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No. 1185-85 GS/158

Onderwerp:

Nieuw Guinea.

G E H E I M.

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Ik heb de eer Uwer Excellentie bijgaand ter kennisneming te doen toekomen afschrift van een schrijven d.d. 22 April j.l. met bijlagen van de Hoge Commissaris voor Australië, A.R. Cutler, aan de Secretaris Generaal van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken alhier, betreffende Nederlands Nieuw Guinea. Ik moge in dit verband verwijzen naar een langs andere weg door mij terzake gedane mededeling.

Op 26 April j.l. vond op mijn verzoek een besprekking plaats met mijn Australische collega, omdat ik uit een bepaalde aanwijzing meende te moeten afleiden, dat deze speciale aandacht besteedde aan het Nieuw Guinea-vraagstuk. Deze veronderstelling bleek juist te zijn.

De Britse Hoge Commissaris, Sir Cecil Syers, die ik op het Australische Hoge Commissariaat aantrof en op mijn verzoek bleef deelnemen aan het gesprek, heeft van de Premier, Sir John Kotelawala, vernomen, dat Indonesië de kwestie van Nederlands Nieuw Guinea zou voorbrengen op de op morgen aanvangende, alhier te houden Premiers-conferentie. Hij deed hiervan mededeling aan zijn Commonwealth-collega, die op zijn beurt rapporteerde aan zijn regering. De Australische regering gaf opdracht tot een démarche bij de regering van Ceylon.

Ter ondersteuning van zijn Australische collega, heeft Sir Cecil Syers daarna met de Premier in dezelfde zin het ondernemige vraagstuk besproken, uiteraard met weglating van het vraagstuk betreffende de "security and defence" van Australië.

Sir John, die zoals dezerzijds gemeld gunstig reageerde op beide démarches - hij verklaarde zich bereid behandeling ter conferentie van het vraagstuk tegen te gaan - bleek vooral begrip te tonen voor het argument, dat overgang van Nieuw Guinea van Nederland naar Indonesië slechts zou betekenen "exchanging one form of colonialism for another". Hieraan werd door de Australische Hoge Commissaris mondeling toegevoegd, dat deze ruil voor de bevolking van Nieuw Guinea zonder twijfel een verslechtering zou betekenen. Hiermede was Sir John het eens; zijn respect voor de prestaties van de Indonesische regering is, zoals dezerzijds reeds eerder gemeld, niet groot.

Aan Zijne Excellentie de Heere
Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken

te

's-Gravenhage.

De Heer -

GEHEIM ARCHIEF	
In doss. no. G.	993
Classificatie no.	07.124
No. Openb. doss.	993

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GEZANTSCHAP
DER NEDERLANDEN

No.

Vervolgblad Nr. 1
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d.d. 27 April 1954

De Heer Cutler verzocht mij met nadruk de door hem verstrekte inlichtingen als strikt persoonlijk te willen behandelen. Hij meent, en m.i. ten rechte, dat het op de weg van zijn regering ligt Uwe Excellentie in te lichten.

De Heer Cutler merkte tegenover mij nog op, dat de beide notities over Nieuw Guinea met grote spoed zijn opgemaakt. Hij sprak de hoop uit, dat hiermede een correct beeld is gegeven van de feitelijke positie.

ds/HG

De Zaakgelastigde,

D.M. de Smit -

(D.M. de Smit)

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GEHEIM ARCHIEF

In doss. no. G. 993
Classificatie no. 07.194
No. Openb. doss. 993

Australian High Commission,
COLOMBO

22nd April, 1954.

My dear de Soyza,

I refer to the conversation I had with the Prime Minister and yourself recently concerning Australia's attitude towards Dutch New Guinea.

If by any chance this subject is raised at the forthcoming Asian Prime Ministers' Conference, we feel that we should like Ceylon informed of our views, but on the other hand we would naturally prefer that the subject is not raised as it has been a somewhat delicate one between Indonesia and ourselves. The Australian policy is very friendly disposed towards Indonesia, but on the question of Dutch New Guinea we have strong views, for reasons which I am sure are appreciated by Ceylon.

In brief, we can see no point in exchanging one form of colonialism for another, and feel that the future of Dutch New Guinea should be maintained at status quo until the inhabitants themselves are sufficiently advanced to indicate their own views. We feel that the Netherlands have shown a willingness to accept a proper responsibility for these people by voluntarily bringing Dutch New Guinea under the Charter of the United Nations. Australia feels considerable doubt that Indonesia has the ability to adequately develop Dutch New Guinea and accept responsibility for the welfare of its inhabitants. If Dutch New Guinea were controlled by Indonesia, the domestic instability of the latter could conceivably admit of infiltration into Dutch New Guinea which could be a risk to Australia's security and defence.

I am attaching to this memorandum a brief survey of the geographical and historical background of New Guinea, and a map illustrating this and the boundaries of Dutch New Guinea, the Trust Territory of New Guinea, and Papua. Also attached is a brief summary of the political position and Australia's views in relation to Dutch New Guinea.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) A.R. Cutler
High Commissioner

G. de Soyza, Esq.,
Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of External Affairs,
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

I. The Round Table Conference.

1. Throughout the period 1945 to early 1949, the future of West New Guinea was not an important issue in Netherlands-Indonesian relations. It was at the three-cornered discussions at Batavia in May 1949 between the Republican, Federalist, and Netherlands delegations that the question first assumed major significance.

*Relevant
second row
Anak Agung
Brahma*

2. At the Round Table Conference which met under the auspices of the United Nations Commission for Indonesia towards the end of that year the question whether West New Guinea should or should not be part of Indonesia at the transfer of sovereignty proved to be one of the most contentious issues. The Netherlands delegation insisted that West New Guinea be excluded from Indonesia, while both Indonesian delegations demanded its inclusion. The Republicans (notably Hatta) did not, however, feel as strongly on this issue as the Federalists. In order to permit the Conference to conclude successfully within the agreed time limit, the United Nations Commission for Indonesia finally proposed a compromise which was agreed to by the parties and was formulated as Article 2 of the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty. The operative part of this article is :-

"it is decided....that the status quo of the residency of New Guinea shall be maintained with the stipulation that within a year from the date of transfer of sovereignty (i.e. 27th December, 1949) to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia the question of the political status of New Guinea be determined through negotiations between the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands."

3. In an exchange of letters with the Netherlands delegation, which became part of the record of the Conference, the two Indonesian delegations agreed that the clause "the status quo of the residency of New Guinea shall be maintained" meant "through continuing under the Government of the Netherlands."

4. Further formal discussions took place between the Netherlands and Indonesia at the Hague in December 1950, and again in December 1952, but no agreed solution was found.

II. Summary of Australian Viewpoint.

(a) Australia recognizes Netherlands sovereignty over West New Guinea. Dutch New Guinea was not included in the agreement for the transfer of sovereignty and, from the beginning of the negotiations which led up to that agreement, the Dutch made it clear that they did not regard its disposition as one of the questions under discussion.

(b) Indonesia has no real claims to the territory. From the legal point of view, it is clear that the general intention of the Round Table Conference is governed by Article 2 of the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty, namely, that Netherlands sovereignty should continue until modified by agreement among the parties to the agreement.

(c)

(c) The population of West New Guinea is quite different in ethnic origin, language, and culture from that of Indonesia. Whereas the peoples of Indonesia are of Indo-Malayan culture and language, the inhabitants of West New Guinea are Papuans. (They have been so described by Indonesian spokesmen). West New Guinea has far greater links with Australian New Guinea than with the Indonesian islands.

(d) The separate and distinct character of West New Guinea was recognised by the Dutch under the Netherlands East Indies Administration, so that West New Guinea has never, in effect, been a part of what has now become Indonesia. The distinct position of the territory was also recognised by the inclusion in the South Pacific Commission of the Netherlands as the power administering Dutch New Guinea.

(e) By its geographical situation, the island of New Guinea is vital to the defence of Australia. Our experience during both World Wars of the German and subsequently the Japanese threat in New Guinea illustrates its importance. Because of this, and also because of the links between Dutch New Guinea and the rest of the island, Australia has a legitimate interest in it, and the right to participate in any discussions affecting its future status.

(f) No change of the status of the territory should take place without regard to the interests of the native inhabitants. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for Indonesia, which has the most complicated economic and other problems to solve in its present territories, to ensure the proper administration of West New Guinea and its political and economic development.

(g) Disagreement on the New Guinea question should not be allowed to affect Australia's relations generally with Indonesia. Australia desires close and friendly relations with Indonesia, and will do its best to secure them.

III. Netherlands Position.

It may be appropriate to mention that on 30th October, 1952, the Netherlands Government issued a statement which said:

"The Government considers general political discussions an opportune moment to clarify generally, where necessary, the standpoint of the present Cabinet with regard to New Guinea, as expressed in the Speech from the Throne.

The standpoint of the Cabinet is that sovereignty, de jure and de facto, over this overseas territory, is with the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As a signatory of the Charter of the United Nations the Kingdom took upon itself the obligations contained in Article 73 of the Charter to promote the development of this country and its inhabitants, to consider this administration as a sacred trust and, in accordance to Article 73e of the Charter, to report to the United Nations regularly on this; all this to

be done

be done until such time that the inhabitants of New Guinea are able to decide themselves about their future.

The Government sees no point in a resumption of discussions with Indonesia on the status of New Guinea. The Government is however willing, in the event of talks on New Guinea, to assist in removing possible misconceptions and consequent anxiety on the part of the Indonesian Government with regard to Dutch intentions in respect of that area. The Government is equally prepared to study suggestions which, without infringing upon Netherlands sovereignty over New Guinea, could contribute towards any improvements in relations between the two countries.

The Government cannot consider relinquishing New Guinea or restricting Netherlands sovereignty over that area or accepting a mandate."