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LETTER DATED 16 JANUARY 1949 FROM THE COMMITTEE OF GOOD OFFICES ON THE  
INDONESIAN QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL  
TRANSMITTING A REPORT CONCERNING THE EXPERIENCES OF  
REPUBLICAN INTERNEES SINCE 19 DECEMBER 1948

15 January 1949.

Sir,

Following our telegraphic Report (S/1213) of 16 January 1949,  
concerning the Committee's visit to Bangka, we have the honour to forward  
herewith the Report submitted by the Chairman of the Republican delegation  
covering the experiences of Republican internees since 19 December, referred  
to in paragraph 7 of the Committee's Report.

We have the honour, etc.

(Signed) R. Eerremans (Belgium)  
Chairman.

T. K. Critchley (Australia)

R. Lisle (United States)

REPORT BY DR. MOHD. ROEM, CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN DELEGATION FOR THE  
COMMITTEE OF GOOD OFFICES

The part of this report which concerns events at Kaliurang from December 19, 1948, till December 22, 1948, is based on my own experiences, as I was there at that time to accompany the Committee of Good Offices. From December 22 till December 31, 1948, I was interned at the Palace of the President at Jogyakarta. The account of events at the Palace from December 19, till December 31, 1948, is based on the statements of Dr. A. G. Pringgodigdo, State Secretary, who was there during this period. Further, this report concerns my experiences in internment on the Island of Bangka, where I was brought with the Vice President, Dr. Hatta, and a small group of other persons on December 31, 1948. This report also includes many events of which I heard from people who were interned with me in the President's Palace.

The Dutch Army, which had landed at Maguwo on December 19, 1948, began to attack President Soekarno's Palace at about 2 p.m. that same day. The President's bodyguard at first resisted, but at the order of the President a party went to the Dutch carrying a white flag to inform them that the President's bodyguard would no longer offer resistance. Thereupon a Dutch officer, Lieutenant Colonel Overbeek, came to inform the President that he and all the people who were in the Palace at the time were interned and were not allowed to leave. He asked the President to give his word of honour that he would remain there and the President agreed. On that same day, the Vice-President, Dr. Mohd. Hatta and his family were also interned.

On Monday morning, December 20, 1948, Lieutenant Bakker came to the President to inform him that he was to be taken for a meeting with Major General Meyer. In the afternoon, Captain Vosveld took the President by jeep to Dutch headquarters. According to the President, he was asked at that meeting to order the TNI to cease fire. The President, however, replied that as a prisoner he was not in a position to do so. General Meyer declared that the President was not a prisoner but that he was only under house arrest, whereupon the President replied that this amounted to the same thing.

On Wednesday, December 22, 1948, at about 9 a.m. Captain Vosveld came with the message that the following five people had to prepare to leave Jogyakarta: (1) President Soekarno, (2) Vice-President Mohd. Hatta, (3) St. Sjahrir, advisor of the President, (4) Dr. Assaat, Chairman of the KNIP (Central National Indonesian Committee - Provisional People's Representative Body of the Republic), who had attended the Cabinet meeting at the Palace of the President on December 19, and who was also taken prisoner, and (5) Dr. A. G. Pringgodigdo, State Secretary.

/Not long

Not long afterwards Hadji Agus Salim, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Air Commodore Suriadarma, Chief of the Indonesian Air Force, were also brought to the Palace of the President and were taken together with the five people above mentioned to the airfield at Maguwo and thence by aircraft to the airfield at Bangka. There the President, H. A. Salim and St. Sjahrir were separated from the others. Afterwards we learned that these three were taken to Brastagi. Vice-President Mh. Hatta and the others were taken to Menumbing, a small place on the hills near Muntok (Bangka).

On Monday, December 20th, at about 3 p.m. the Dutch army arrived at Kaliurang. The members of the Republican Delegation and the Delegation staff, who were at the Delegation Office and in a certain house ("P"), were summoned to the house where the Dutch Commander had established himself, to have their names taken. Before this house I saw how the male part of the Indonesian population of Kaliurang were collected. They were ordered to sit down cross-legged in the middle of the road. I saw, too, how Dr. Roosdiono and Paul Hakim (members of the Indonesian Delegation Secretariat) had to sit on the ground while Dutch soldiers were having their meal at the Hotel Kaliurang. The other members of the Republican Delegation and the Delegation staff were not treated in this way. Afterwards Dr. Roosdiono and Paul Hakim joined us. We were all ordered into the house where we were allowed to sit on chairs. After our names had been taken we were taken back to the Delegation Office.

When the military action began, I, as the only member of the Delegation at Kaliurang, was ordered by the Vice-President to stay there with Dr. A. K. Pringgodigdo, an adviser, in order to be with the GOC. The other members of the Delegation staff who remained at Kaliurang were those who lived at Djakarta but had not been allowed by the Dutch to return to their homes in September 1948.

The next morning the Delegation Office was searched and all typewriters and radio sets taken away. On Wednesday, December 22, 1948, we were taken in a truck to Terbang Taman No. 11-A, Jocja, which was apparently occupied by a part of the Dutch Military Intelligence Service. There we were told that we might choose a place for ourselves and that we must give our address.

I was the only person who was then taken to the President's Palace. My wife, who had accompanied me all the time at Kaliurang, was allowed to return home. However, as my house at 17 Sagan, Jocja, was already occupied by the Dutch Army, my family was taken to the family of Natsir (Minister of Information) at 18 Sagan, Jocja; H. A. Salim's family, which was forced to leave its own house at Terban Taman 12, was also taken there. Consequently, Mr. Natsir's house was over-crowded. My wife therefore went with me to the President's Palace, where she stayed for some time. At Terban Taman 11-a,

all the archives of the Republican Delegation and my own papers which, for the greater part dealt with the negotiations, were taken by the Dutch. The Dutch officers present were: (1) Captain Vosveld, (2) Captain Treffers, (3) Lieutenant Bakker, (4) Mr. Biegert, whose military rank I do not know.

Arriving at the Palace of the President, I found:

- (1) Mrs. Soekarno and the other members of the President's family,
- (2) Mrs. Mohd. Hatta and the other members of the family,
- (3) Dr. Ali Sastroamidjojo, Minister of Education and Deputy Chairman of the Republican Delegation, who had been interned at the Palace since the 20th December,
- (4) Dr. Laoh, Minister of Public Works, also interned from December 20, 1948,
- (5) Mr. Kusnan, Minister for Social Affairs, interned as from December 20,
- (6) Prof. Asikin, who was already at the Palace before the beginning of the military action, as he was to accompany the President to India as the latter's private physician,
- (7) Mr. Sumarto, Deputy Chief of the Republican Police,
- (8) Dr. Icksan, Ass. Secretary of State and his family, whose dwelling place was the President's Palace,
- (9) Dr. Ratmoko, Ass. Secretary of State and his family. He had to move to the Palace of the President as his house, which was in front of the Palace, was occupied by the Dutch,
- (10) Mr. Mutahar, member of the State Secretariat,
- (11) Mr. Memed, Commissary of the State Police,
- (12) Mr. Nazir Pamuntjak, high official of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who had already been appointed Republican Representative in India as the successor of Dr. Sudarsono,
- (13) Mr. Wangsawidjaja, Secretary of the Vice-President,
- (14) Dr. Saubari, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Finance,
- (15) Mr. Purubojo Kolopaking, Patih (Deputy Regent) on detachment at Djambi, who had been summoned to Jocja by the Government.

Also at the Palace was the staff of the President's household, making a total, including children, of about one hundred persons.

As the prisoners were not allowed to leave the Palace and were guarded by the Dutch military police, no communication with people outside the Palace was allowed. During my stay, other high Republicans were sent to the Palace, viz:

- (1) Dr. Leimena, Minister of Public Health and Chairman of the Security Committee of the Republican Delegation. He had been taken from his house.

/(2) Mr. Mohd.

- (2) Mr. Mohd. Natsir, Minister of Information. He had been taken from the hospital where he had been nursed for several days. At the time he seemed to have recovered his health.
- (3) Dr. Djuanda, Minister of Communications and Chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee of the Republican Delegation. He had been taken from his house.
- (4) Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, member of the Republican High Advisory Council and leader of the Taman-Siswa Educational Institute. He had been taken from his home.
- (5) Mr. Sewaka, Governor of West Java. He had been removed from the prison at Wirogunan, Jooja.
- (6) Dr. Ratulangi, Advisor of the Republican Delegation, ex-Republican Governor of Gelebes, who had been interned by the Dutch on the Island of Serui.
- (7) Dr. Latuharhary, Member of the Republican Delegation.

In the period from December 22 till 31, 1948, the following people left the Palace of the President:

- (1) Mr. Sumarto,
- (2) Mr. Memed,
- (3) Mr. Mohd. Natsir,
- (4) Dr. Ratmoko and family, who were permitted to live outside the Palace,
- (5) Prof. Asikin, who was taken home to Solo,
- (6) The family of Mr. Iksan and Mr. Mutahar, who according to Mrs. Iksan, were to be taken to Semarang,
- (7) Mr. Wangsawidjaja, who was allowed to go home.

I have not been able to find out where the three first-mentioned persons were taken. Before they left they had been asked whether they were willing to work with the Dutch. Mr. Sumarto had replied that the question of cooperating with the Dutch was a matter which the Government of the Republic was trying to solve by negotiation.

Food and medicines were sufficient. We were allowed to listen to the radio and read Dutch newspapers such as De Locomotief and Het Bataviaas Nieuwsblad. Dr. Ali Sastroamidjojo and Mr. Kusnan told me their families were also ordered to leave their houses and that they were given very short notice to make preparations. For the time being they were given another place. From Mr. Sewaka, I learned that he saw Dr. Setiabudi in the prison. Dr. Setiabudi whose Dutch name is Douwes Dekker, is an adviser of the Republican Delegation. He is already seventy years old and when he was taken

/from

from Kaliurang to Jocoja he was ill. Though he is a Dutchman he has been struggling together with the Indonesians. It seems that he had not been treated well in the prison. He had been separated from the others with the words "Dog, you must not talk with gentlemen." I am glad I heard over the radio that he is now nursed in a hospital.

On the 31st December 1948, Dr. Ali Sastroamidjojo and I were flown to Bangka. My wife who had been with me all the time was to be allowed to return home. Shortly afterwards I heard that my family had already returned to Pakuningratan 69, the house where we had lived.

In this new internment I was brought together with the Vice-President Dr. Mohd. Hatta and the other persons whom I have already mentioned.

In the house which had been prepared for us at Muntok we were allowed very little space, even though the house was a big one, formerly used by the Bangka Tin Corporation for weekends. The six of us were allotted one bed room, six by six metres, in which there were already six beds. In addition, we were given a space of about 4 x 10 metres in a large reception room. This space was separated from the rest of the room by barbed wire.

When I arrived on the 31st December 1948, the barbed wire was being made and our prison was completed on the 1st January 1949. It was therefore appropriate for Dr. Hatta to remind me of the Linggardjati Agreement, which I had also signed. According to the agreement a free and sovereign United States of Indonesia would have been formed on the 1st January 1949. Dr. Hatta spoke with a smile. He saw wry humour in the fact that fate and history had destined us to be imprisoned and without personal freedom, on the day on which the Dutch by the Linggardjati agreement had promised to set free our country.

The armed guard remained before our room. Each morning and afternoon we were allowed to go to the roof garden on top of the house for sunlight and fresh air. So that we could be constantly watched the door of our room had been removed. This caused considerable personal inconvenience and discomfort. The house was also surrounded with barbed wire, so that with the exception of one or two windows in front, the doors and windows could not be opened.

The food was prepared for us by a soldier and his wife and was quite to our taste. Dr. Witkamp from Muntok came at least once a week and took good care of our health. We received papers and pencils for writing and we were permitted to write to our families at Djocoja. There were Dutch newspapers and magazines for us, and every day the provision for reading matter improved. We also received books from the library of Pangkalpinang. We have asked for our books in Djocoja which we hope will soon arrive.

We were allowed to listen to the radio and in this way we could follow the march of events both in the country and abroad. What interested us most was, of course, the discussions in the Security Council. The resolution of the Security Council of 24 December 1948, among others, made an appeal to the Dutch to release President Sukarno and the other leaders who have been detained by the Dutch since 19 December 1948. On December 28, the Security Council passed a resolution of China which made an appeal to the Dutch to implement the first resolution - the release of President Sukarno and the other leaders - and to report to the Security Council within twenty-four hours after the resolution had been carried out.

Since my transfer to Bangka with Dr. Ali Sastromidjojo I have not had any contact with the people who were still in custody at Djocja and I do not know what has befallen them.

On January 8, 1949, we heard from Radio Australia that Dr. van Royen, the Dutch representative, stated at a meeting of the Security Council, that 9 Republican leaders had already been set free, four of them, including Dr. Mohd. Hatta, being on the island of Bangka. At that very moment Dr. Mohd. Hatta was a matter of fact still in custody in the circumstances I have just described.

On January 10, Mr. Brouwer, Crown Commissioner of East Sumatra, came to visit us in our place of internment on the island of Bangka, accompanied by Mr. Lion Cachet, Resident of Bangka. Mr. Lion Cachet had visited us before to see how we were doing and what we needed. Mr. Brouwer said that he had come to inform us of the decisions of Dr. Beel, the High Commissioner of the Crown. He told us that the Dutch Government no longer recognized the Republic as a political organization with a territory of her own, and accordingly no longer recognized our position. The Dutch Government had decided to set us free within the limits of the island of Bangka, provided we were prepared to give a written statement that we would refrain from political activities. Mr. Brouwer went on to state that the Dutch Government would soon establish an interim government, which would make preparations for a general election in Indonesia for the purpose of establishing the United States of Indonesia as was promised in the declaration of Queen Juliana. Mr. Brouwer also explained that our families would soon be allowed to join us, if we were prepared to give the above-mentioned written statement. In the name of everyone of us Dr. Hatta replied that we could not give such a written statement on grounds of principle.

On January 11, we were delighted to learn from the Dutch radio that the G.O.C. had asked the Dutch to be allowed to visit us. The Dutch had asked the G.O.C. to have a little patience.

/On January 12.

On January 12, we noticed some improvements in our place. The barbed wire surrounding our room was removed, so that our world became a little larger. The barbed wire now only separated us from the back part of the house.

On January 13, we heard over the radio that the G.O.C. were coming to Bangka on January 15. We awaited their arrival with great anxiety. On January 14 some further improvements were made. Up to then our room contained one small table and 6 cane chairs, a long table and 6 chairs for our meals. On that day we received in addition one cupboard, two writing desks, a better dining table with 6 chairs, and one table with 6 cane chairs.

On that same day Mr. Boerebekker, the assistant resident of Pangkalpinang called. He brought with him writing materials and new magazines. In addition, he told us that the G.O.C. would come the next day and would stay two hours.

I shall conclude my account with information about the incident in which Dr. Santoso, husband of Dr. Maria Ulfah, a former member of Sjahrir's Cabinet, became a victim. On Sunday, December 19, 1948, Dr. Santoso, who was Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education, wanted to go to Solo. Though he knew that the Dutch had already landed at Maguwo, urged as it seemed by his sense of duty, he left Djocja in a motor car, accompanied by Miss Kajatun, official of the Ministry of Education and two other people, one of whom was a woman. In the neighbourhood of Maguwo they were stopped by soldiers of the Dutch army. They were ordered out of the car and asked whether they were members of the T.N.I. (Republican forces). They replied they were not. The two men were then shot without further ado. The two women who had accompanied Dr. Santoso were detained for one day. Thanks to the efforts of Prof. Dr. Sutomo, the two dead bodies were allowed to be taken for burial.

(Signed) Dr. Mohammad Roem

Merumbang, Bangka,  
15 January 1949.