a "victory" due to the indirect support of the Company, but something indiscriminate will sooner

or later become a reality as well as proven in the end.

### 3.5 Diponegoro

The road from Anyer to Banyuwangi, which connects the robbed districts, was built by Governor General Daendels with a lot of sweat and the lives of Javanese people at stake. With that road, the process of capital cultivation becomes orderly. But the process was not voluntarily accepted by the Indonesian nation. It is a coercive process and not according to the laws of nature. Merchants in the cities were urged. Sailing was monopolised by the Dutch, indigenous people were forbidden to have property rights. Cheap cotton imports from the West destroyed industry and trade, both small and medium. The Javanese bourgeoisie or half of Java can continue its journey, namely the journey between feudalism to capitalism. However, it was squeezed to dryness by Western capital and its apparatus; such is the feudalism of Mataram that almost fell.

A boy with a will as hard as steel, as influential as a hot iron, that is, a man who has in his chest the qualities of a true Indonesian prince, powerless to change that unfortunate fate. If Diponegoro was born in the West and placed himself in the face of a revolution with such a sacred heart, it may be that he will be able to match Cromwell or Garibaldi. But he “helps a leaking boat”, a class that will disappear. His deeds, though full of chivalry, in the economic view were counter-revolutionary. And it is very difficult to ascertain, what kind of Diponegoro in the political view, because it is undeniable that his ideal is “Singgasana Kerajaan Mataram”(Throne of the Mataram Kingdom). A power that can easily turn into tyranny.

Diponegoro supports further capital expansion as well as road expansion. Therefore, it hinders income and economic growth, counterrevolutionary. We never read that he opposed capital-imperialism by reviving national capital. In short, he has no political or economic program. He felt pressured by the new power and after he saw that the new power was using the decayed power of Mataram as a tool, so he attacked the two enemies.

If Java had a revolutionary national bourgeoisie, Diponegoro in his struggle against Mataram and the Company must have stood on the side of the bourgeoisie. In this way, a noble and certain deed can be created. But that was not the case, the bourgeoisie that smelled of Islam in the economic field was destroyed by Dutch capital altogether. In great frustration with

Mataram and the Company, it was able to unite under the leadership of Kyai Mojo, a fanatical Muslim cleric with the slogan "War of Sabilullah", not national.

Drawing a conclusion on the Diponegoro uprising is not an easy job. Because of this, the struggle of the Javanese Islamic bourgeoisie against the Western capital is supported by a kingdom that is about to fall (Mataram).

The consequences are very clear. No one is able, however smart, to help a weakening class, both technically and economically, against a class that is getting stronger and stronger.

A new class must be established in Indonesia to fight modern Western imperialism.

What are the conclusions from the above stories?

First, that our history is Hindu history or half Hindu history; second that the feeling of national grandeur is far from where it's supposed to be; and lastly, that every thought that aspires for development (renaissance) has the same meaning as digging into the aristocracy and colonisation of the Hindu nation and the half-buried Hindu nation.

The true Indonesian nation from then until now still remains an obedient slave from foreign robbers.

The true nationality of Indonesia does not exist unless there is an intention to liberate the Indonesian nation that has never been independent.

The true Indonesian nation has no history of its own other than slavery.

The history of the Indonesian nation will only begin if they are free from the oppression of the imperialists.

# Chapter 4

## Different Types of Imperialism

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### 4.1 Ways of Exploitation and Opressions

”God created the world in His own image.”

The foreigners who colonised Asia for 300 years were to fulfil their own needs and they ruled the conquered lands in various ways. Economically, from the past until now can be divided as follows.

1. **Open Robbery**, formerly carried out by the Portuguese and Spanish.
2. **Monopoly**, which in practice is equivalent to robbery, is still being carried out by the Dutch in Indonesia until now (c. 1926, ed.).
3. **Half Monopoly**, began to be carried out by the British in India.
4. **Free Competition**, started by America in the Philippines.

Other imperialist methods can almost be compared to the ones mentioned above.

The ways of oppression in politics are as follows.

1. **Barbaric imperialism**, which is to destroy all indigenous political power and run an arbitrary government, for example is Spain in the Philippines.
2. **Autocratic imperialism**, which is almost indistinguishable from the aforementioned article “a” like the Netherlands.

3. **Semi-liberal imperialism**, i.e. imperialism that gives very limited power to the ruling indigenous people (kings or heads of state for generations such as Britain in India).
4. **Liberal imperialism**, that is, imperialism that gives complete independence to the great landlords as well as to the rising indigenous bourgeoisie, for example is American imperialism in the Philippines.

## 4.2 Causes of Difference

The differences in the methods of extortion and oppression of the colonised are not due to differences in human nature in the imperialist countries. But because of the position of the capital of each country when they arrived in Asia, and also the way the capital was run.

By the time the Spanish and Portuguese arrived in Asia around the 1500s, they had not been completely free from feudalism. The Portuguese and Spanish were countries of agriculture, handicrafts, nobility and religion (so there was no victorian style industry yet).

There were no industrial goods that could be sold in the colony's markets. They came to the colonies to rob the produce there and then sold it on the European market at high prices. Because they strongly embraced the Catholic religion which had just expelled Islam from Spain, the Indonesians who embraced the animist religion in the Philippines were forced to become Christians. Who does not like to follow the force beheaded with a sword.

By the time the Dutch followed Spain and the Portuguese to Indonesia around the 1600s, much of Dutch feudalism had been pushed by the bourgeoisie. They had broken free from the oppression of feudalism as well as Catholicism and took the path of free trade, liberalism and Protestantism. The Netherlands was in the age of young capitalism.

Britain, which in 1750s was able to stand still in India, had in fact been immersed in the bourgeois revolution under Cromwell for 100 years.

After that, British capitalism advanced very rapidly, accompanied by the notions of free trade, liberalism, constitutionalism and the belief in independence.

America arrived in the Philippines in 1898 after two bourgeois revolutions (1775 and 1860). He firmly held Monroe's understanding of democracy and open-door politics.

### 4.3 Consequences of the Various Ways of Extortion and Oppression

As a result of the robbery, the Portuguese and Spanish were eventually expelled from their colonies.

Although the revolutionary spirit in Indonesia is mature and burning, our supplies are not enough, so Dutch imperialism is still standing.

By granting large concessions, if forced, as well as a politics of compromise to a group of Indians, British imperialism still stood there.

Under the guise of nurturing, helping and loving human beings as well as giving economic autonomy, great economic and political freedom to the indigenous people in the Philippine, American imperialism still created chaos there.

#### India

Although Warren Hasting and Lord Clive killed and robbed, their actions should not be equated with those of Daendels, van den Bosch and others, because the British colonial system in terms of "material and history" was much softer than the Dutch system (of course we do not want imperialism of any kind). The lust to kill and plunder from British imperialism cannot destroy the will of the Indian people.

This showed itself especially with Indian goods which had not been robbed by the British. After experiencing several political and economic struggles, the Indian nation was able to establish a large national industry, agriculture and trade. In addition, British imperialism organised schools from the lowest level to high schools (more than five universities) and for a long time has developed a system of government to "dominion" or beyond. India has had Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Das, Tagore, Dr. C. Bose and Dr. Naye who are famous all over the world. All of these educated people were born in recognition of British imperialism.

Because England in its own country had materials for industry (coal and iron), it in itself became a world workshop. Because it did not have cotton in the beginning, India was made a cotton plantation. In addition, as an industrial country with enormous incomes, the UK needs markets. Because of this, the British lands (the only industrial country) were forced to work together with India, albeit at the beginning indirectly. Do not firms and sealanes, whether import or export in such a large trade between Britain and India, need the middle Indian merchants as intermediaries? And again, can't "bayonets" always force a nation to buy things? Inevitably he must raise his standard of living, if he wants to obtain a permanent purchase. This is what forced British imperialism to provide Western education to a group of Indians. The first High School in Bengal which is now 100 years old, which at first could only be entered by the children of the rich and the aristocracy, was later allowed also for the children of the common people.

In such a short time, the high schools also produced so many educated people that the British bureaucracy could not accept them at all. There arose a class that was educated in the West and who felt unhappy, namely the educated or professional workers. From this class were born some of the leaders of the independence movement who are known as extremists, namely the left. Thus, British imperialism gave birth to its enemies and dug its own grave.

Under the leadership of the famous Tilak, there was a boycott of 1900-1905. The point is to keep national industry and trade alive, namely by boycotting British factory goods imported into India (cotton is grown in India, then sent to England, at double the price it is also sold to Indian buyers).

By using items that have not been robbed "as weapons", the educated gain victory. Large landlords and merchants provided assistance in the form of capital, enthusiasm and tools to meet the programs of the extremists. Despite being full of political, economic, financial obstacles and extraordinary tactics, Tilak and his compatriots were able to win. Various industries, including the weaving industry-the national industry of today-are the most important handicrafts of Tilak and his comrades. Even the industry already has an international field. Much of the victory also depended on the help of Indian workers and peasants.

Standing on Tilak's victory, Mr. Gandhi won the victory in the non-cooperation movement or the boycott movement. Almost all weaving facto-



ries in Bombay (approximately 200 in number) are now owned and managed by Indian brains and personnel. British cotton was hit in fierce competition, not only in India but also in Africa, Malay, China and eventually also in Europe.

India's current trade laws protect Indian cotton. Not a few plantation firms and banks are not working with Indian capital and are led by the Indian nation. Industries such as charcoal and iron; and the modern metal industry is now held by the Indians. During the world war England bought a train wagon from "Tata Coy", now (since about 2 years) he made an agreement to also buy train engines. In short, without the violence of British imperialism, India's national capital was established — which resulted in a relentless struggle, which at times led to bloodshed. India is now in the age of modern big industry. England is no longer the centre of the workshop in the world though in its own kingdom; and India is no longer a cotton field for Britain.

After Britain was defeated in the economic game, it was forced to acknowledge India's victory in politics. There now stands a national industry whose material interests are in some respects equal to those of the colonialists. It remained for Britain to grant political concessions to the representatives of the great landlords and the modern bourgeoisie.

Indeed, this is the meaning of the reform work of the state government that has been done for many years—the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. Large districts with a population of 50,000,000 such as Bengal and the Central District after reforming (hervorming) with the intermediaries of district councils, almost fell into the hands of the Indian nation entirely. The election of the highest council (Duma of the Indian nation), influenced by the Swaraj, the military, the academies, and the judiciary, in recent years was provided - occupied by the eloquent and loyal Indian sons.

However, there is not yet a single people's representative (parliament) and cabinet in charge. Although the reform of the Indian government is much more perfect than the Dutch -style House of Representatives, it has not yet reached the Dominion of Canada, the Philippine or Egyptian constitution. But a number of leaders and extremists could be drawn to the reform. As a result, the revolutionary movement was temporarily "stranded" until British imperialism had a chance to catch its breath.

## Philippines

The situation in the Philippines is slightly different from that in India. The Americans came, in 1898, a time when the Filipinos had a "three-quarters success" in overthrowing the Spanish. At first America happened to be an ally, but once her stand was solid she stayed in the country. The 33 year Philippine-American War (1898-1901) failed to drive away the thieves. Before the arrival of America, the Philippines has been able to show some great nationalists such as Dr. Rizal (who was shot by the Spaniards from behind); the organiser Bonifacio, Mabini the diplomat and great generals Luna and Aquinaldo.

Therefore, it is necessary to use a very cunning deception to deceive the eyes of a nation that is as strong and clever, such as the Filipino people.

Due to the greatness and wealth of America and by one of the influential anti-imperialist ideologies among the American people, the imperialists immediately worked for reform. Domestic politics, mediated by the "Senate" and the "House of Representatives", can now be said to be in the hands of the indigenous people. All representatives of the two councils-exempt from some Islamic regions-were elected with full suffrage and were all Filipinos. Most of the governors of the regions are also Filipinos. Only a few department heads are American. In a constitution, America must promise to grant the widest possible "independence" "to the Filipino people once they have demonstrated the competence to establish a permanent government".

Primary schools were observed with great care and emphasis on agriculture.

The companies that are the backbone of the Philippine economy are now held entirely by the indigenous hands. Some factories, trading houses and shipping lines are owned or operated by Filipinos. Four Universities and several high schools each year graduate Filipino sons and daughters in large numbers to defend the nation of 12,000,000 souls from American deception and fraud.

Very few people are illiterate. Almost all children go to school. To the far corners, apart from their own language, the young men understood English.

Even though the colleges there did not please an educated Dutchman

like Dr. Nieuwenshuis who of course will forever lick the boots of his own government, while insulting the actions of others, but because of the height of Filipino intellect, the great and wealthy Americans cannot do as they please.

Because America in 1925 had to pay the price of rubber f 540,000,000 more than in 1924 to the United Kingdom, the Americans thought of opening a plantation in the Southern Philippines whose land was good for rubber.

But Filipino leaders are working hard to avoid being targeted by the American "rubber wolf." Before they went any further to acquire large tracts of land for rubber plantations, in concessions-thanks to the efforts of Philippine leaders, members of the Senate and the House with its long-standing land law stipulated that "no more than 2500 acres (one acre 4840 yards square) which can be rented to foreigners. Not long after the rubber wolf, through Firestone came to ask for a concession for the rubber plantation. They were greeted with the words that Philippine land law "does not grant permission".

Philippine leaders argued that if America invested its capital in the Philippines, in addition to the people would soon be miserable (as in Java) also America would have a reason to obstruct Philippine independence. American imperialism, which is no less ingenious than Anglo-Saxon imperialism, can one day say that a shock may arise because of America's untimely departure? American interests are at stake in the Philippines.

This is why the Philippine leaders hastily removed the land law from the law book and disclosed it to the entire people. It was like the village in the arrival of a tiger.

A nation that has already built national consciousness like the Philippines, moreover given insight by indigenous newspapers (due to the high school cursed by the educated Dr. Nieuwenshuis!), Can see and carry out the truth from its leaders. Accompanied by the entire people, the Philippine leaders can at any time shoot the rubber wolf of American imperialism with the arrow of the land law they made.

No one criticised the non-national school system other than the Philippine leaders themselves. In addition, there are difficulties in taking on the role of trade from foreign nations. But they all agreed that a healthy education system and the best economic changes could only be done perfectly

after the nation's independence was achieved. And in which corner of the world is it viewed differently? The existence of a Governor-General who has the right to prevent (*recht van veto*) is an obstacle to economic reform that is solely for the benefit of the Filipino people. That is why, our brothers and sisters in the north there are still fighting solely for independence to the fullest extent possible.

The huge concessions, which were forcibly granted by the United States 25 years ago, could not cool the hearts of the Filipinos to take away their birthright and independence.

If the Filipinos had not joined America (one of the strongest and richest countries in the world), but "the famous pirates on the shores of the North Sea (Netherlands)", it would have been a long time since the great Filipino people had driven them into hell.

Britain controls more than two-thirds of rubber and America consumes 72% of the world's produce. Due to the "Stevenson Rubber Restriction's policy" still in effect, the garden owners and monopolists, the British alone controlled the world's rubber - *American Chamber of Commerce report chamber version published in the Manila Tribune, July 26, 1925.*

## Indonesia

The situation of India and the Philippines which I have presented above, I intend to add to our knowledge of imperialism.

About Indonesia, now and in the future, at length. After considering all that is described above, it is certainly not for the reader to define the robberies, arson, and murder committed by the Dutch. Therefore, we will not linger to describe "hongi-hongi" (pepper in Ambon), a coffee plantation now called an independent grower. All of them has been famous and cursed by every brainy human being.

Far be it from us to say that all these incidents were merely the work of individual Dutch people. We ourselves have known enough of the character and habits of the Dutch. But the manners and songs of Dutch imperialism made the Dutch nation as we know it then and now - evil and cruel.

When the Dutch directed their pirate ships to Indonesia, at that time their country was only a country of farmers and small coffee shopkeepers.

Even today the country still remains as a country of farmers and merchants. And it will not change, because it has no basic materials for large industries, namely coal, iron and cotton. If the Dutch state did not have its colonies, it would not be able to match Belgium or Sweden.

At its height it was just a country of lonely peasants and small merchants like Denmark.

With the courage and will of a pirate and the greed of a small coffee shopkeeper, he confiscated all the Indonesian produce. There is not a single stone for indigenous economic housing that is left behind. How can we expect a wise government from these pirates, and small shopkeepers! (How can security and state management be expected of pirates and thieves - beware!).

Before the arrival of the East Indies Company, the Chinese, Hindu, Arabs (eventually) became Javanese or at least continued to live in the country, but the Dutch came to Indonesia and returned to their country with sacks full of untold riches. There, Indonesian money was scattered and that is where they sucked their pension funds from Indonesian coffers. As a result, the Indonesian economy is leaking and drying up!

If the Netherlands is a developed industrial state, it will sooner or later have to, like Britain and America, adopt a different politics.

They will certainly use liberal politics against Javanese or Indo-Javanese nobles. Thus, political and economic progress as it is now happening in the Philippines and India, can also happen in Indonesia. Although the Netherlands has begun to industrialise Indonesia in the last 20 years, the goal remains a monopoly. Its capital remains foreign capital.

The gap between the coloniser and the colonised now remains as it was in the days of Daendels and van den Bosch. Only the roaring voice of the revolution can fill that deep chasm.

But it seems that because of this, Indonesia and other Asian countries will survive the imperialism defended by the Netherlands. Because of the sharp social conflict in Indonesia, one day a new nature will inevitably emerge that can free Indonesia and the whole of Asia from Western actions forever.

## Chapter 5

# Indonesian Capitalism

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Capitalism in Indonesia is a transplant from Europe which in some ways is not the same as capitalism that grew and matured in its own country, namely Europe and North America.

### A Young Capitalism

Because capitalism in Indonesia is still young, its production and centralization have not yet reached the proper level. About a quarter of a century ago, industrialization began in Indonesia. It was only at that time that modern machines were used in sugar, rubber, tea, oil, coal and tin companies.

Indonesian industry, especially the agricultural industry, remains limited in Java and in some places in Sumatra. Vast lands, which are usually very fertile and contain priceless metal goods, such as Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and other islands are still waiting for development. Although the island of Java in terms of plantations and means of transport has reached a high level but generally the islands outside of Java, except Sumatra, is still a jungle.

Real modern industry will not be held on the island of Java. It will remain a place for the agricultural industry. Because metals such as iron, charcoal, kerosene, gold and others, are not found there or very little. Sumatra is the real place of modern industry. This has now been partially proven. Charcoal, kerosene, gold and tin from Sumatra (later also iron) are of great significance, both nationally and internationally.

Britain, the world's oldest industrialised country, in the middle of the last century underwent a drastic change in its industry. Other European states and North America followed gradually. The techniques and regulations working there have now reached a level as high as never before known in the history of the world. Production and distribution power far exceeds the limits of national needs. Europe and North America have become mature capitalist states.

Capital separates the city from the village. Cities produce industrial production and agricultural production. The more advanced capitalism is, the more people who used to be in the villages are drawn to the cities. When the political and economic conditions are well, don't we get more jobs, more institutions of education, and more entertainment in cities than in the villages? In 1790 in the cities lived 3.4% and in the villages 96.6% of the total population, and in 1920 it became 51% and 49%, respectively. In 1870 the figures were 21% and 79% and in 1910 they were 51% and 49%, respectively. Thus, the population in the villages in 1920 was smaller than the population in the cities. These figures show us clearly the progress of American cities, as a result of the progress of industrialization. In England the process of division (of towns and villages) is equally orderly and equally adequate. In 1850 the cities lived 49% of the total population. In 1900 this ratio became 77% and 23%, (The relations Government to industry, M.L. Regua).

According to foods No. 73 this year, the number of residents and cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants in Java and Madura is only 60% of the total population.

If we use the comparison between urban and rural population as a measure of industrial progress of a country, surely Indonesian industry is still in its infancy.

If we also take the total length of the railway to describe the progress of industry as an explanation of our description above, it is clear to us that Germany, with 177,000 square miles in area and a population less than Indonesia, in 1913 had 38,809 miles of railway. , while Indonesia, which covers an area of 735,000 square miles, in 1919 only had 3,914 miles.

Regarding the amount of trade (import-export) in Indonesia in 1924 (after the world war) there was f 2,208,800 (according to International Ocean, no. 526, Germany in 1913 [before the war] there was f 13,375,000,000).

These numbers show our backwardness. But when compared to countries like the United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines, it seems that Indonesia is not that backward. And when compared to Turkey, Siam, and China, Indonesia is much better. By making that comparison as we have already done, in fact this has gone beyond necessity. Our purpose is nothing but to explain how young capitalism is in Indonesia.

### **Improper Growth**

Capitalism in Indonesia was not born out of the indigenous ways of production according to the will of nature. It is a foreign tool used for foreign interests that violently pushes against the indigenous system of production.

When we look at the development of capitalism in Europe and America, we realise that older modes of production are successively replaced by younger ones. Usually this is not so apparent, but sometimes it is so rapid that it is quite obvious. The most recent occurrence is due to new incomes. Whatever the circumstances of the moment, it is progress according to nature, because the forces driving it are within the grasp of the peoples of Europe and America themselves.

As we have shown, industrial progress in every country is paralleled by the rise of cities that manufacture mainly industrial goods such as iron-works, agricultural tools, medicines and so on. The villages produce rice, vegetables, livestock, milk and so on. Excess city goods - that is, goods that the city dwellers see as necessities of life are exchanged for excess village goods.

In America at a typical period like 1913, when the country was remote and less imperialistic, as it is today, the ratio between industrial and agricultural goods was practically the same (the market price of both goods was almost the same). So in economic terms, the city fulfils the needs of the countryside, and the countryside fulfils the needs of the city.

In Indonesia, as a result of disorganised economic progress, the situation is not as it should be. Our cities cannot be regarded as concentrations of technique, industry, and population. They do not manufacture goods either for the countryside or for foreign trade, from indigenous capitalists. Agricultural machinery, household utensils, materials for clothing etc. are not made in Indonesia, but are imported from abroad by imperialistic trading agencies. Our villages do not produce the goods needed for the cities,



because they do not even have enough for themselves. Rice, for example, the main food of the people, has to be imported, in 1921 at a cost of f 114,160,000, although our people are generally very good at working their land and have all the conditions to produce rice for their own needs and can even produce excess rice. Our villages produce sugar, rubber, tea, and other trade goods that enrich foreign merchants, but impoverish and destitute the poor; our cities are not the economic centres of the Indonesian nation, but continue to be economic sources of profit for foreign financial cultures.

The ingredients that make capitalism not Indonesian - given the history of our country mentioned above - are clear to us.

We have seen that the robber politics of the Dutch destroyed all the seeds of modern native industry. *cultuurstelsel*<sup>4</sup>, monopoly landlords and unforgiving taxation. And the regular influx of Chinese merchants in the days of the Far East Company (VOC) destroyed all strong national socio-economic and technical means.

If the Indonesians had not been robbed, and had the technical intelligence and influence of foreigners, they would have had the opportunity to fulfill the will of nature.

Either peacefully (as in Japan) or by means of a national boycott (as in India) the Indonesian or Indo middle class by pooling national capital set up industries to fulfil national needs such as iron workings.

Thus, Indonesian capital arises in an orderly manner among the social strata of Indonesia and has an orderly relationship. Indonesian merchants who were once small are now bankers or heads of large companies. The once small iron forge, sugar artisan, batik merchant became the leader of the metal, sugar or weaving industries. But in the 300 years of Dutch imperialism, nothing has improved for the Indonesian people, everything has been transported to its own country. It unleashed out Dutch colonial capitalism like no other in the world.

To enter into an economic struggle against foreign titans of industries,

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<sup>4</sup>A Dutch government policy from 1830–1870 for its Dutch East Indies colony. Requiring 20% of agricultural production in all villages to be devoted to export crops (sugar, tea, coffee, etc) and for people that couldn't meet the requirements, they were required to work for 75 days a year in a government owned plantation to make up for it.

with the intention of boosting national industry, is to "catch the wind".

## **Indonesian Capital is International**

British imperialism with its first-rate national industry and a formidable fleet, had from the beginning felt the need to compromise with the kings, and landlords of the Indian nation, to defend itself against the nascent native bourgeoisie. But when the latter came out of the struggle victorious (in 1900-1905 and 1919-1922), the British had their hands full.

Together with the kings, landlords and the new Indian bourgeoisie, she went to ride on the backs of the grumbling people. However challenging British imperialism was, it still had a purpose within its own empire.

Dutch imperialism punched and kicked the patient "buffalo" for so long that it is now using its horns.

The little Netherlands, which in the past swallowed everything for itself, is now forced to share it with the stronger countries.

As the lack of capital and industry was the most important cause of these Dutch actions, since a few years ago, British capital has played a major role in Indonesia. The wise Raffles had long seen this and was not satisfied until he could trick the Dutch-peasant's eye. After the war with Napoleon ceased, the British returned all the Dutch colonies. This action seemed to be very contrary to the politics then used by the British, but upon closer examination it was the British policy of being as subtle and cheap as possible in using the Netherlands as an instrument for the capital they had invested in Indonesia. Did the takeover of the entire Indonesian administration give the British responsibility and trouble? The British capital, which in recent years has been getting bigger and bigger, for the Netherlands - is becoming alarmingly small, and the Indonesians are now so impatient that the Netherlands now intends to use "open-door policy". This term, which is actually taken from an American dictionary, fits perfectly with Dutch politics in the East. In ordinary words, it reads: "And against British capital and the Indonesian nation, which has woken up from its slumber, the Netherlands should be stronger if it has a democratic America. But this country must be drawn to Indonesia. Its capital must be invested in Indonesia with all its endeavours and, if necessary, given extraordinary rights. When the time comes, America will join hands with the Netherlands".

Money and labour no longer count in favour of American capital. A minister once said frankly in the chamber that: The arrival of American capital is very easy because of the present laws in Indonesia. Fock's visit to Manila in 1923, and the arrival of several warships to the Philippines, placed a consul-general in New York whose job was not only to go back and forth with negotiations and agreements but also to squander money on billboards, pamphlets and magazines that for years carried the story of Java the Wonderland. All this was to lure American travellers and capitalists to Indonesia.

The size of the Dutch capital can be seen in the figures below.

In the Handbook *voor cultuur en handsondernemingen* in Ned, India, written by Agulvant, the capital invested in Indonesia is estimated at f 3,270,000,000. Of which f 1,27,000,000 in plantations, f 900,000,000 in oil. In banks and trade f 750,000,000.

Ship, railway and tram companies f 250,000,000, f 220,000,000 and f 200,000,000 respectively. Mines f 70,000,000 and insurance companies f 60,000,000.

Capital invested in East Sumatra in 1924 totalled f 439,000,000. Of which 55.3% belonged to the Dutch and 44.7% to foreigners. Foreign capital invested in the agricultural industry totalled f 200,000,000. Of which f 147,500,000 is British capital, f 300,000,000 belongs to France and Belgium, f 15,700,000 to Japan and f 4,000,000 to Germany (*International Ocean. No. 6, 1926*).

The area of rubber plantations in 1924 was 241,357 bau<sup>5</sup>. Of which 42.% belonged to foreigners and 32.% to the British. Due to the British monopoly, American rubber capital has been rapidly increasing in Sumatra in recent years. The area of tea plantations in Java is 116,664 bau. Foreign ownership 23.% and British ownership 17.%.

Of the seven main products shipped to markets around the world, sugar exports in 1924, f 491,100,000 or 32.% of total exports. Rubber f 202,600,000, or 13.2 per cent of exports. Kerosene f 158,300,000, tobacco f 123,600,000, copra f 97,400,000, tea f 93,600,000 and coffee f 56,600,000 i.e. 10.%; 8.%; 6.%; 6.%; and 4.% of total exports respectively.

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<sup>5</sup>1 bau = 500 tombak persegi or 7096 m<sup>2</sup>

In 1924, exports to the United Kingdom and its colonies accounted for 42.55

So it is clear that British trade in Indonesia is larger than in all foreign countries, while in the most important oil companies and plantations, British capital plays the largest role among non-Dutch capital. So it is not surprising why the Dutch are in a hurry to lure American capital.

It is true that in recent years, jealous of the British monopoly on rubber, the Americans have begun to invest in rubber plantations in East Sumatra. However, it is not yet certain whether America wants to invest its capital in Sumatra and Java alone, because there is fertile land for rubber plantations in Mindanau (Southern Philippines) and Liberia.

Recognising and safeguarding modern native industry as in India according to the new economic outlook will not exist at all, because modern native industry does not exist. The people are only squeezed, trampled and cheated. The dismissals of labourers are not unusual, and the grip of taxation is getting tighter and tighter. The people's economy need not be mentioned because the Netherlands is mainly dependent on foreign capital.

## Chapter 6

# Conditions of the Indonesian People

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### 6.1 Destitution

How many thousands, or even how many hundreds of thousands of Indonesians are sleeping on empty stomachs in the public halls every day as they unwind is not clear. The government has a complete record of the figures of profitable farms and enterprises, especially the names of those who are liable to pay taxes, but it forgets to give any certainty about the livelihood of the people as a whole. It is true that sometimes a committee is set up by the government, but this body does not represent the people, and of course it never indicts big capital, though it criticises it. "Orderly" and "independent" examinations, as evidence of good intentions, have never been heard of.

If we want to know how many industrial, plantation and transport workers there are, we will know how many "colonial slaves" are starving in Indonesia, because most of the industrial workers are poor, because they have to sell or lease their land to the big companies, thus losing their land and livelihood.

It cannot be blamed on the negligence and indifference of the government. Although we are working with inadequate figures, this does not mean that the plight of the Indonesian people is a closed book to us; on the contrary, it cannot even be surmised that two to three million oppressed slaves receive wages just enough to survive starvation. The largest part of them

are organised. They are, for example, railway labourers, sweepers, porters and brakemen, who start work with a salary of f 15 - with one to two rupiahs increase each year - and reach a maximum of f 30 to f 40 a month when they are already greying of old age. That's too little a salary in the age of capitalism, and it's especially sad, considering that the care and responsibility of a group of labourers are dependent on the lives of thousands of people.

If hundreds of thousands of unorganised sugar workers do not have the courage to ask for an increase in their wages; if the landless peasantry work only a few months a year for 30 or 40 cents a day, that is, when cutting sugar cane; if 250 to 300 thousand indentured workers - the so-called "free slaves" in East Sumatra - earn 30 to 40 cents a day, who dares to say that in these days a man (even if he is an inlander!), with his daughter, can live as a human being on 12 to 25 rupiah a month? If anyone says so, he is a donkey or, more insultingly, a "traitor".

The ironworkers, a group of labourers whose wages are high in other countries, are underpaid in Surabaya, living conditions of a dog cage, with insufficient food, clothing and other necessities of life, until they fall prey to Chinese and Arab loan sharks. We still hear that their salaries were between 30 and 40 rupiah. In Surabaya, which is known as a city of commerce, this salary means only a barrier against certain death.

What is the name of the governor-general who one day shamefully told us that there were thousands of coolies in the port of Jakarta, because their wages were not enough to rent the huts so beloved by the Javanese? So shameful and uncertain is the fate of the labourers who are still working, what about the unemployed who are becoming more and more numerous?

In the *Verslag van de Suiker Enquete Commissie* (p. 99) we read the very significant sentence: "Presumably half of the families of the people on the island of Java belong to landowners, and the rest live from the enterprise and trade of bumiputra or not. There must be hundreds of thousands of people who have nothing, who occasionally work for one of the farmers and who misleadingly call themselves farmers". Moreover, in the cities there are many people who loiter along the streets, eating a bite in the morning and a bite in the evening. We do not have any comprehensive, correct and valid statistics on how many there are.

But anyone who has lived in one of the many sugar towns such as Banyu-

mas, Solo, Kediri and Surabaya, and who has really paid attention to the lives of the people, will be astonished at the "patience" and "endurance" of the people in bearing their hardships, knowing that taxes are far beyond the means of the people, a known fact to government officials.

All and every living person (even if he does not earn a living) must pay taxes. We could include quotations from all the relevant parties, but since we consider them to be useless, we don't need to add them here.

(In passing we might say that the big industries and trading partnerships also pay taxes. However, this is a matter of mere convention, because in various ways the tax can be brought down on the heads of the destitute and disenfranchised Indonesians).

Padoux, the Chinese government's advisor in the "*Memorandum for the National Commission for the Study of Financial Problems*", determined that individual persons in the Philippines, Indo-China, France, Siam, Indonesia, and China paid taxes of \$7.50, 8.50, 9.50, 15.50, and 1.20 respectively.

Thus, the highest tax is in Indonesia! It is twice that of the Philippines, almost twice that of Indo-China, France, and twelve times that of China. This calculation is based on comparisons made before 1923. Back then there was still "*Inlandsch Verponding*" - a shameless travesty - the likes of which no despotic king in Java had ever done.

% research Inlandsch Verponding

Mr Yeekes explains in "*de Opbouw*" (1923) that the average income of the Indonesian people is f 196 a year. Of this income much has to be spent as a taxpayer, and outside Java for labour as well, so that a month's income is only f 13. A figure far below the minimum. Mr Yeekes' calculation is for the whole of Indonesia, so the income of the people in Central Java must be even less.

We in modern times are saddened and shocked to see Javanese people living in shabby huts or no shelter at all, starving and dressed in filthy rags, living in the most dangerous climate of Indonesia, lacking health care, due to epidemics of malaria, tapeworm, cholera and pestilence; "only" hundreds of thousands died when these diseases were rampant.

A fortitude worthy of praise!

## 6.2 Darkness

Still, the Dutch "government of peasants and shopkeepers" is as afraid of the Universities and Colleges as it is of ghosts. Still he has not escaped the menace of "intellectual labour". They have mistaken the political attitude of British doctrine and drawn the wrong conclusions. They are too ignorant to think that it was because of the insight and skill of British imperialism that there was an intelligentsia in India which in times of trouble often helped the British government, and that it was because of the intellectual class, including extremists, that Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi won economic victories with their extensive boycott movements. And it was also because the British co-operated with the modern indigenous bourgeoisie, on the political and economic fronts, that the British were able to continue to rule in India despite the recent onslaught of the noncooperation movement.

The Dutch government in the debates always raised various objections to the establishment of universities in Indonesia, objections that could only be accepted by children. All of these arguments were only used at the time of colonisation and can be summarised in the following reasons.

1. That this government, having repented, should now make itself the educator of the Indonesian people at the people's own expense and should give the best possible instruction to the children of Indonesia, if it is not fond of nonsense.
2. That the Indonesian people are neither superior in brain nor in spirit, nor inferior to any other nation, and that they are ripe for any kind of teaching.
3. That the first Indonesian university need not be a copy of a European university, but a European university based on the spiritual intelligence and circumstances of Indonesian society at this time.

The Philippines - with 12 million people - already has four universities and several colleges, but Indonesia with five times as many people does not have a single one.

We do not forget for a moment that if the "Dutch" establish a university in Indonesia, its teaching will undoubtedly be higher than in other colonies, just as they say that Dutch universities are much higher than universities anywhere else. Regardless of this selfish behaviour, we just want to say to the Dutch, " Show your competence in Indonesia first!."



"It's the act that you have to actually prove!"

But apart from money, which for a Dutchman weighs more than political aspirations and reasons, there are other political views that we would not expect from the ignorant Dutchman.

Not long ago Mr. Hardeman, the head of the Department of Education, explained in a session of the People's Council that establishing a university did not necessarily produce educated workers, because the need for educated workers was temporarily decreasing, due to economic difficulties which would later of course be restored. With this the "specter" of the Java Bode of 30 June has disappeared.

We will come back to the consequences of Dutch educational policy later on. Here we want to show, with figures, that the lower, middle and higher education institutions have always been insufficient for a population of 55 million. This must be recognised regardless of the empty excuses of the so-called "government".

Let's skip over the higher institutions that have been churning out dozens of doctors, masters, and engineers for years. Let us turn for a moment to the question of the lower schools. The number of children who had to attend school in 1919 was as follows: H.I.S. 1%, Public Schools 5%, Village Schools 8% to 14%. Approximately 86% of the children who should have gone to school had no place (*according to the 1923 report of the N.I.O.G. congress published in the Indische Courant*). Those who can read and write are now estimated at 5% to 6%, perhaps even 2% to 3%.

The total expenditure of the colleges in 1919 was reportedly f 20,000,000 and f 75,000,000 for 150,000 European children and f 12,500,000 for the children of 55,000,000 Indonesian taxpayers. In 1923 the expenditure of the college was f 34,452,000. Thus, 30 cents was spent on a native child at that time, which was 1/7th of what was spent on a Filipino child.

For other institutions which set a good example to the dissatisfied people, such as the police, the military and the fleet, an expenditure of f 156,274,000 was made in that year. In addition, f 300,000,000 will be spent in another year. This was a very heavy burden on the shoulders of the miserable people.

We, as revolutionaries, were determined in 1921 to correct the government's negligence in education by establishing our own schools. By going

through all kinds of difficulties, such as technical, personnel, financial, political and police difficulties, we were finally able to establish throughout Java 52 schools with about 50,000 pupils and the number is growing. However, the schools were violently suppressed. Teachers were banned from teaching all the time for petty reasons, and parents were frightened. The final blow was dealt by the Green Union (a band of thieves mobilised, hired and led by the government and its minions). These hired thugs were told to burn down schools, frighten and persecute people, students and teachers. And the orders were carried out by them in earnest.

A vibrant people's movement towards the eradication of illiteracy led joyfully and effortlessly by revolutionaries in Priangan in 1922 met with a fate that was just as terrible.

The politics of this government in matters of education can be summarised with the words: "the Indonesian nation, must remain ignorant so that public peace and security are maintained".

### 6.3 Savagery and Slavery

Despite 300 years of exposure to Western civilisation, our people still live in a state of ignorance and lack of rights. The peasants have never had a day of certainty about their ownership, independence or even their lives. Every year the people's tax cycle turn harder and harder. The workers are not allowed to hold associations or express their objections. The reasonable requests of the people are not heard. The education and leaders of the people who are trusted by the people are labelled and treated as seditionists and bandits, and are therefore, with no prior investigation, put in jail, kept in rat rooms, banished out of the country or beaten to death. Reasoned requests and protests are crushed by a bureaucracy that apparently prefers to drown in its own rot.

Now let us allow the famous Prof Van Vollenhoyen to speak and denounce the attitude of the Dutch government, as written in his book *Indonesier en zijn Grond*. Indonesia may have at least 70% of the population living on the agricultural industry; and for this reason it is important for a well educated man - whose honour and position have never been compromised - to hear what has been done to the peasantry in recent years by a power which claims to be the "guardians of the people" and feels that it is doing so.

We do not want to dig up what has already happened, so let's first talk about the events of the past 60 years of the last century. Everybody knows and justifies the saying that in those years "the Javanese were persecuted". However, not everyone can readily see what kind and to what extent the peasant property was exploited. To find this out, we do not need to read the books of the Dutch government's cruelty as "instigators and spreaders of hatred", but simply take the matter into our own hands.

Daendels' despotism, rotten as it was, could still be considered extraordinary. He had his own authority over the people's rice fields and fields to pay bumiputra employees.

Van Vollenhoven goes on to say: "whereas the Javanese kingship, which is almost as rotten as ours, is 'confined' to its own kingdoms, Kedu, Yogyakarta and Surakarta, we extend it to cover the whole island".

The village officials take what is good for themselves and give what is bad to the foolish people. All of this is arbitrary.

"What do we expect now?" van Vollenhoven asked next. Are we gradually going to stop fussing about the rice fields because of the land tax (this is already happening). Are we gradually going to stop taking away the rice fields and plantations under coercion of the people (this has already happened). Will we reduce and eliminate the harmful effects of forced labour on lands belonging to the people (this is already happening). And then we will learn to keep our itching hands quiet. The latter has not yet happened.

If in 1919 a Javanese whose land rights had been damaged by f 1,000 came to complain to the controller, he would be sentenced to eight days' hard labour. If he went to the President of the District Court, he would be told, "There is no time!" and if he went to the *Wali Negeri*<sup>6</sup> for protection, "His Majesty is not pleased to answer". In rather polite Dutch it was called "godsgeklaagd".

It often happens that in the midst of a piece of land that the government intends to give to the big landlords there is an indigenous owned land. According to the law, the land cannot be taken unless it is for the government's own use. In practice, however, people would try to persuade the inlander to exchange his rights to the land for money. The following is the

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<sup>6</sup>Wali Negeri is a general term for local landlords/aristocracy

conclusion of Prof van. Vollenhoven's conclusions, which cannot be faulted for their truth and reality.

"But it seems that this is what is most important to the Indonesian who owns their own land, it is very difficult to have any feeling other than that of the constant abuse; the lying and deception of their legal land rights on paper, as an inexhaustible effort to deprive them of their rights or to prevent them from being able to utilise them".

And aren't all these tax increases now a cruel abuse of power if we are to use Prof van Vollenhoven's own words? Are our people informed when the government takes a decision and discusses our property, jobs and freedom?

Never! Just as the government never asks us, "Do we like it or not?"

The 55 million Indonesians do not have a single representative in this government who can voice their opinions or advice, protest or denounce. The militarist and bureaucratic thugs who suck our blood and control our destiny, we never liked or voted for. We cannot stop them because we have no political power. We must fight them if we don't like them, nothing else! In conclusion, all the rules and regulations that rule us in Indonesia are made at their own will and the payment of taxes is, in theory or practice, "theft".

Let us consider the plight of these 300,000 indentured workers, who are "supposedly" protected by the government. A wage of approximately f12 a month is barely enough to buy clothes which are usually shredded, because they are worn every day working in the fields. A day's work is 14 to 18 hours, because the tobacco fields are usually far from the workers lodgings, more accurately the workers cages, even though the contract only says 10 hours.

The treatment of European plantation supervisors is better described as stabbings, mutilations; assaults and murders of assistants and "subtlety disturbed to the point of cruelty!" Here was a social scene poisoned by gambling, opium and prostitution that degraded the character of the workers and left them so much in debt to their employers that their contracts had to be renewed forever.

Such working conditions are - directly or indirectly - imposed on the mostly illiterate and ignorant peasantry; they are pressured into a "con-

tract" recognised by the government. The contract states that they are "not allowed to organise and go on strike" - by which means they can demand wages and working conditions that are slightly better than in other countries. This is recognised by the government. It is something that only the "slave traders" of the barbaric age can defend.

Let us remember the crimes committed in Deli. Let us remember the recent atrocities committed by Europeans in Lampung and South Sumatra, crimes that were regarded as fairy tales in the Middle Ages. Even more than a fairy tale is the leniency of the punishment given by the government to these European "bastards".

The hundreds of thousands or millions industrial, plantation and transport workers in Java and elsewhere, who are enslaved not by contract, who are said to be "free workers", fare no better than the original indentured slaves. One by one, their feet are bound with chains of rules, so that they cannot organise and fight against the exploitative capitalists. In the People's Council, the Upper and Lower Houses, and the newspapers of different stripes, the right of organisation and the right to strike of the Indonesian workers have been repeatedly discussed! There is no need to repeat them here, or to elaborate on these forced laws. Once again, it is said that these laws are not according to modern principles, but are coercive laws imposed by a group of bureaucrats on the Indonesian workers, in order to bind all their efforts towards the improvement of their conditions.

All these laws that are being enforced cause us to remember the dark ages of savagery and slavery. So many laws are forced upon the political movement that we cannot openly say or write anything about the colonisers or open the eyes of the enslaved people.

The Indonesian people must keep their mouths shut in the wake of the persecution of leaders they trust and love, as well as when leaders are deliberately deprived of several months of their independence or, without proper investigation, thrown away because they are considered dangerous or treacherously stabbed, mutilated, beaten to death, or deprived of their very lives by bullets.

When people are told that a beloved leader, such as Haji Misbach, was said to have died "of black fever" in a government-appointed captivity, whether they want to or not, they must believe it.

When the people hear that an educated and decent young man, such as our Soegono, the leader of the V.S.T.G. who is said to have "committed suicide" in prison, while his head and hands bear the marks of torture and a finger is completely crushed, the people "cannot indict", nor can they protest at all.

And the government, which is "said" to be the guardian and protector of our people, did not conduct a careful examination of the causes of the sudden death of a capable leader of the people who fought with an unwavering heart and was, in short, loved and trusted by the people. It does not care or have the moral courage to admit and correct its mistakes and punish the guilty according to the *Fiat justitiaruate cellum law*.

(Let justice be done though the heavens fall!.)

Justice in Indonesia is only for a small group of white colonisers. For the Indonesians who were entitled to the land, there was no justice and no courts.

# Chapter 7

## Social Circumstances

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The three hundred years of Dutch perfidy in the imperialistic world of the so-called colonisers created one-of-a-kind social and national contradictions throughout Asia. On the one hand, there was capital accumulating in highly modern agriculture, with very high production, and with international connections, organized into a number of syndicates and trusts, which made enormous profits. On the other hand, the peasantry, the small merchants, were turned into workers. They are huddled together as industrial workers in the cities and agricultural workers in the fields. All this gave birth to misery, slavery and insecurity.

If the class struggle resembles an impassable valley, which in the Western countries and Japan has given rise to socialism, anarchism and bolshevism, in Indonesia the valley has been deepened by the conflict between the Dutch and the Indonesians. This conflict, though not an essential cause, could very well provoke a war of independence. The "conflict" between the capitalist Netherlands and the Indonesian workers is our social relations, which differs from that of other countries. This conflict is born in its sharpest form. This sharpness is due not only to the absence of modern capital from the Indonesian nation, but also to the differences in religion, nation, language, and culture between the coloniser and the colonised.

In advanced capitalist countries, social conflict is divided into two classes: the class of capitalists and their followers and the class of workers. The capitalists are those who own land, factories, railways, ships and banks, and increase their wealth with the unpaid labour of the workers, which Marx describes as *"met de zijn kapitaal geaccumuleenk meerwaarde"* (*with its*

*capital accumulated surplus value*). The workers are those whose property and land have been seized by the capitalists. They were once peasants and small traders, but now all their possessions are completely gone except their labour, their bodies and their lives. The price of this labour is "subject" to the fluctuating prices in the labour market. The capitalist lives from extortion and the workers from their labour. This wage is due to the "iron law" of the labour market - it cannot pay for the labour that is put in (because of the fierce competition in the labour market and the fear of starving to death, the labourer is forced to accept the lowest possible wage).

The capitalist class, which is relatively smaller in number compared to the working class, uses "invisible weapons", such as schools, churches or mosques, and newspapers, as well as class tools such as the police, army, prisons, and justices. Parliament, mosques, churches, schools and newspapers have the power to sedate and weaken the hearts of the workers with poisonous education. When they are unable to do so, prisons, the police and the military are used.

Economic competition among capitalists led to the formation of companies. They can fight their isolated enemies. If a company in "desperate" competition cannot conquer its opponent, it tries to organise a compromise. The two companies, who were once enemies, now become one syndicate. Thus they can raise the prices of their goods at will, to the detriment of the buyers (poor workers and peasants).

So, a syndicate is a combination of several companies. However, the partners worked in their own way and were independent as usual. In order to increase their strength and centralise them under one leader for the economic struggle, a trust was formed. So, a syndicate has many chairmen, while a trust has only one, and the way it works, a trust can more thoroughly control the world market than a syndicate.

In the markets of Western nations, especially America, we see a number of charcoal mines, iron industries, oil refineries and shipping companies that were once fragmented now united in huge trusts, headed by trust magnates. We hear names like Morgan the King of Banks, Rockefeller the King of Oil, Carnegie the King of Steel and Ford the Lord of Automobiles.

In Germany we saw how the many trusts were tied together into one "joint trust". The iron, charcoal and paper factories, the ship and railway companies were all subordinated to the recently deceased Stinnes. In this



way, Stinnes was able to control the prices of raw materials and manufactured goods, as well as the transport and advertising costs of these manufactured goods. The formation of trusts like this was imitated by banks that merged themselves from companies to syndicates, from syndicates to trusts and from trusts to combined trusts.

In order to continue earning interest, it appoints and dismisses heads of industry, statesmen and politicians, and directly or indirectly pays or bribes them. With the trust, the leadership of the bank company is placed in the hands of several bankers. Thus, it is the bankers who are essentially at the head of industry, transport, agriculture commerce, the state and politics, in short, of modern capitalist society.

In light of the previously mentioned, it appears to us that the more capitalism advances, the fewer the wealthy and the greater the number of poor workers. In the advanced capitalistic countries such as Britain, Germany and America, the number of educated and skilled workers is not less than 75% of the population. The number of artisans but capitalised and productive is getting smaller and smaller. Their power and wealth are growing. The number of workers, who own nothing, is growing, and so is their organisation. The conflict between the stakeholders and the poor workers intensifies over time and eventually leads to social revolution.

In Indonesia, the process of capitalisation is hardly different from the outline described above. Indonesian merchants and small enterprises have long since disappeared from society.

Several million people now live in a state of hunger. They are landless and resourceless, with no hope for the future. Control over factory land, transport equipment and trade agencies is now all concentrated in the hands of a few syndicates such as Avros, Suikersyndikaat, Handelsvereniging Amsterdam and others. The leadership of these large syndicates is in the hands of a few capitalists.

The social conflict between capitalists and workers in Indonesia is - for one reason or another - sharper than meets the eye. The huge profits from sugar, oil, rubber, coffee, tea etc. flow mostly to Europe, into the pockets of the Dutch, and a small part also returns to Indonesia, but not as an increase in the wages of the workers, but as an addition to the existing "capital", to make it a new "means of exploitation". Most of the profits stayed in the Netherlands as salaries or pensions for Dutch employees.

The plight of Indonesian workers can only be improved by raising their wages in proportion to the price of daily necessities. With the opening of several large plantations, some workers or unemployed people have found work, but on the other hand, their land has been leased and sold, and many farmers have lost their property. In addition, due to the expansion of capitalisation, everyday goods have risen in price. It is undeniable that the rise in the price of goods in the past ten years has not kept pace with the rise in workers wages.

Thus the Indonesian people are getting poorer and poorer because their salaries remain as they have been (in fact, they are often lowered), while goods are getting more and more expensive. And with competition becoming more and more intense, because the number of people is increasing rapidly and strongly, there is less certainty of finding work.

If the capitalists were Indonesians, the poverty and squalor would not have been so grievous because the remaining huge profits might have been passed on to the people. Workers' salaries might have been raised; teaching, people's cooperatives, industrialisation and healthcare might have been attended to and improved. Now none of this is happening, as the vast profits continue to be transported out of Indonesia.

Apart from this draining process, social conflicts are sharpened by national differences and all that goes with them. The capitalists speak a different language from the people and the government is not a government of the people. The capitalists and the government profess other religions, have other morals and customs, and have different ideologies from the people. In the daily interactions between capitalists and workers, between the government and the people, these are very important. The Dutch capitalist does not know his workers; the Dutch government knows its people. It is not that he does not want to know the people.

Even if he had wanted to do so, it would not have been easy for the Dutch to delve into the hearts of these equatorial peoples because they had not prepared the necessary factors, such as education, the language of social relations and the trust of the people. For this reason, the Dutch, who are said to be 'polite', would often use foul language against the Indonesians. The Indonesians would not like the Dutch government. Just as the Philippines, which was not directly subjected to the rule of the American Governor-General and arguably did not suffer any hardship from American officials, is still demanding its independence, so too the Indonesians of the

South will continue to demand absolute and broad independence. Just as a human being does not like to be bullied and controlled by others, so do the people. They will eventually not allow themselves to be colonised or ruled by other nations.

It is up to us to see whether the opposition between capitalist Netherlands and workers' Indonesia will remain forever or only temporarily!

This opposition will gradually diminish if the present government, not the future one, makes major changes, economic, political and social improvements that improve the situation of all Indonesians.

This right can only be achieved by establishing new industries (cotton, rubber, machine factories, shipping, mining, etc.), opening up large farms and multiplying roads, establishing people's cooperatives with low interest rates, giving assistance and materials to the peasantry, land to former poor farmers, increasing the wages of workers and reducing working hours, reducing or abolishing taxes and increasing taxes on plantations or large estates, and industry into a communal property, i.e. the government, granting the widest possible electoral rights to the indigenous people, establishing a "true" people's representative from which a body fully responsible to the Indonesian people will be elected, abolishing all useless bureaucratic bodies, such as the *Raad van Indie*, *de Alt gemeene Secretaris* and others.

Of course it will never happen!

Not even half of it will happen. Even if Dutch imperialism were to suddenly abandon its "petty politics" and adopt real colonial politics, it would be too late, too late! Dutch imperialism has neither the aspirations, the courage nor the means to bring about the slightest meaningful change. It is too "daif" (weak) to do so and no modern native bourgeoisie can help it.

As for the "foreign capital" which is dotted with a few dollars from Wall Street, it is merely a few pebbles thrown to fill the deep gulf between Dutch imperialism and the Indonesian people.

Radical reforms like those in the Philippines can and will be carried out by America if it receives political power in Indonesia from the Netherlands. If this were the case, America would undoubtedly arrive in Indonesia in a short time with a few thousand million rupiahs. But it is impossible! Because it is against the interests and "honour" of the Netherlands. Because a large American capital in Indonesia would push Dutch capital to the side!

And if the finances are tied up, Dutch capital is meaningless (and the Dutch are forced to become puppets of Uncle Sam).

Of course the "*Meneerge*" won't! Last but not least, it would mean an increase in American economic and political power in a strategically important part of the Pacific. This would be vigorously opposed by the spiteful British and Japanese, and might lead to a long and devastating world war.

Therefore, for the little Dutch who are reluctant to perish, it is better to do as they please while they await their downfall. After all, the other colonisers (Britain, America and Japan) were better off letting the Netherlands to struggle with its disobedient colonies.

# Chapter 8

## Political Circumstances

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### 8.1 In Retrospect

"Politics" in Indonesia has never been "a common good", the common property of the people. The notion of statehood has never gone beyond a small clique of Hindu or half-Hindu colonisers.

As in most feudalistic societies in Indonesia, the government of the country is held by a king and his accomplices. The king, having successfully performed the role of the "hero", then appointed himself as the reigning king. His son, who could be dumber than a buffalo, would later replace his father as the lord of the land. This hereditary rule "vanishes" when a new "hero" comes along and overthrows the old one, making himself king of the land.

No constitution determines the coronation or impeachment of a king and his ministers, and specifies them carefully. All power and its sphere of influence rests on the king's violence and will, as well as the trust and servitude of the masses. Government of the people, for the people, by the people, as Lincoln said, has never been known in Indonesia.

Occasionally there is a king who is "fair" on the political stage. However, this is an exception, a fluke and an anomaly. There is nothing the people can do in the absence of such a king but to revolt. Indonesia has only known the rule of a few and has never known written laws.

The situation in Minangkabau<sup>7</sup> is slightly different. Government according to custom is entrusted to the representatives of the people, the datuk-datuk, the penghulu. They must rule according to certain laws. The supreme power is called "*mufakat*"<sup>8</sup>, which is obtained by legislation in a meeting.

Every meeting must be open to the fullest extent possible and according to established custom. Men and women at meetings have the fullest right to speak which shall not in any way be curtailed. Whether on local or national matters, "the law" reigns supreme.

However, such a situation only exists in Minangkabau, which is a small, remote area in the Indonesian Archipelago. For this reason, the people there were not much influenced by the Hindus and Arabs, in short, in terms of politics.

Despite the Dutch, if they want to treat the Indonesian people with the same respect as their peers, for example as in other parts of Indonesia, in drafting and executing laws and in forming and imposing governments, "the people must not interfere".

## Basic Minangkabau Law

*"Anak kemenakanaja kepada penghulu,  
Penghulu beraja kepada mufakat.  
Mufakat beraja kepada alur dan patut".*

*(Roughly translates to)*

*"The people follows the leaders,  
Leaders to the consensus,  
Consensus to customs and tradition"*

This was also the case in the kingdoms of Poko-Dato, Srivijaya, Majapahit and Mataram.

Because the people could not intervene in the government of the country, the East India Company was able to conquer or compromise with the kings

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<sup>7</sup>Minangkabau is an ethnic group residing in the highlands of West Sumatera.

<sup>8</sup>"Mufakat" is a traditional Indonesian term for "to reach a consensus".

of Indonesia, and gained power little by little, and finally the whole of Indonesia fell into its hands.

### **People's Representatives or Soviets**

During the Dutch colonisation, a social discourse was born that gradually called for a solution to the question of the organisation of the state but governance was still not necessarily parliamentary or Soviet.

Parliamentarianism in Western countries was born by the bourgeoisie when arbitrary rule was rampant everywhere and the bourgeoisie, with its advanced commerce and industry, felt that it was being hindered in expanding its enterprises by feudal lords: who were hindering it with various taxes and fees, while it was denied political rights. It was under such circumstances that the Magna Charta, Cromwellism and the French Revolution were born. Voltaire, the great leader of the bourgeoisie, then attacked the Catholic religion and its priests and preached "atheism" (denial of God).

Rousseau opposed autocracy with democracy and to oppose hereditary rule, he preached the "social contract", which is a government that contracts with the people. According to Rousseau's doctrine, a king should only rule as long as he acts in accordance with the contract; the people should oppose him if the contract is broken.

Because the French bourgeoisie felt that it lacked the strength to resist the rule of the king, the nobility and the clergy, it united with the revolutionary masses, the workers and peasants. However, these masses were not allowed to take power. They were to be used as cannon fodder in the bourgeois revolution, while power was to be held by the bourgeoisie. With the slogan of "Liberte, Egalite and Fraternite", now democracy, liberalism and parliamentarism, they were able to overthrow the feudalistic government.

After gaining political power, "bourgeois democracy" shows itself. Although in parliamentary states, such as England, France and America, every citizen is given the right to vote, the workers and the poor there (the largest number of people) are always unable to support their candidates in parliamentary elections because they are trapped under the influence of the bourgeois thought developed in schools, churches, newspapers, and above all, because they lack the means of propaganda (meeting rooms, newspapers and brochures, all of which are expensive).

The bourgeoisie, with its well-paid professors, journalists, priests and diplomats, can win parliamentary elections.

Since members of parliament hold office for three or four years, the relationship between the voter and the elected is very tenuous. They deal with the people only at election time, and that is what makes the representative a true bureaucrat. With the division of the Lower House and Upper House (the body that makes the laws) from the cabinet (the body that executes the laws), real power fell into the hands of offices in close contact with the banks. So, in the end, democratic principles and parliamentary rule were swallowed up by the big bank moguls (Morgan in America, Locheur in France, formerly Stinnes in Germany), that is "official democracy": formed by funds.

Thus, the real democracy of today becomes the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Cromwellism, Napoleonism and now Fascism) hiding behind the press, schools, churches and masked parliaments in the tranquillity of capitalism and real political power, like the economy, always lays in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

I have already described Sovietism and parliamentarism in the brochure "Parliament or Soviet" (printed in 1911), so I am only outlining the main points here.

In this age of proletarian movement and revolutions, the restless workers put forward all their opposition and stand against the rule of the bourgeoisie, just as the bourgeoisie overthrew the feudalists in the 100-year mental and physical struggle (1740-1848).

Communist economic order is contrasted with the capitalist order, workers' dictatorship with bourgeois dictatorship, Sovietism with Parliamentarianism.

Just as parliament is an invention of the bourgeoisie, the Soviets are an invention of the workers' dictatorship which, with the help of the peasantry, overcomes the bourgeoisie. Thus, the soviet is a political instrument in the hands of the workers, created before or during the revolution. It was a political state that turned capitalist society towards communism by nationalising all the means of production and organising all production and distribution in a communistic manner.



The economic, political and educational institutions set up during the dictatorship were used not only to weaken and destroy the bourgeoisie in the political, economic and ideological arena, but also to educate all the forces of society towards communism.

While the workers exercise dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, within the class itself there is already real democracy. It has real political power because it controls all the means of production and distribution. In addition, it will have all the means of propagating the revolutionary spirit, such as schools, newspapers and much more.

The Soviets sought to destroy the "bureaucracy" inherent in parliamentary arrangements. In order to achieve this goal, the following measures were taken.

1. The election cycle is shortened.
2. The relationship between the elector and the electorate shall be brought closer and the legislator and the executive shall be united and one authority shall be established, which shall both make and execute laws.
3. Representatives may be appointed and dismissed at any time.
4. The workers should be included in the government as much as possible.

The educated workers, who are supposed to be in charge of the government of the country because the bourgeoisie will always make an effort to fight for the defeat of the workers, and this they will certainly do by counter-revolution. They will be organised in the communist party.

Under these circumstances, political power will be extended to the organised workers and trade unions and eventually to the entire working class.

Accordingly, each revolutionary class should seize and retain all political power. For when political security in each country is established, economic enterprises can be carried out and, with them, real democracy.

Indonesia has never known "democracy". And in the absence of a strong native bourgeoisie, for the time being, Indonesia will not be acquainted with democracy. All efforts to achieve it will be unsuccessful, and it can be said that all such ideals - dictatorship - bourgeois democracy - are impossible.

Only the Indonesian working class can hold the dictatorship (if it stays conscious and organized). It controls economic life.

And today, the workers are one of the most organised classes in Indonesia. We shouldn't regret it if we skip the age of "deceptive democracy"!

The political stability of the Republic of Indonesia can be maintained by a worker's dictatorship whose revolutionary power is embodied in one "strong" revolutionary party. Over time political power can be extended to every Indonesian worker.

## 8.2 Our "People's" Council!

The work of a corrupt bureaucracy and great hypocrisy! Indeed, was it only with the Philistines in the past that we find such violence and deceit today?

Where are the people who stand behind the People's Council? And what has the luxurious People's Council done for the people? Among the 48 members, 20 are Indonesians and 28 are foreigners representing foreign capital. Under these circumstances, all the members' endeavours to win votes are futile.

Even if it were a real council, it could do nothing because all its advice could be thrown into the dustbin by the people in power (the People's Council is not a law-making body, but an advisory body).

The number of Indonesian members is too few and, therefore, they cannot express the will of the people. If we remember that the Netherlands, with a population of 7,000,000, has 100 members of the *Tweede Kamer*<sup>9</sup> (the Eerste Kamer is not included), Indonesia, with a population of 55,000,000, should have at least 600 members in parliament.

Among the 20 Indonesian members on the council, not one is truly a representative of the people or elected by the people, let alone for the people. Eight were appointed by the Governor-General and most of them were careerists, such as the representative from Sumatra, Demang Loetan, and from Java, Dawidjosewojo. Or they were the children of politicians as best exemplified by His Excellency Tuan Soetadi. The other members were

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<sup>9</sup>The "*Tweede Kamer*" is a lower house of representatives in the Netherlands.

elected by the gementee (PEB) meetings, the evidence of which is quite clear! There is no point in writing about all the rottenness of the Dutch bureaucracy in this book. Nor is it worthwhile for us revolutionaries to seriously criticise all the proposals discussed or accepted by the council. If we do not want to be deceived by the nice names and sweet promises of this government, we can summarise Dutch colonial policy as follows.

1. The 55,000,000 Indonesians have no say in politics.
2. The big capitalists rule through heartless bureaucrats and petty militarists.
3. The People's Council is "a blood sucking leech" attached to the back of the Indonesian people.

### **8.3 Hopes for the House of Representatives**

Is there any hope that Indonesia will one day have some kind of House of Representatives? The answer is a definite: "no". Establishing a House of Representatives during the current social and national struggle would mean the death of Dutch imperialism or the "destruction" of its political machine.

This must be known by every Indonesian!

This is not a question of the "maturity" or "ripeness" of the Indonesian nation but, as we have repeatedly pointed out in the course of this book, is due to the absence of a modern native bourgeoisie, whose economic interests are more or less the same as those of the imperialistic-capitalistic bourgeoisie.

If today the representatives of all or part of the Indonesian people were elected by Indonesians in a free election, they would immediately face a class problem. If they don't choose to deceive the electorate, their representatives should take up the question of economic, social and political improvements against big capital. These are not small improvements carried out slowly by bureaucrats, but radical changes carried out quickly and practically under the leadership and supervision of the people's representatives.

For example, thieves such as those in the Rice Company in Selat Jaran and other government companies should not be punished with "dishon-

ourable" dismissal as is usually done to petty thieves. Such gentlemen, who are on the people's payroll but ruin the people's enterprises, should all be hung "with honour".

If in the future the representatives of the people can make real reconciliation, the people will feel that they are materially and morally better off, and the question of the "flag" (colonisation or independence from the Netherlands) will be temporarily forgotten. Not because it is unimportant, but because major difficulties can be removed and political ideals can largely be achieved.

We will not discuss the form of government that will be established as described above. That is a matter of wishful thinking and the structure of the country's government is based on mere "theoretical considerations".

But the question is, will Dutch imperialism be able to make real compromises in the future? If we once again bear in mind the contradiction between the Dutch capitalists and the Indonesian workers, the absence of the native bourgeoisie, the financial weakness and the shortsightedness of Dutch imperialist politics, we can answer this question with "impossible"!

In conclusion, all the fuss about the change of government in Indonesia that is now being discussed by the Dutch intelligentsia and bureaucracy is a waste of time. If the Indonesian people do get a House of Representatives one day, it will not be a "gift from above" but a "strong pressure" from below.

# Chapter 9

## Revolution in Indonesia

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### 9.1 The High Probability of Revolution

There is no need to elaborate on the political, economic and social issues that might lead to revolution in Indonesia, as we have already explained them several times above. It is enough to draw the following conclusions.

1. Wealth and power have accumulated in the hands of a few capitalists.
2. The Indonesian people are all getting poorer, destitute, oppressed and subjugated.
3. Class and national contradictions are getting sharper and sharper.
4. The Dutch government is becoming more and more reactionary.
5. The Indonesian nation is becoming more revolutionary by the day and knows no peace.

Since the notion that the Dutch imperialists will suddenly become intelligent, ingenious and able to make compromises to the detriment of the big capitalists can be regarded as a fantasy in "The Story of a Thousand and One Nights", the revolutionary development will not be stifled. On the contrary, it is progressing faster and faster and an outbreak of revolution can be expected at any time.

Moreover, some of these revolutions have already been proven. The several rebellions that broke out on their own in Java and Sumatra during the 300 years of the "blessed" Dutch imperialism were the result of a clash

of classes and nationalities that had originally taken the form of religious rebellions. Also the political turmoil of the past 15 years, in the form of various incitements and actions and more clearly in the form of anarchist plots and actions in Java and the murder of Pamong Praja officials in West Sumatra which undermined the confidence in the invulnerability of Dutch imperialism, are all classified as the result of class and nationality conflicts.

However, a major clash between classes and nationalities of such a magnitude, breaking out solely because of the clash itself and of such a modern nature as a "revolution", has not yet occurred in Indonesia!

Eventually it will engulf the entire archipelago and erupt on its own.

## 9.2 The Emerging Nature of the Indonesian Revolution

What will the revolution look like? What characteristics will it exhibit if it erupts tomorrow or the day after? This is what we, as revolutionaries, must ask ourselves and answer at once, if we are to avoid the "wandering" politics of Douwes Dekker and Tjokroaminoto. According to the answer to that question, we forge the tools of revolution, namely our organisational programme and tactics.

The proper characterisation of Indonesian society is the most important prerequisite for obtaining the tools of revolution. It is also the first step towards the victory of our revolution.

If the analysis is imperfect or we are wrong with our predictions and conclusions, the victory will be uncertain or short-lived. We don't have horoscopes that can foresee future events the way an astrologer predicts a person's future life. However, with Marx and Lenin as guideposts, we can determine some of the outlines of the revolution in Indonesia (given the current level of capitalist development).

Certainly the revolution will be different from the "Moroccan Rebellion"<sup>10</sup>. This is particularly true because Indonesia has a higher level of productive power (industry, agriculture, transport and a large financial

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<sup>10</sup>Referring to the Rift War between berber tribes of northern Morocco and Spain from 1921-1926, joined by France in 1924.

base) than the small peasant and sheep-herding country of Morocco. Also Indonesia, especially Java, does not have inhabitable mountains and vast deserts where revolutionaries can hide for years and then at any time resume guerrilla warfare.

Furthermore, it will not be a genuine proletarian revolution like in Germany, Britain and America (where the population is mainly made up of proletarian workers) because Indonesian capital is still too young, infertile and weak. Therefore, our workers, when compared to the workers of the West, are far behind, both in quantity and quality. In addition, the conditions of the non-workers who will also participate in the revolution are still within the epoch of the bourgeoisie revolution and the national revolution.

Our revolution will also not be like the bourgeois revolution in France in 1789 because our bourgeoisie is still too weak and feudalism has been largely wiped out by Dutch imperialism. Nor will it equal the French Revolution of 1870 because we seem to have a more developed production forces, in addition to an excessive social contradictions.

It will also be different from the Russian Revolution whose feudalism can be said to be weak and whose young bourgeoisie has been greatly weakened by years of war, while the workers are young, happy and educated according to Lenin's principles. We must fight against Western imperialism even though it is small, it must not be ignored because it has tricks and likes to be the "servant" of mighty British imperialism.

In the end, it will not be a purely political revolution like the ones in India, Egypt and the Philippines, where the native bourgeoisie only seized political power (parliamentary power) because the national capitalists are strong and the intellectuals are more numerous than in Indonesia.

The Indonesian Revolution will be partly against the remnants of feudalism and partly against despotic Western imperialism. It is fuelled by the hatred of the Eastern nations for the Westerners who oppressed and desecrated them.

The heart of the revolution (at least in Java) must be formed by the workers of modern industry, enterprise and agriculture (factory and farm workers). The political bastions, especially the economy of Dutch imperialism, can only be beaten by the workers. Surrounding the workers are the petty bourgeoisie, who will go backwards and forwards (The bourgeoisie

will obey if they know they will win; even then, they will go backwards. Even if they really like to participate. Anything more than that is a "no" and should not be expected).

A victorious Indonesian Revolution will bring about the right economic, political and social changes at a time when capitalistic development is facing a crisis. If our workers remain active, they can play the most important role.



# Chapter 10

## The Tools of our Revolution

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10.1 Parties and Their Characteristics

10.2 Our National Programme

10.3 Party Duties and Organisation

# Chapter 11

## A Glimpse of the Independence Movement in Indonesia

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### 11.1 The Failure of the Bourgeois Party

Budi Utomo

National Indische Party

Sarekat Islam

### 11.2 What Now?

### 11.3 De Indonesische Studieclub

## Chapter 12

# Federation of the Republics of Indonesia

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## Chapter 13

### Dreams of a Revolutionary

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# Chapter 14

## Appendix : Draft for a Proletarian Programme in Indonesia

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### 14.1 Politics

1. Indonesia's immediate and absolute independence.
2. Establish a federation of republics of the various islands of Indonesia.
3. To immediately organize a national assembly, representing all sectors of people and religion throughout Indonesia.
4. To immediately grant full voting rights to the Indonesian population, both men and women.

### 14.2 Economy

1. Nationalize factories, and mines, such as coal, oil, and gold mines.
2. Nationalize forestries and large modern plantations such as sugar, rubber, tea, coffee, quinine, coconut, indigo, and casava plantations.
3. Nationalize transport and traffic equipment.
4. Nationalize large banks, corporations, and trading companies.

5. Electrification of the whole of Indonesia and establishing new industries with the help of the state, such as weaving mills, machinery, and shipping.
6. Establish people's cooperatives by providing cheap loans by the state.
7. Provide livestock and tools to the peasantry to improve their agriculture and establish public collective farms.
8. Moving large numbers of people at state expense from Java to the outer islands.
9. Distribute vacant land to the landless and poor peasants by providing financial assistance to cultivate the land.
10. Abolish feudal remnants and landed estates and distribute the land to poor unlanded peasants.

### **14.3 Social**

1. Set a minimum wage, seven hours of work and improve the working and living conditions of the workers.
2. Protect workers by recognising the workers' right to strike.
3. Workers get a share of the profits of big industries.
4. Set up workers councils in large industries.
5. Separate the state from the Church or Mosque and recognise religious freedom.
6. Provide social, economic and political rights to every Indonesian citizen, both men and women.
7. Nationalize large residences, build new residences and distribute residences to state workers.
8. Large amount of effort shall be used to fight against infectious diseases.

## 14.4 Education

1. Education is compulsory and provided free of charge to all Indonesian children up to the age of 17, with Indonesian as the main national language and English as the primary foreign language.
2. Abolish the current system of education and establish a new system, based directly on the needs of existing or prospective industries.
3. Improve and expand schools for artisanship, agriculture and commerce, and improve and expand technical colleges and schools for administrators.

## 14.5 Military

1. Abolish the imperialistic military and establish a people's militia to defend the Republic of Indonesia.
2. Abolish the rule of living in a fortress or camp and all rules that degrade rank-and-file soldiers, and allow them to live in the villages and in the houses that will be built for them, give them good treatment and increase their salary.
3. Granting rank-and-file soldiers the full right to organise and hold meetings.

## 14.6 Police and Judiciary

1. Separate the civil service, police and judiciary.
2. Give every person indicted the full right to defend themselves before a court of law against attacks and discharge the indicted person within 24 hours, if the evidence and witnesses are insufficient.
3. Every case having a valid ground shall be heard within five days in an open, orderly and proper court.

## 14.7 Action Programmes

1. Demand a seven-hour workday, minimum wage and better working conditions for the workers and their livelihoods.

2. Recognise Trade Unions and the right to strike.
3. Organising workers for economic and political rights.
4. Abolish *poenale sanctie*<sup>10</sup>
5. Abolish laws and regulations that oppress political movements, such as strike bans, press bans, meeting bans and teaching bans, and also recognise full freedom of movement.
6. Demand the right to demonstrate, reinforced by mass demonstrations throughout Indonesia against economic and political oppression, such as against tax legislation, and demanding the immediate release of political exiles; such mass action should be reinforced by general strikes and mass disobedience.
7. Demand the abolition of the *Volksraad Raad van Indie*<sup>11</sup> and the *Algemeene Secretaris*, and establish a National Assembly. A National Assembly from which a Workers' Council will be elected, responsible to the National Meeting.

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<sup>10</sup>The *poenale sanctie* (penal sanction) was a legal penalty in both Suriname and the Dutch East Indies. The *poenale sanctie* was a part of the *Koelie Ordonnantie* ('Coolie Ordinance') of 1880 and stipulated that a plantation-owner could punish his workers in any manner he saw fit, including fines.

<sup>11</sup>An advisory body for the colonial government made up mostly of dutch and indies nationals, not to be confused with the *volksraad* which was a later institution borned out of the ethical policy that allowed educated aristocrats of the Indonesian population to participate.