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AMBASSADE DER NEDERLANDEN

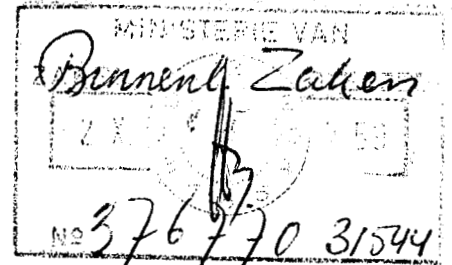
ROYAL NETHERLANDS  
EMBASSY

No. 1054/168.

Canberra, 21 september 1959.

Onderwerp:

De idee van een Melanesische  
federatie.



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Met verwijzing naar voorgaande correspondentie over bovenstaand onderwerp, heb ik de eer Uwer Excellentie hiernevens afschrift aan te bieden van een voordracht, welke de bekende Australische advocaat, de heer J.R.Kerr, Q.C., op 8 september j.l. gehouden heeft voor de Rotary Club te Sydney.

Na zijn visie te hebben gegeven op het (politieke) standpunt met betrekking tot Westelijk Nieuw-Guinea, van de Aziatische en Afrikaanse landen, bepleit Mr.Kerr het voeren van een "morally sound policy" for West New Guinea", welke niet als "koloniaal" bestempeld kan worden.

Alles moet worden gedaan om te voorkomen dat Westelijk Nieuw-Guinea in Indonesische handen komt en om dit te bereiken moeten Australië en Nederland eendrachtig blijven samengaan bij het bepalen van het beleid voor (geheel) Nieuw-Guinea. Australië dient de Nederlandse politiek te volgen, welke - volgens Mr.Kerr - ten doel heeft om zo spoedig mogelijk een "educated élite and an educated Melanesian leadership within 20 years" te vormen.

Dit is de aanloop tot de konklusie: "We must "sell to the world the idea of a future Federation of Melanesia as a union of Dutch, Australian and British Territories in the New Guinea area. We must do everything in our power to win such a State and its leaders to Western notions."

Bovenstaande ideeën heeft Mr.Kerr reeds bij vroegere gelegenheden gelanceerd, evenals zijn mening dat een "crash programme" moet worden opgesteld om een en ander te kunnen realiseren.

-Geheel-

Zijner Excellentie  
de Minister van Binnenlandse Zaken,  
Directie N.N.G.,  
'S-GRAVENHAGE.

c.c. Hr.Ms.Ambassadeur, Canberra (2x)  
Gouverneur N.N.G., Hollandia (2x)  
Ned.Liaison Officer, Port Moresby.

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# AMBASSADE DER NEDERLANDEN

ROYAL NETHERLANDS  
EMBASSY

No. ....

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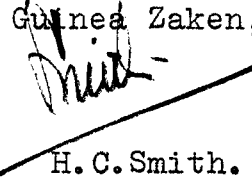
Vervolg Brief No:1054/168.

Geheel nieuw is echter zijn suggestie om een "Royal Commission" on New Guinea policy" in het leven te roepen, alsmede zijn gedachte om eventueel een beroep op de Wereldbank en dergelijke internationale instellingen te doen om het voor de ontwikkeling van Nieuw-Guinea op te stellen programma te kunnen financieren.

Ik moge mij bij het weergeven van de inhoud van de voordracht van Mr.Kerr tot bovenstaande bepalen. De vooraanstaande Australische bladen hebben een vrij uitvoerig verslag van deze voordracht gegeven en deze over het algemeen gunstig becommentariëerd. In "The Sydney Morning Herald" van 18 september j.l. was opgenomen een hierbij in afschrift gevoegde "letter to the editor" van Mr.J.Hohnen, Managing Director van "The New Guinea Goldfields Ltd" te Wau, en (benoemd) lid van de Legislative Council te Port Moresby. De heer Hohnen bestempelt de idee van een Melanesische federatie als onpractisch (zonder dit te motiveren), doch sluit zich aan bij de suggestie van Mr.Kerr om een "commissie van onderzoek" in het leven te roepen, waarbij hij - en passant - een grotere vertegenwoordiging zowel van autochtonen als Europeanen in de Legislative Council bepleit. Tegen grotere Europese vertegenwoordiging in de Council heeft Mr.Kerr ernstige bezwaren, wat uit zijn eveneens in afschrift hierbij gevoegde "letter to the editor" in "The Sydney Morning Herald" van 21 september j.l. moge blijken.

Uit de over dit onderwerp gevoerde correspondentie moge blijken, dat Mr.Kerr zijn ideeën over de politieke toekomst van Nieuw-Guinea regelmatig naar voren brengt voor een publiek, wat beschouwd kan worden als de representante van de Australische intellectuele bovenlaag. Het is niet te veel gezegd, dat in deze kringen een toenemende sympathie voor de ideeën van Mr.Kerr kan worden geconstateerd.

De Attaché voor Nieuw-  
Guinea Zaken,

  
H.C.Smith.

Passions in Asia and Africa today are aroused by nationalism and self-determination and against imperialism and colonialism. Against this background of felling Communist and anti-Communist solutions for the problems of under-developed areas are proposed and fought about.

There is no possibility of winning Asian and African support for any policy for the New Guinea area which is not based upon the notions of nationalism and self-determination.

At the present time Asian and African support is given to Indonesia in her claims for West New Guinea. This attitude is nourished by anti-imperialist and anti-colonial reactions to the Dutch and those who support them. No change is possible in this state of affairs which is not based upon the idea of self-determination for the New Guinea peoples. Bearing in mind their primitive situation, self-determination for them can rest only upon a nationalist movement encouraged and fostered by us, fed by Western ideas and by our political and economic help. In this way we can counter propaganda that our motives are imperialist and colonialist and cultivate a situation in which Western ideas rather than Communist ideas may grow in Melanesia.

So far we have done very little along these lines. We have tried rather to prevent the emergence of a nationalist movement in New Guinea by refraining from creating there the kind of educated élite which Britain has long since created in her territories.

In the context of Asian support for Indonesia there is fear in many quarters in Australia that the United States, in its eagerness to prevent Indonesia from becoming a Communist State, may abandon its neutrality on the issue of Dutch New Guinea. Some believe that America may take the view that incorporation of Dutch New Guinea into Indonesia may be definitive in defeating or weakening Communism in Indonesia by enabling the present Government to achieve a signal victory on that dramatic question.

In the debate in the House of Representatives in February of this year, after the visit of Dr. Subandrio, Opposition speakers indicated that they believed that the United States and, indeed, the United Kingdom had put pressure upon the Australian Government to recede from its policy of collaboration with the Netherlands and had led Indonesia to believe that she can expect to be given Dutch New Guinea as an aid in the stabilisation of an Indonesian Government not controlled by the Communist Party.

It is unlikely that any such development has taken place, and our diplomacy aims at preventing it. Nevertheless the point of view is often put forward plausibly by supporters of Indonesia.

The argument was advanced by Dr. Mohammed Hatta in April last year in an article in the American journal "Foreign Affairs". His anti-communism ensures that he is listened to attentively on these matters. He said that Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea is backed by every Indonesian Party without exception but the most demanding voice, apart from the President, Dr. Soekarno, is that of the Communist Party. He claims that the United States policy of silence and neutrality and the Dutch and Australian attitude of opposition to Indonesia, though all three countries are equally afraid of the spread of Communism in South East Asia, are in fact strengthening Communism and helping it spread. He argued that to concede the Indonesian claim would weaken the Communist Party in Indonesia.

Throughout the Afro-Asian bloc the Indonesians have strong support, both from Communist and non-Communist countries. American desire

to appease non-Communist Asian opinion and to strengthen a non-Communist government in Indonesia and American anti-colonialist sentiments could conceivably lead to difficulties on the New Guinea question unless we have a morally sound policy for West New Guinea which cannot be attacked in the familiar terms of current anti-colonialism. Such a policy is available and can be very strongly apposed to Indonesian policy which, on its face, will split Melanesia and deny the future right of self-determination to a united Melanesian people.

Our policy has been to support the Dutch in their stand on West New Guinea and to collaborate with them in evolving a policy for the whole New Guinea area. This has attracted Asian opposition to us. We, like the Dutch, are in Asian eyes a colonial power and Dutch-Australian collaboration on the future of New Guinea is suspect in Asia as mere colonial window-dressing.

The policy we have followed, and reaffirmed after Dr. Subandrio's visit, has been based upon ultimate self-determination for the peoples of the Dutch and Australian territories and, in the meantime, the prevention of the emergence of barriers to the political unity of those territories should their inhabitants wish to achieve it. This policy is based upon the ethnological and geographic affinity of the territories and their people and is to be carried out by continuous consultation between the Dutch and ourselves, both on the policy and administrative levels. It is supported both by the Government and Opposition parties in Australia.

In order to resist the assertion that this policy is mere colonial double-talk we must demonstrate by actions that we are really serious and intend the Melanesians in our Territories and the Dutch territories to have their independence in due course. We should underwrite politically the slogan "Melanesia for the Melanesians". This means that we cannot drift on indefinitely with slow uniform development in our own territories. We must adopt the Dutch policy of bring into existence as quickly as possible an educated élite. The Dutch intend to have an educated Melanesian leadership within 20 years demanding Melanesian self-determination and freedom and, they hope, demanding freedom from Indonesia in the name of their own nationalism. We cannot continue, in our territories, to prevent the emergence of a similar élite. We need a crash programme to overcome as quickly as possible the problems caused by the lack of a democratic Melanesian nationalist movement.

The dangers of such a programme are clear enough. Such a leadership may ultimately turn out to be anti-Dutch and anti-Australian. The Minister is opposed to it because it may unleash native demagogues and foster black fascism. But wise leadership could avoid this outcome as the British have succeeded in avoiding the worst excess of anti-British sentiment in many former colonies. We cannot avoid the emergence of some kind of nationalist movement and leadership and opposition to its growth will ensure its fundamental enmity, whereas adoption of modern British methods has every chance of winning Melanesian friendship.

To neutralise Asian opposition and to prevent changes in American policy we must move as quickly as possible (though much time will be necessary) towards political power for Melanesians. We must not give political power to white settlers despite current clamour. We must kill all aspirations towards continued white supremacy. We must sell to the world the idea of a future Federation of Melanesia as a union of Dutch, Australian and British Territories in the New Guinea area. We must do everything in our power to win such a State and its leaders to Western notions.

The finance for such a venture will doubtless be very considerable and perhaps beyond Dutch-Australian resources. We will have to conduct thorough economic surveys and work out the costs of sound over-all development plans which at present do not exist. The recent United

Nations Mission said in its report.:

"During its discussions with the Administrator in Port Moresby and with the Minister of State for Territories in Canberra the Mission was struck by the absence of any comprehensive and integrated development plan. In the absence of such a plan the Mission does not feel that it is possible to make the best use of the available finance and it therefore urges the Administering Authority to consider formulating a plan of this kind and basing its expenditure upon it."

Perhaps a Royal Commission on New Guinea policy would be the best and most impartial way to open up informed national discussion in Australia and to get balanced solutions. If it is truly beyond our economic resources to underwrite a Federation of Melanesia we should, as visiting United Nations Missions have recommended, call upon the World Bank and similar international bodies for help.

We have, in Melanesian self-determination and unity, an unanswerable moral argument which Asia will come to understand if we genuinely promote it. It is a sound method for resisting Communist encroachment in Melanesia. We should not succumb to Dr. Hatta's arguments and give West New Guinea to Indonesia as an anti-Communist measure. It would only establish the Indonesian Communist Party on the New Guinea mainland and lead to a so-called "free" Melanesian movement in which Melanesian unity would be used against us. A truly free, democratic Melanesia in friendship with Australia is what we should aim at and seek to get established with the aid of an educated leadership, as soon as the great difficulties in our way permit.

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