Summer 1974

American Policy and the Netherlands East Indies, 1940-1945

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AMERICAN POLICY AND THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES 1940-1945

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A thesis presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

HISTORY DEPARTMENT
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
July 18, 1974

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INTRODUCTION

Almost the entire archipelago of more than 13,500 islands stretching along the equator from Asia to Australia is now the Republic of Indonesia. Prior to 1942 this territory was the most important of the Dutch overseas possessions, the Netherlands East Indies. The strategic location of these islands contributed both to their importance to the Dutch and to their significance during World War II. The archipelago almost forms a land bridge between the two continents and also forms a barrier between oceans. The power which holds these islands can effectively control the movement of shipping between the Indian and Pacific oceans.[1]

It was not, however, because of their strategic location that the Indies became significant in world affairs; rather, it was because of their abundance of natural resources.

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[1]For a detailed summary of the geography, geology, and physical features of the Indies as compiled from the point of view of their strategic significance, see Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, Netherlands East Indies, Geographical Handbook Series (2 vols.; London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1944). Volume I is primarily concerned with physical features and most geographical information is contained therein; however, ports are covered in II, 339-99. American University, Area Handbook for Indonesia, by John W. Henderson and others, DA Pam 550-30 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1970), contains more recent, but less complete, information.

In 1940 the most important of these resources were rubber, tin, bauxite, nickel, copper, iron ore, and petroleum, but the resources which originally brought these islands international recognition--and colonial subjugation--were the spices grown there, particularly in the Molucas, the "Spice Islands." These spices, which even now constitute an important export of the area,[2] were part of the lure which launched the European explorations of the fifteenth century. While some of these explorations resulted in the discovery of the West Indies and the remainder of the Western Hemisphere, others eventually reached their goal.

For the Europeans, their arrival in the East Indies came at an auspicious time. An advanced civilization had existed for over a thousand years on the islands of Java and Sumatra, and at times had developed into powerful kingdoms ruling much of the area. As Islam, which had come to the islands beginning in the twelfth century, gradually replaced Hinduism in all of the principal islands except Bali, the once powerful kingdoms broke into smaller states which were unable to resist the European colonialist influx which began with the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. The question soon became not whether the

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[2]U.S. Department of State, Republic of Indonesia, Background Notes Series Pubn. no. 7786 (Revised October, 1971), p. 5.

Europeans would dominate the native kingdoms, but rather which European power would dominate.[3]

The first Dutch traders arrived in the Indies on June 5, 1596. By 1602, when the Dutch East India Company was established, they had decisively defeated the Portuguese, who retained only a small colony on an island on the southern fringe of the group, Portuguese Timor. The British controlled the East Indies for a short time during the Napoleonic wars and retained the northern portion of the large island of Borneo. This portion is now part of Malaysia. Except for this brief interruption, the Dutch ruled the territory of the current Republic of Indonesia for over three hundred years. Until 1800 the agency of Dutch power was the Dutch East India Company, and the exercise of control over the territory was merely a means to the end of ensuring a Dutch monopoly of trade. Although the Netherlands government took over administration of the possessions in 1800, the first major change in policy came in 1811 when the British invaded the Indies.

Although the interval of British rule in the Indies was short, it profoundly affected the subsequent Dutch administration of the area. The British, under

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[3]Bernard H. M. Vlekke, Nusantara: A History of Indonesia (rev. ed.; Chicago: Quadrangle Books, Inc., 1960), pp. 35-79.

Sir Stamford Raffles--better know as the founder of Singapore--began modifying the Dutch system of forced deliveries of quotas of goods to the Dutch East India Company for sale in Europe. These deliveries were the responsibilities of the native rulers, whom the Dutch had generally allowed to continue to rule their "kingdoms," villages, or tribes as they saw fit--so long as the required produce was delivered. There were liberal Dutch reformers who, influenced by the ideals of the French Revolution, were trying to change the system. But the Dutch, with little industrial production to export, did not have the same economic incentive reinforcing their idealism as did the British, who, by improving the lot of the natives and establishing a money-based system, could make a new market for the growing surpluses of English industry.[4]

After the British interlude, there was some vacillation by the Dutch between a policy of continuing the reforms instituted by Raffles or returning to the monopolistic policies of the previous centuries. A new policy was established in 1830 with the adoption of the so-called "culture system" which abolished direct land-rents by

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[4]John Bastin, The Native Policies of Sir Stamford Raffles in Java and Sumatra, An Economic Interpretation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 1-25.

natives in favor of a return to more dependence on the native rulers to provide goods and control the land. In 1850 this system was cast aside in favor of liberalism, which in this case meant opening the Indies to exploitation by private enterprise in the nineteenth-century laissez-faire manner. After 1900 the Dutch administration was modified by the influence of the "Ethical Policy." This last phase of colonialism was characterized by Dutch efforts to better the lot of the native population by improved welfare, medical, and educational facilities.

Although the Dutch ruled the Indies for three hundred years, it was not until the twentieth century that they were able to exercise direct control over some of the tribes in the interior of Borneo and New Guinea. Even in areas with large European populations, and after the end of the "culture system," the Dutch continued to depend on the descendants of the Indonesian nobility to control the native population.[5]

American interest in the area dated from before the American Revolution. Pirates from the North American colonies operated in East Indian waters during King

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[5]J. A. Furnivall, Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy (Cambridge: University Press, 1939). This thorough work, reprinted in 1967, deals with the development of both the administration and economy of the Indies.

William's War in the final years of the seventeenth century. Legitimate commerce with the Indies began soon after American independence.

Trading interests of the United States led to contact with the East Indies as early as the first American voyage to the orient when the Empress of China stopped in Java on her way to China in 1784. By 1789 Americans were trading in Sumatran ports.[6] Trade with the United States came to amount to between fifteen to twenty-five per cent of the area's exports and between ten to twenty per cent of its imports.[7] Although problems arose from time to time,[8] the

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[6]Charles Oscar Paullin, American Voyages to the Orient, 1690-1865 (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1971), pp. 3-43.

[7]Republic of Indonesia, Background Notes Series, p. 5. Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (2 vols.; New York: Macmillan Company, 1948), I, 895, notes that he pointed out to the Japanese that the U.S. share of Indies trade, in a normal year (1937), was 15.8 per cent as opposed to the Japanese share of 11.6 per cent.

[8]In 1830 the American merchant vessel Friendship was seized, plundered, and several crew members killed by the natives in the port of Qualla Battoo on the west coast of Sumatra, an area not then under Dutch control. Although the ship and crew were rescued with the help of other American ships from a nearby port, the U.S. frigate Potomac was dispatched to investigate, to demand restitution and indemnity, and to take punitive action if demands were not met. After a scouting party was threatened, Potomac captured or forced surrender of the forts protecting the town and plundered, burned, and bombarded it. Paullin, American Voyages, pp. 46-52.

good relations between the United States and the Netherlands generally assured that American interests in the Indies were amicably handled.

The Dutch appeared, prior to World War II, to be working toward a mutually satisfactory accomodation with the native population. Modern nationalist sentiments--as opposed to old tribal loyalties--were expressed in some of the earliest Javanese periodicals dating as far back as 1864; however, the beginnings of the nationalist movement as an organized force is generally dated from about 1900. In that year Raden Adjeng Kartini, twenty-year-old daughter of the Regent of Japara, moved to Batavia to stay with the Director of Education and began her work to educate the native women--not for material gain but for the advancement of the Indonesian people.[9] Other milestones in the early nationalist movement were the founding in 1908 of Boedi Oelomo, the Glorious Endeavor, and in 1911 of Garikat Islam. Boedi Oelomo was a moderate movement inspired by Japanese successes against Russia and the development of a modern nationalist movement in China and was chiefly limited to natives with a western education.

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[9]Furnivall, Netherlands India, pp. 242-43. Her work was cut short when she died in childbirth in 1907. Although she really only wrote some letters, Furnivall and others give her credit for providing the spark that ignited the nationalist movement.

Garikat Islam was a Moslem Javanese trader's organization, originally more opposed to Chinese traders than Dutch governors.

Although neither Boedi Oelomo nor Garikat Islam was originally a true nationalist political movement, both developed into such. Boedi Oelomo retained its moderate orientation. Garikat Islam within four years of its founding had developed a following of 360,000 and a program calling for self-government. By 1919, it had a membership of almost two and a half million and a nationalistic program calling for complete independence, to be attained by force if necessary.[10] Much of this increased militancy was caused by the large communist membership in the party. In 1921, the Sixth National Congress of Garikat Islam voted that members could not be, at the same time, members of another party. Garikat Islam lost much of its following in the ensuing struggle between Communists and non-Communists for control of local branches.[11]

During the same period there was a rapid increase of the number of Europeans in the Indies branches of the political parties in the Netherlands. At times during the

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[10]George McTurnan Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1952), p. 65.

[11]Ibid., p. 76.

first two decades of the twentieth century considerable mixing of natives, Dutch, and those of mixed blood occurred in these movements. A national consultive assembly was organized in 1918. Although its composition was made progressively more representative, and, after 1925, theoretically had a native majority, it remained weighted in favor of the European point of view and never developed real power. During the 1920's the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), in addition to infiltrating other parties, became strong in its own right. In 1926, the PKI attempted a revolution, but it was poorly coordinated, received little popular support, and was easily crushed. Over thirteen thousand arrests were made after the failure of this revolt. The PKI was outlawed and its power broken. The poor showing of this revolution also discredited the communist cause in the nationalist parties, and communist domination of the movement never again threatened during the remaining period of Dutch rule.[12]

In 1922, Indonesian students in the Netherlands formed a political organization, the Indonesian Union (PI). This party, through the return of its leaders to the Indies, did

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[12]Ibid., pp. 77-87; Furnivall, Netherlands India, pp. 243-53.

much to shape the course of the Indonesian nationalist movement after 1926. Both Mohammad Hatta and Soetan Sjahrir entered the movement via this route.[13]

In 1927, members of the Bandung Study Club founded the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI). The chairman of this party, and one of its few leaders who was not a member of PI, was a young engineer, Soekarno.[14] The new party stressed unity of all religious and political groups to achieve the immediate goal of Indonesian independence. Noncooperation with the Dutch was the means advocated to achieve independence.[15]

PNI was outlawed in 1930 and Soekarno and seven other leaders were exiled. Most of the PNI membership formed a new organization, Partai Indonesia (Partindo) which had the same aims but was more moderate in its methods, at least until Soekarno became its leader in 1932, after his return from exile.[16] Meanwhile, a small but influential group,

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[13]Respectively the first Vice President and first Prime Minister of Indonesia, Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 88-90.

[14]As is the case with many Indonesians, Soekarno has only one name. "Achmed" which is often used as his first name was the invention of an American reporter who wanted his dispatches to look more complete, Ibid., p. ix.

[15]Ibid., pp. 90-91.

[16]Soekarno was again exiled in 1933 and remained in exile until released by the Japanese in 1942, Ibid., pp. 92-94.

the Indonesian National Education Club, was formed by a minority of the PNI leadership. The leadership of this group soon passed to Sjahrir who returned from the Netherlands in early 1932, and to the PI leader Hatta, who returned later in that same year. The Education Club concentrated on educating leadership cadres. Both Hatta and Sjahrir were exiled in 1934,[17] but their organization continued to be influential beyond its numbers even though four successive executive boards were exiled.[18]

In spite of the continued existence of these groups advocating complete independence, the Dutch efforts to control the nationalist movement appeared so successful that Furnivall, writing in 1939, dismissed nationalism as a force which had served its purpose in the Indies and was really out-dated in the "plural society" which the Dutch appeared to be making to work there.[19] The East Indies, although hard hit by the decline of trade resulting from the Great Depression, were a relatively prosperous and peaceful area. The prosperity was by no means evenly shared.

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[17]Soetan Sjahrir, Out of Exile, ed. by Maria Duchâteau-Sjahrir, trans. by Charles Wolf, Jr., (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 1-32.

[18]Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 93.

[19]Netherlands India, pp. 447-67.

While most Dutch and a sprinkling of natives, Eurasians, and Chinese lived in comfort in neat towns and cities reminiscent of the Netherlands, the average native subsisted on a very low annual income.[20] But political discontent appeared to have peaked in the mid-twenties and waned thereafter with most of the major parties by 1939 showing a disposition to recognize the sovereignty of the Netherlands, but with the Indies on a footing of equality with the Netherlands and with the right of self-determination within the Netherlands commonwealth.[21] The Dutch faced neither the recurring famines nor the strong native leaders with mass followings which confronted the British in contemporary India.[22]

Domestic unrest was not the problem which faced the Dutch in 1940. The problem was how to protect the East Indies from the Japanese while the Netherlands itself was menaced by Japan's ally, Germany. Japan was naturally a

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[20]In 1929, 81 per cent of the Indonesian population earned 300 guilders or less and only 0.1 per cent earned over 5,000 guilders per annum. On the other hand, only 1.6 per cent of the Europeans earned 300 guilders or less and 37.3 per cent had an income of over 5,000 guilders per annum, Furnivall, Netherlands India, p. 348.

[21]Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, Netherlands East Indies, p. 101.

[22]Sjahrir, Out of Exile, p. 125. Sjahrir, writing from exile in 1936, states that there has "never been possible among us the same sort of fanatical nationalism as some of the other peoples of Asia have shown."

good customer for the raw materials from the Indies, particularly crude oil. As the United States attempted to bring more and more economic pressure on Japan in an effort to limit Japanese military activity in China, Japan looked elsewhere for the raw materials necessary to support not only her military effort but also her industrial economy. With free access to the oil and rubber of the Indies the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" could live on its own.[23] Japanese national interest prompted Japan to take advantage of the German threat to the Netherlands to assure a continuing and increasing flow of raw materials from the East Indies.[24]

However expected this Japanese reaction may have been, it complicated American policy toward Japan. Embargoes on strategic material and other economic pressures were contemplated to influence Japan to end her war with China, or at least to protect American interests in China. The

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[23]Samuel Eliot Morison, History of United States Naval Operations in World War II: The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931-April 1942 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948), p. 280.

[24]U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan: 1931-1941 (2 vols., Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), II, 306-07, provides the Japanese rationale. This series is hereinafter referred to as Foreign Relations, with year or other identifying designation.

need for such pressure had to be weighed against the possibility that it might be used as an excuse by the militarist factions in Japan for aggression against the Indies, as well as French Indo China and British Malaya.[25]

On the eve of World War II, the Dutch, who had managed to remain neutral during the First World War, were not prepared to defend even their homeland. Japanese expansionist tendencies were made evident by the seizure of Manchuria in 1932 and the attack on China in 1937. However, the immediate threat to the Indies developed after the European war had begun. The British as well as the Dutch were in no position to prevent Japanese domination of the Indies--either by conquest or by the imposition of economic control through forced trade agreements. Particularly after the German conquest of the Netherlands in May 1940, the Dutch in the East Indies placed their hope for protection from the Japanese on the American fleet.[26] The future of the Netherlands East Indies clearly depended on the policy of the United States.

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[25]Hull, Memoirs, I, 899-916 and II, 982-99; Joseph C. Grew, Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945 (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), II, 1221-22.

[26]Consul General at Batavia (Dickover) to Secretary of State, July 17, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 51-52.

CHAPTER I

THE BASIS OF THE GOALS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN 1940-1941

The foreign policy with which the United States faced the world crises of 1940 and 1941 was forged in the depression politics of 1932. In his first inaugural address, Roosevelt stated that international trade relations, though important, were secondary to domestic problems. He devoted only one short paragraph to his goals in foreign affairs, as follows:

> In the field of world policy I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor--the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others--the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.[1]

This Good Neighbor Policy came to be identified with relations in the Western Hemisphere where it met with considerable success in improving the attitude of Latin American Governments towards the United States by renunciation

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[1] The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, compiled by Samuel I. Rosenman with introduction and explanatory notes by President Roosevelt, Vol. II, The Year of Crisis 1933 (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 14.

of United States intervention in their internal affairs. It was intended, however, as the world-wide goal of American policy.[2]

Roosevelt chose Cordell Hull as his Secretary of State. Hull was the product of rural Tennessee Democratic politics and many years in Congress where he had made his mark in the field of taxation. His interest in foreign affairs had primarily been as a supporter of increasing world trade by lowering tariff barriers. This background was reflected in Hull's goals as Secretary of State. He established cooperation with other nations in restoring commerce as the primary United States objective. He believed that trade barriers bred war; therefore, the restoration of trade was the first step toward further cooperation to maintain peace.[3]

With regard to the future of peoples subject to colonial domination, Hull believed that the United States

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[2]Thomas H. Greer, What Roosevelt Thought: The Social and Political Ideas of Franklin D. Roosevelt (n.p.: Michigan State University Press, 1958), p. 159. Hull, Memoirs, I, 167, calls it "a doctrine that applied alike to every part of the world;" however, throughout the remainder of the work he uses the term only in relation to Western Hemisphere diplomacy.

[3]Julius W. Pratt, Cordell Hull, 1933-44, Vol. XIII of The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, ed. by Robert H. Farrell, advisory ed. Samuel Flagg Bemis (2 vols.; New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1964), I, 12-29.

should, in the tradition of Thomas Jefferson, support self-determination and self-government.[4] Roosevelt shared this aim. However, he believed that, for a time at least, the advanced nations must be trustees for the less advanced cultures.[5] Like Hull, he frequently mentioned the United States' policy towards the Philippines, which were promised complete independence by 1946, as an example for other colonial powers to follow.[6]

The Roosevelt administration was handicapped in pursuing its foreign policy goals by the isolationist sentiment in the country in the 1930's. The traditional American desire to avoid foreign entanglements had been reinforced by disillusionment with the results of World War I.[7] Hull wrote that this sentiment was so strong in both parties that the electorate would have turned the Roosevelt administration out of office had the people been

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[4]Ibid., for Hull's own retrospective view of his goals in 1933 see his Memoirs, I, 173-77.

[5]Roosevelt considered that such trusteeships for Asian colonies might last thirty to forty years, Henry A. Wallace, The Price of Vision, ed. by John Morton Blum (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 308.

[6]Gaddis Smith, American Diplomacy during the Second World War, America in Crisis Series, ed. by Robert A. Devine (New York: John Wiley and Sons., Inc., 1965), p. 83.

[7]Leroy N. Rieselbach, The Roots of Isolationism: Congressional Voting and Presidential Leadership in Foreign Policy (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1967), pp. 3-12.

told, in 1933, that the administration planned extensive international cooperation.[8]

With the advent of World War II, the Roosevelt administration faced more urgent problems than being a good neighbor to the peoples of the world. The renewal of hostilities in China in 1937 led to further deterioration of relations between the United States and Japan. These relations had not been normal since Japan's seizure of Manchuria in 1932.[9] As the situation in Europe also became critical, the administration shifted its emphasis from domestic to foreign affairs. In January 1939, Roosevelt announced in his annual message to Congress that "events abroad have made it increasingly clear to the American people that dangers within are less to be feared than dangers from without."[10] He indicated that the prime concern of the country was now meeting these foreign dangers, even if this meant the sacrifice of domestic programs. Roosevelt's decision to seek an unprecedented third term was based on these foreign dangers.[11]

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[8]Hull, Memoirs, I, 176-77.

[9]Ibid., pp. 270-74. The Roosevelt administration continued the policy of non-recognition of the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo begun by Hoover's Secretary of State, Henry L. Stimson.

[10]Public Papers and Addresses, 1939, Vol. 8, War--and Neutrality (New York: Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 12.

[11]Hull, Memoirs, II, 855-59.

Having rejected the isolationist point of view that such survival could best be assured by total non-involvement in the conflict, the administration proceeded to provide all of the help, short of war, that it could to England and later to Russia.[12] While the United States provided this aid and sought to maintain the status quo in the Pacific, American and British goals for the peace to follow were expressed in the Atlantic Charter.

This document, issued on August 12, 1941, after the first of the summit meetings between Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, began with the statement that the countries sought "no aggrandisement, territorial or other." The second article expressed their desire to "see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." The real promise to subjects of colonialism came, however, in article three, which stated that the United States and

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[12]The wisdom of these policies has by no means been unanimously supported. For a sympathetic appraisal, in addition to Hull, Memoirs, see Basil Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor: A Study in the Creation of a Foreign Policy (New York: Creative Age Press, 1950); which answers the unsympathetic Charles A. Beard, American Foreign Policy in the Making: 1932-1940: A Study in Responsibilities (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946) and President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War: 1941: A Study in Appearances and Realities (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948). For differing views of participants on missed opportunities for a peaceful settlement with Japan see Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1244-375 and Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), pp. 66-93.

the United Kingdom would

> respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

Article four, on free trade and access to raw materials, was the subject of compromise, whereby the British were able to safeguard their commitments to Imperial Preference. However, the first two articles and the key first clause of article three were identical to the first draft of the document. Although the idea of a joint statement of war aims was American, this first draft was prepared by Winston Churchill.[13] This did not keep the Roosevelt administration from distrusting British intentions. Cordell Hull agonized over Churchill's report to the House of Commons on September 9, 1941. Hull wrote that the Prime Minister said that

> Article 3 applied only to European nations under Nazi occupation and had no effect on British policy as previously enunciated relative to the development of constitutional government in India, Burma, and other parts of the Empire.[14]

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[13]Winston S. Churchill, The Second World War, Vol. III: The Grand Alliance (New York: Bantam Books, 1962), pp. 366-75. Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading? (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), pp. 6-18, covers the same drafting procedure from the American point of view.

[14]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1484. It is possible, although not likely, that Hull was not aware that Churchill was the author of the article. Hull was recuperating in White Sulphur Springs when Roosevelt left for the rendezvous, and Sumner Welles was the senior State Department representative present. Apparently it did not occur to Hull that Churchill must also consider public opinion. For a view more

Hull's paraphrase, taken out of context, gives a misleading impression of Churchill's comments to Commons on the Charter. Churchill began by noting that it was wise for one party to a statement to refrain from putting "special strained interpretations" on particular passages without prior consultation with the other party. He then pointed out that the intent of the declaration was to promise restoration of self-government to nations under the Nazi yoke, which he described as

> quite a separate problem from the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions in the regions and peoples which owe allegiance to the British Crown. We have made declarations on these matters which are complete in themselves, free from ambiguity, and related to the conditions and circumstances of the territories and peoples affected. They will be found to be entirely in harmony with the high conception of freedom and justice which inspired the joint declaration.[15] (Emphasis supplied.)

Churchill's statements on the Atlantic Charter re-affirmed his government's intent to guide British possessions toward self-government. That this speech could alarm the American Secretary of State was indicative of the American leaders' suspicions of British intentions. These suspicions acted as a detriment to allied cooperation during

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sympathetic toward Hull's concern see Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 740-41.

[15] Kessing's Contemporary Archieves, IV, 1940-43, p. 4781.

the war and affected the formulation of American post-war policy.[16]

Clement Attlee, ranking Labor member of the wartime coalition government and Deputy Prime Minister and Lord Privy Seal at the time of the Atlantic Charter, quickly let it be known that he deemed it to be "designed for all races of the world, colored as well as white." Hull may not have considered Attlee's comment important because of the later statement by Churchill, but Attlee's statement impressed twenty-four native members of the People's Council at Batavia, who asked the Netherlands' government (in exile in London) to define its attitude toward Attlee's comment.[17]

The establishment of an effective organization of nations to keep the peace eventually became the major objective of United States post-war planning. But the administration had hardly begun to plan for this goal in 1941.[18] The mention of such an organization in the Atlantic Charter was Churchill's suggestion.[19] In 1941, the administration's goals for the post-war world were the same as those Hull had enumerated as the aims of the new administration in 1933. Victory by the United Nations was seen as

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[16]Smith, American Diplomacy, pp. 81-82.

[17]Netherlands News, Sept. 15, 1941, p. 192.

[18]Hull, Memoirs, II, 718-20.

[19]Churchill, The Grand Alliance, p. 370.

the opportunity to implement these policies. In ending colonialism, however, there was a dilemma. The leading colonial power, the United Kingdom, was America's chief ally. Also, France and the Netherlands, which the United States was committed to liberate, could be expected to consider that such liberation would entail the return of their colonies.

This dilemma was resolved, at least in theory, by compromise on the part of the United States. As Hull had foreseen, the key to committing the United Nations to ending colonialism was to persuade the British to support such a policy. "Self-government" was included in proposals for goals of the organization as an alternative to "independence." Trusteeships were limited to former League of Nations mandates, possessions of Axis powers, and cases where the colonial power requested them. After these concessions, the British were persuaded to accept this call for the end of colonialism in the United Nations Charter.[20]

A second American goal overshadowed anti-colonialism. American leaders discussed and proclaimed the post-war aims of the United States but they did not allow these aims to interfere with the prime objective of American military

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[20]Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 750-52; Memorandum for President dated January 13, 1945, on American and British positions, Foreign Relations, 1945, I, 18-22.

strategy--to defeat the Axis powers in the fastest manner possible. This single-minded concentration on military victory was based on the American belief that, since the enemy's existence was the only significant cause of insecurity, a world consistent with American ideals and interests would emerge when the Axis powers were destroyed.[21]

Cordell Hull, recognizing that military strategy affected foreign policy decisions and that foreign policy goals should be considered in developing military strategy, chafed at not being invited to strategy discussions.[22] Churchill sometimes succeeded, but often failed, in his efforts to persuade his American allies to consider the effect of strategy on the post-war world. This American attitude may have shortened the war, but it contributed to many of the major problems which faced the United States after the Second World War. In particular it eased the way to Russian domination of Eastern Europe. Sacrificing American aims in Asia in order to bring Russia into the war helped to undermine the Nationalist government in China.[23]

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[21]Smith, American Diplomacy, p. 2.

[22]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1109-11.

[23]In addition to Smith, American Diplomacy, see Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought. (Princeton: University Press, 1957).

In the Netherlands East Indies, this single-minded strategy was of paramount importance. It contributed to the lengthy Japanese occupation of the area, the abandonment of plans to re-conquer the central islands, and the transfer of the entire area to British control at the time of the Japanese surrender. The combination of these factors contributed significantly to the failure to achieve, in the Indies, Roosevelt's goal for all Asian colonies: peaceful transition to self-government and, with help and guidance from the European colonial powers, eventual independence within a society of cooperating nations.

CHAPTER II

UNITED STATES POLICY AND THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES PRIOR TO AMERICAN ENTRY INTO THE WAR

The Netherlands East Indies figured prominently in the formulation of American policy between the beginning of the war in Europe, in September 1939, and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Prior to 1939, the thrust of American Far Eastern policy was to attempt to persuade Japan to end its military activity in China. Economic pressure was limited to a "moral embargo," without legal effect, on the shipment of aircraft.[1]

In early 1939 the European powers were preoccupied with the Czechoslovakian crisis. Japan took advantage of this preoccupation to expand her aggression southward. On February 10, 1939, Japanese troops occupied Hainan Island off the coast of Indochina. Although a Chinese possession, Hainan was considered to be in the French sphere of influence.[2] In March, Japan claimed sovereignty over a large sea area surrounding the Spratly Islands, claimed by France.[3]

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[1]Hull, Memoirs, I, 531-71; Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1035-1210; Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 449-55.

[2]Pratt, Cordell Hull, 456-57.

[3]Ibid., II, 457; Hull, Memoirs, I, 628.

American reaction was no longer limited to diplomatic protests. It was more than a month before Hull told the Japanese ambassador that the United States did not recognize the Japanese claim to sovereignty as having any international validity. However, on April 15, the President ordered the United States Fleet back into the Pacific ahead of schedule.[4] On July 26, Hull informed the Japanese ambassador that the commercial treaty between the two countries would expire in six months. Abrogation of this treaty left the United States free to apply economic pressure to Japan in response to further Japanese expansionist moves or denial of American rights in China.[5]

On November 27, 1939, Ambassador Joseph C. Grew telegraphed from Tokyo a paraphrase of joint British, French, and Polish assessment of Japanese intentions. It appeared that the purpose of Japan in negotiations with the Soviet Union was not only to stop Russian aid to China but also to

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[4]Morison, Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 38; Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 457. The Fleet had been "showing the flag" at the New York World's Fair after maneuvers in the Caribbean. Hull's note to Japanese Ambassador (Herinouchi), May 17, 1939, Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 280.

[5]The immediate cause for the decision to abrogate the treaty was the recognition, by Britain, of the rights of the Japanese Army in occupied China; however, the move had been under consideration for several months. Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 457-58.

secure the northern flank in order that Japan could attack the Netherlands East Indies.[6]

Also in November, a State Department study concluded that an American embargo would force Japan to move into the South Pacific. Barring American pressure, such aggression would probably not occur:

> (a) Until and unless Japan becomes convinced that Great Britain and France will be defeated in the present war; and (b) unless Japan is convinced that aggression will not cause the United States to adopt measures seriously impairing Japanese interests or unless Japan feels certain that aggression will not place the United States in such position that it will be eventually forced by circumstances to consider that armed conflict with Japan might be inevitable.

As to the alternative of backing down on the China question, the study concluded that not to do so might lead to Japanese seizure of the Netherlands East Indies, but this was a risk that the United States would have to take in order to keep its policy consistent with "fundamental principles to which we are committed and in which we believe."[7] This assessment reflected the principles on which United States policy was based until military disaster struck the European democracies in May 1940.[8]

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[6]Foreign Relations, 1939, III, 83-86.

[7]Memorandum by Director of Far Eastern Affairs, Laurence E. Salisbury, Sept. 29, 1939, Ibid., pp. 121-23.

[8]Hull, Memoirs, I, 730.

Even before the Germans overran the Low Countries and France, Japanese army leaders had decided that Germany would win the war. The army effectively controlled Japanese policy. This policy focused on support for the Japanese forces in China. German success would make England and France susceptible to Japanese pressure to cut off supplies to China through Burma and Indochina. The army policy also called for domination of the Indies in order to obtain sufficient raw materials to support the war in China. The prospect of an assured supply of oil from the Netherlands East Indies generated considerable support in the Navy for the policy.[9]

On February 2, 1940, the American consul general at Batavia, Earle R. Dickover, reported a conversation with his Japanese counterpart. The Japanese consul, while claiming that Japan had no territorial designs on the Netherlands East Indies (or the Philippines), insisted that Japan had to have access to the raw materials of the Indies not only in case of an American embargo but simply because Japan was entitled to expand. In a dynamic world Japan needed additional resources just as a small boy needed larger clothes as he grew up.[10]

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[9]Mamoru Shigemitsu, Japan and Her Destiny: My Struggle for Peace, ed. by F. S. G. Piggott, trans. by Oswald White (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1958), pp. 168-73, 181-86.

[10]Dickover, Memorandum of conversation with Japanese Consul General (Saito), Feb. 2, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 1-3.

In mid-February, the Netherlands authorities expressed concern when Japan announced its intention to abrogate the Dutch-Japanese Treaty of Arbitration and Conciliation at the end of its initial five-year period in August. Although the Japanese had legitimate reasons to re-negotiate the treaty,[11] the Dutch surmised that Japan would use the negotiations to press for concessions in the East Indies.

An incident on the other side of the world indicated the significance that the United States government placed on safeguarding of the Netherlands East Indies. When Denmark was overrun, on April 9, 1940, the American government faced the prospect of German control of Greenland, the Danish-owned island in the Western Hemisphere. Hull considered that the United States had ample claim to previous application of the Monroe Doctrine to Greenland.[12] Nevertheless, when the local authorities on Greenland suggested that they might apply to the United States for

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[11]Telegrams, Ambassador in Japan (Grew) to Secretary of State, Feb. 15, and March 12, 1940, Ibid., pp. 4-8. The treaty provided for arbitration within the frame-work of the League of Nations. This was no longer appropriate as Japan had withdrawn from the League.

[12]Based on an exchange of notes after the United States purchase of the Virgin Islands. The British government asked Denmark for advance notification of any intent to sell Greenland. The United States denied the right of any non-American power to obtain sovereignty over Greenland, a position which the British accepted, Ibid., I, 755; Foreign Relations, 1922, II, 1-3.

protection, the State Department discouraged them from doing so to prevent a precedent with regard to colonial possessions of European countries. Hull stated that "specifically, what we had in mind was the necessity to avoid any precedent that might give Japan an excuse to seize the Netherlands East Indies if Holland were invaded by the Germans." For the time being, the United States limited its aid to Greenland to advice, arms, and visits by Coast Guard cutters. It was not until 1941, when the German threat to Greenland was considered to out-weigh the danger of setting a precedent, that American troops were finally stationed there.[13]

On April 15, a Japanese diplomatic initiative concerning the Indies led to direct American involvement. The Japanese Foreign Minister declared that the Netherlands East Indies and Japan were "economically bound by an intimate relationship" and that "together are contributing to the prosperity of East Asia through mutual aid and interdependence." On this special relationship the Japanese government based its deep concern over "any development accompanying an aggravation of the war in Europe that may

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[13]Hull, Memoirs, I, 753-58. In his explanation to the Danish Minister of American hesitancy to establish a protectorate, Hull only refers to "nations bent on conquest" as looking for precedents. Memorandum of conversation, Sept. 29, 1939, Foreign Relations, 1940, II, 360.

affect the status quo of the Netherlands East Indies."[14] The maintenance of the status quo in the Indies was also the American goal, but the Japanese claim to special interest based on economic interdependence and co-prosperity theories raised American fears over Japan's true intentions. The British and French governments were also alarmed at the prospect that Japan would use the German invasion of the Netherlands, which appeared imminent, as a pretext for a "protective" military occupation of the Indies. The United States declined to make a joint protest with the British and French. However, the State Department communicated American objections to the Japanese government and issued a press release which pointed out that the Indies were important economically to the whole world and that

> intervention in the domestic affairs of the Netherlands Indies or any alteration of their status quo by other than peaceful processes would be prejudicial to the cause of stability, peace, and security not only in the region of the Netherlands Indies but in the entire Pacific area.[15]

This release caused a considerable stir in the Japanese press. The Japanese government, however, officially

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[14]Press release, Japanese Embassy at Washington, April 15, 1940, Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 281.

[15]Department of State press release, April 17, 1940, Ibid., pp. 281-82.

maintained that the American statement only supported the Japanese position.[16]

Three days later, the Japanese ambassador, Kensuke Horinouchi, discussed the matter with Secretary Hull. Hull's account of the interview leaves the impression that more disagreement--on what he called the so-called Japanese Monroe Doctrine for Asia--than agreement came from their meeting.[17] Grew, however, telegraphed that the Japanese press reported that Horinouchi announced after the interview that "Japan and the United States have reached an agreement in principle" concerning the maintenance of the status quo in the Indies.[18] The Netherlands East Indies had hardly faded from the limelight when the German invasion of the Netherlands, on May 10, made them an even more tempting target for Japanese domination.

On the day of the invasion, Hull began a campaign to keep the Japanese from exploiting the Netherlands' predicament. There were two prongs to this campaign.

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[16]New York Times, April 19, 1940, p. 6. The Times played down the danger of Japan's threatening the Indies while still involved in the China incident, Ibid., editorial, p. 10.

[17]Hull's Memorandum of conversation in Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 283; Hull, Memoirs, I, 889-90.

[18]Grew to Hull, April 22, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 12.

First, Japan was reminded of pledges, including her own, to maintain the status quo, and second, the British and French were dissuaded from taking any action to protect the Indies which might have provided an excuse for Japanese armed intervention. The situation complicated when the British and French sent troops to Curaçao and Aruba in the West Indies. Although there was some concern that Germans living in the East Indies might engineer a coup,[19] the British and French concurred that the wisest course was to avoid sending troops there. Hull stated that the firm attitude adopted by the United States forestalled a Japanese move against the Indies in the summer of 1940.[20] Although an actual Japanese move was avoided, there were many rumors and false alarms during that summer. These benefited the Japanese as they sought to obtain more favorable trading arrangements with the Netherlands East Indies.[21]

Trade talks between Japan and the East Indies government continued for more than a year. The United States was not directly involved in these trade talks but took a keen interest in their outcome. Negotiations concerning oil and petroleum products were particularly important.

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[19]Discussed by Dickover in telegram to Secretary of State, April 16, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 8-9.

[20]Hull, Memoirs, I, 893.

[21]Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 20-52, passim, and Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 281-316, passim.

Although the American government was not a participant, Standard-Vacuum Oil Company, New York, a major Indies oil producer, (about 27 per cent of the total Netherlands East Indies production) did participate. Representatives of this company consulted with the State Department on July 25 and again, along with a Royal Dutch Shell and a British embassy representative, on August 16, 1940. They were advised that there should be no problem meeting the Japanese demands for crude oil, even though this would end Japaneses need for oil from the United States. On the other hand, the American government could hardly give its blessing to the sale of aviation gasoline to replace that which could no longer be obtained from the United States because of the embargo imposed on it.[22]

The agreement of the Vichy French government to Japanese occupation of Indochina in August 1940, the signing of the Tripartite Pact by Japan, Germany, and Italy in September, and Japan's excessive demands insured that the trade talks with the Netherlands East Indies authorities would not be fruitful. The Japanese demanded over half of the Netherlands East Indies yearly production of oil and

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[22]Memoranda of the two meetings, Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 55-56, 75-79. Aviation gasoline was not covered by the moral embargo on the sale of aircraft imposed against Japan as the result of her bombing of civilian populations; however, after July 2, 1940, it could legally be withheld from export as a vital war material. Hull, Memoirs, I, 901.

quantities of rubber and tin obviously greater than Japanese needs.[23] These demands led the Dutch to believe that this material was destined for re-export to Germany.[24] When the talks finally collapsed in July 1941, the Dutch Foreign Minister, Eelco N. van Kleffens, stated, "We are prepared to meet any reasonable desire but between reasonable wishes and what the Japanese asked of us, runs a dividing line that no one could ignore."[25]

A major cause of the exorbitant Japanese demands in the trade negotiations with the Dutch was the pressure placed on Japan by United States export restrictions. Dutch authorities repeatedly asked that the United States refrain from further restrictions on exports to Japan while the talks were in progress. They also asked for assurance that the United States would come to the defense of the Indies if the Japanese did attack. In response to the former request, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles equated failure to impose restrictions with the "adoption by the United States of an attitude of complete supine

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[23]American Chargé near Netherlands Government in the United Kingdom to Secretary of State, Oct. 9, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 175-76.

[24]Joseph W. Ballantine, Memorandum of May 27, 1941, for the Secretary of State, Foreign Relations, 1941, IV, 232-33. An agreement on petroleum products, however, had been initialed on November 12, 1940, Foreign Relations, Japan, 1931-1941, II, 297-98.

[25]Netherlands News, August 1, 1941, p. 64.

acquiescence in the continuing and ever-enlarging policy of Japan of aggression in the Pacific region."[26] As to United States assurances of support, even the internationalist Cordell Hull considered an American commitment to go to war a "foreign entanglement." In 1940 and 1941 this was still an unthinkable departure from the traditional United States policy.[27]

Forestalling a Japanese move against the Netherlands East Indies was a major concern of American Far Eastern policy in 1939 and most of 1940. In September 1940, the emphasis shifted. On September 2, Ambassador Grew, recognizing that the military were firmly in control of Japanese

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[26]Memorandum of conversation with Netherlands Chargé September 24, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 147-48.

[27]Robert Emmet Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, An Intimate History (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), p. 432. Sherwood quotes Hopkins as stating that Roosevelt "felt that it was a weakness in our policy that we could not be specific on that point. The President told me that he felt that an attack on the Netherlands East Indies should result in war with Japan and he told me that Hull always ducked that question." Hopkins adds, however, that neither Hull nor Roosevelt could give such a pledge because, aside from the fact that Congress must declare war, "the isolationists, and, indeed, a great part of the American people, would not be interested in a war in the Far East merely because Japan attacked the Dutch." Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 91, goes even further, stating the inability of the President "to say what he would do in contingencies had made it wholly impossible for him for a period of exactly four years to carry out the policy that he himself believed to be vitally important to our security."

policy, sent what he referred to as his "Green Light" telegram. Grew, previously opposed to strong measures, now felt that failure to take such measures would only encourage the Japanese military.[28] Two events later in the month confirmed Grew's assessment to the American administration and led to a hardening of the American attitude toward Japan.

On September 22, the Vichy government agreed to transit rights for Japanese troops in French Indochina and the right to inspect goods shipped to China to insure that war material was not being transshipped. The United States reacted, on the twenty-fourth, by restricting the export of scrap iron and steel to Britain and the Western Hemisphere. Cordell Hull dissuaded Roosevelt from including oil in this embargo because to have done so would have resulted in further Japanese pressure to assure an alternate supply from the Netherlands East Indies.[29]

On September 27, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy. Containing pledges of aid in case any partner was attacked by a nation "not then involved in the European War or in the Sino-Japanese Conflict," this pact

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[28]Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 470-71; telegram is printed in Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1223-29, as well as Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 599-603.

[29]Pratt, Cordell Hull, II, 466, 471-72.

firmly placed Japan in the Axis camp at a time when the United States was drawing nearer the democracies still fighting Germany and Italy.[30]

American policy in the remaining months of 1940 and until December 7, 1941, continued to include consideration of the impact on the Netherlands East Indies of actions contemplated. This consideration led to the conclusion that pressure on Japan increased the danger of Japanese attack on the Indies.[31] Nevertheless, American policy makers decided that the only alternative to economic pressure was appeasement. In 1941, appeasement as a policy was discredited by the failure of British and French appeasement of Hitler in 1938. Cordell Hull advised Ambassador Grew that he should make clear to the Japanese government that appeasement,

> viewed in the light of the experience of some fifteen countries in Europe which were told that they would not be molested, would be absurd, futile and suicidal from the standpoint of reasonable precautions for the safety of this country.[32]

The Dutch may not have always been happy with United States policy toward Japan in 1940 and 1941. They realized,

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[30]Ibid., II, 467; Shigemitsu, Japan and Her Destiny, p. 204.

[31]Chief of Naval Operations (Stark) to Roosevelt, July 21, 1941, Foreign Relations, 1941, IV, 840.

[32]Telegram, Hull to Grew June 6, 1941, Foreign Relations, 1941, IV, 254-55.

however, that, short of surrendering the Indies to the Japanese, as the French had done with Indochina, they had no choice but to go along with American initiatives. Thus, when the United States and Britain froze Japanese assets in July 1941, the Dutch followed the same policy in the Netherlands East Indies.[33] As trade between the Indies and Japan came to a standstill, Japan evacuated her nationals from the area.[34] Negotiations continued, but, cut off from Indies oil, the Japanese government resolved, on September 6, to go to war with the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands if the negotiations did not produce results by October 10.[35]

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[33] Netherlands News, Aug. 1, 1941, pp. 69-70.

[34] Ibid., December 1, 1941, p. 65, only a few hundred Japanese remained in the archipelago when the last ship for Japan departed on November 25.

[35] Leonard Mosley, Hirohito, Emperor of Japan (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 213-26; S. Woodburn Kirby and others, The War Against Japan, Vol. I: The Loss of Singapore, History of the Second World War Series (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1957), pp. 70-75.

CHAPTER III

JAPANESE CONQUEST AND OCCUPATION

Japan went to war for the oil of the Netherlands East Indies.[1] However, when Japan attacked United States and British possessions in the Pacific and Southeast Asia on December 7/8,1941, she did not attack the Netherlands East Indies. Nevertheless, the Netherlands Government in Exile, in London, recognized that the Indies were the prime goal of the Japanese. The Netherlands' cabinet met on December 7 and resolved to declare war on Japan.[2] Queen Wilhelmina's proclamation on December 8, stated that

> the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers itself in a state of war with Japan because the aggression--that seeks to put out of action, one by one, the countries which desire peace--can only be halted through a strong coalition.[3]

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[1]Kirby, Loss of Singapore, Appendix 3, pp. 481-83, provides an assessment of the Japanese oil position.

[2]The Netherlands government notified their minister to the United States (Loudon) of the decision by telephone at 8:30 p.m., Dec. 7, Loudon letter to Under Secretary (Welles) dated Dec. 8, 1941, Foreign Relations, 1941, IV, 733-34. Although there was not a formal agreement to go to war in the Far East if British possessions were attacked, the Netherlands government had approved the results of joint staff conferences held in Singapore in November 1940, which included a recommendation that entry into the area, e.g., crossing 6° North latitude between Borneo and Malaya, by a Japanese fleet or escorted convoy be considered an act of war. Kirby, Loss of Singapore, pp. 51-52.

[3]Netherlands News, Dec. 15, 1941, p. 122.

Unfortunately, there was no strong American, British, and Dutch coalition in the Southwest Pacific in December 1941. The Dutch themselves had been slow in arming the East Indies. Until the commencement of hostilities with Japan, some Indies resources were being channeled into arming remnant Dutch forces for the war in Europe.[4] The supply of materials of war, which could only come from the United States, presented an insurmountable problem. The Netherlands East Indies, although strategically important to the United States, could be supplied only after British and American needs were met. Consequently, the Indies authorities received little more than promises from the United States.[5]

One asset the Dutch possessed but failed to use was a large pool of manpower. Some Indonesian nationalist leaders recognized that the substitution of Japanese for Dutch rule would be no improvement. These leaders attempted to convince the Dutch authorities that they should arm the native population.[6] The Dutch were suspicious of the

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[4]Ibid., p. 29 and passim, July 15, December 15, 1941.

[5]Memorandum of conversation between Under Secretary of State (Welles) and Netherlands Foreign Minister (van Kleffens) of June 3, 1941, Foreign Relations, 1941, IV, 248-51.

[6]Sjahrir, Out of Exile, p. 278.

nationalists' motives and did not begin training native recruits for the East Indies Army until September 24, 1941. Only an insignificant number had entered service before hostilities began.[7]

The Dutch hoped that the Indies would be reinforced and held because of their strategic location and resources. This was the American and British intent, but there was little joint military planning with the Dutch prior to hostilities. When the British suggested the inclusion of a Dutch officer in staff conversations in Washington in December 1940, the State Department insisted that the exchange of views should be limited to British and American officers. The British were requested to inform the Americans of previous discussions with the Dutch.[8] As for the Dutch, they objected

> to any steps being taken by the British, Australian or United States Governments which could give rise to further claims on the part of the Japanese that some secret understanding or pact existed between the Netherlands East Indies and those Governments.[9]

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[7]Netherlands News, Sept. 15, 1941, p. 193; Nov. 1, 1941, p. 316.

[8]Welles, Memorandum of conversation with British Chargé, Dec. 14, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 238-39.

[9]Sumner Welles, Memorandum of conversation with Netherlands minister, Dec. 5, 1940, Foreign Relations, 1940, IV, 230-31. Nevertheless, the Dutch had just completed staff talks with the British in Singapore, Above, p. 41, n. 2.

It was not until April 22-26, 1941, that American, British, and Dutch commanders held inter-service talks. The terms of reference for these talks, in Singapore, required that no political commitments be made.[10] The conference results, known as the A.D.B. Agreement, mainly concerned the employment of naval forces. It was rejected by the American Chiefs-of-Staff because it included too large an area (Africa and New Zealand), called for too little British naval support in the Indies, and placed the United States Asiatic Fleet under British command. Thus, the conference failed to bring about a joint plan including United States forces. The British and Dutch did, however, hold further talks on April 27, with American observers present, to draw up plans for the disposition of British and Dutch forces.[11]

British and American staffs in Washington attempted to resolve the difficulties in the A.D.B. plan. Their revision, called A.D.B.2, was completed on August 25. It met most of the American objections, but the United States Navy Department was still unprepared to accept it. In November, the United States and British staffs finally agreed that joint staff meetings should be held in Manila,

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[10]Kirby, Loss of Singapore, pp. 61-62. Australia, New Zealand and India were all represented.

[11]Ibid., pp. 62-63.

after preliminary British meetings in Singapore, to work out a detailed joint plan. The preliminary British discussions were to have begun in Singapore on December 8, 1941. Thus, the war in the Pacific began with no agreed combined plan for action in the Far East.[12] When the Japanese attack came, it was opposed by hastily assembled allied forces under poorly coordinated joint commands.

The Dutch did what they could to help the cause of the Allies even before the Indies were attacked. The Dutch Navy, particularly the submarines, was actively engaged, and much of the small Netherlands East Indies Air Force was sent to assist the British in the defense of Malaya. When the Japanese invaded the Netherlands East Indies with landings on Tarakan Island on January 10, 1942, the limited Dutch ground forces were scattered throughout the archipelago and left with no effective air support.[13] The small force of cruisers and destroyers which the allies were able to muster was decimated in the Battle of the Java Sea while attempting to intercept the Java invasion convoys. The sacrifice of the Allied naval force delayed the invasion of Java by only one day.[14]

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[12] Ibid., pp. 76-86. [13] Ibid., pp. 431-32.

[14] Ibid., pp. 435-443; Morison, Rising Sun in the Pacific, pp. 342-58.

On February 28, 1942, the Japanese landed at three points on Java. The Dutch regular army in Java consisted of only 25,000 men. In addition, there were about 40,000 Home Guards of doubtful value. The other Allied elements were little more than token forces. There were about 8,000 men consisting of one British tank squadron and five anti-aircraft regiments (less most of their equipment), two Australian battalions and an American field artillery regiment. All ground forces on Java were under the command of Dutch Lieutenant General H. ter Poorten.[15]

The Dutch Navy and Air Force were often ineffective because they were greatly outnumbered and lacked modern equipment, but they fought bravely and generally gave a good account of themselves. The Dutch Army, however, made a very poor showing. Their weak, half-hearted defense of Java made a tremendous impression on the Indonesians.[16] The Dutch surrendered after only eight days. Some eight thousand British Commonwealth and American troops, under British Major General H. D. W. Sitwell, planned to continue fighting and had begun to withdraw into a mountainous area suitable for a last stand. General ter Poorten, aware of these plans, nevertheless surrendered all forces and

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[15]Kirby, Loss of Singapore, pp. 432-33.

[16]Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 101.

broadcast an announcement with the phrase, "all organized resistance having ceased," which compelled Sitwell to surrender his forces also.[17]

The formal instrument of surrender was signed by the allied commanders on Java on March 12. That same day the Japanese invaded Sumatra where they met little opposition. By March 28, they had occupied the entire large island.[18] Although Australian and Dutch troops were not evacuated from Timor until the following December and the Dutch flag continued to fly in the district of South West New Guinea throughout the war,[19] the fall of Java effectively signaled Japanese control of the Indies. The Dutch forces which remained were placed under General Douglas MacArthur's command on April 16, 1942.[20] The Island of Sumatra, however,

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[17]Ibid., n. 2, citing Air Vice Marshall Sir Paul Maltby, "Report on the Air Operations during the Campaign in Malaya and Netherlands East Indies from the 8th of December, 1941, to the 12th of March, 1942," Third Supplement to the London Gazette, Feb. 20, 1948, pp. 1401-02. Sitwell believed that the terms of surrender would have had "the effect in international law of placing those who continued to resist outside the protection of belligerent rights and subject to summary execution if captured. The Japanese were likely to exercise their rights in the matter." For an account of the fighting on Java and circumstances of surrender, see Kirby, Loss of Singapore, pp. 443-49.

[18]Kirby, Loss of Singapore, p. 449.

[19]Bernard H. M. Vlekke, The Story of the Dutch East Indies, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946), pp. 213-22.

[20]Netherlands News, May 1, 1942, p. 129.

was included in Wavell's Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) rather than MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA), with the remainder of the Indies.

The Japanese Foreign Office, Army, and Navy were not in agreement as to how the newly conquered East Indies were to be governed. All three wished to insure that the area be firmly and rapidly integrated into the Co-Prosperity Sphere, but they differed on the means to achieve this. The Foreign Office favored an immediate promise of independence. The Army agreed, in principle, that a nominally independent federation was desirable but wished to defer any promises. The Imperial Navy, which assumed responsibility for Borneo, the Lesser Soenda Islands, and Celebes, was opposed to independence. The possibility of an Indonesian state comprising all of the islands was discouraged by the organization of the occupation. Sumatra was not included in the East Indies command structure. It was under the administration of Malaya until late 1943 when it was made a separate military administrative area.[21] Unlike other Japanese-held areas, the Indies were not given an "independent" government early in the occupation.[22]

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[21]Kirby, War Against Japan, Vol. V: The Surrender of Japan (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1969), pp. 307-308.

[22]Russell H. Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 30.

The Japanese established schools to teach the Japanese language, trade, industry, finance and culture. Cities, and even streets, with Dutch names were given new Japanese names. The folly of these policies soon became apparent, however, and emphasis was shifted to promoting native culture. As an example, the city of Batavia was renamed Senan in August 1942, but in December of the same year it was again renamed Jakarta, after the Indonesian village which had been there before the coming of the Dutch.[23] The Japanese command in Java brought Soekarno back from exile and recruited him and Hatta to promote Indonesian cooperation. Initially, however, they refused to permit any type of nationalist activity. In December 1942, Soekarno was given permission to form a broad nationalist movement, Poetera, which had as its goals the elimination of western influence and the encouragement of support for Japanese aims and collaboration with Japanese military authorities. The Japanese Navy did not allow this organization to be set up in islands under its control. The movement was abolished in 1943, because it had failed to encourage cooperation with the Japanese.[24]

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[23]Netherlands News, Dec. 15, 1942, p. 100.

[24]Kirby, Surrender of Japan, p. 308, inaccurately indicates that the Japanese returned Hatta from exile as well as Soekarno and that Sjahrir did not return to Java until 1945. Actually both Hatta and Sjahrir were returned by the Dutch in January 1942, Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 225-30. Mohammad Hatta, The Putera Reports: Problems in Indonesian-Japanese Wartime Cooperation, trans. by William H.

Even though the Japanese soon recognized the need of emphasizing the native heritage of the Indies, it was not until August 1, 1943, that they announced plans to provide autonomy for Java. The native population was advised that a central council would be elected with the authority "to advise and submit proposals connected with administrative affairs to the Japanese military authorities." Indonesians would be given "the right to accept important positions in provincial councils and various military government departments." The Japanese did not indicate specific positions which would be open to natives.[25] It was not until September 1944 that eventual independence was promised to the Indies. By July 17, 1945, when the Japanese command finally decided to grant independence as soon as possible, the Allies had already begun the invasion of the Indies, and the surrender of Italy and Germany had made the defeat of Japan a certainty.[26]

Frederick (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Translation Series, Modern Indonesia Project, 1971), provides details of Poetera (Putera is spelling by post-independence rules) organization, objectives, and ultimate failure.

[25]Netherlands News, Sept. 1, 1943, p. 150; Kirby, Surrender of Japan, p. 309.

[26]Fifield, Diplomacy of Southeast Asia, p. 30; Kirby, Surrender of Japan, pp. 309-10. For a detailed discussion of Japanese occupation policies and the impact that they had on Indonesian nationalism, see Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, pp. 101-33.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF ALLIED MILITARY STRATEGY ON AMERICAN GOALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EAST INDIES

The conquest of Malaya and the East Indies in only three months gave the Japanese all of the resources for which they had gone to war. The Japanese strategy was now to consolidate and hold the perimeter they had established, until their enemies tired of fighting and accepted suitable terms.[1]

The conquest of the East Indies was vital to the Japanese war effort. On the other hand, the loss of the resources of the Indies was not crippling to American and Allied forces. While this source of material such as rubber and quinine was sorely missed, the Allies had adequate alternate sources of petroleum, the resource that made the Indies vital to Japan. To the Allies, the Indies in Japanese hands were critical more because of the position that they gave the Japanese to threaten the Allies. The threat to supply lines between the United States and Australia was serious. The Allies, particularly the

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[1]Kirby, Loss of Singapore, p. 449.

Australians, thought that there was also a threat of invasion of Australia. The Japanese, emboldened by the ease of their victories, did try to expand their conquests to include Midway and all of New Guinea,[2] but they had no plans to invade Australia.[3]

The Japanese Navy was checked at the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942. It was defeated at the Battle of Midway in June. These naval battles were the turning point of the Pacific war. The Battle of Midway thwarted Japanese attempts to land on that island, and the Battle of the Coral Sea disposed of the Japanese attempt to capture Port Morseby from the sea.[4] The Japanese did succeed in landing forces in Buna Gona area on the north coast of New Guinea in late July, but they were defeated by the Australian garrison when they attempted, in August, to land at Milne Bay at the southeastern tip of Papua. In September 1942,

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[2]Churchill, The Second World War, Vol. IV: The Hinge of Fate, p. 209.

[3]Robert L. Eichelberger and Milton MacKaye, Our Jungle Road to Tokyo (New York: Viking Press, 1950), p. 9; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, pp. 211-223. For a detailed account of this phase of the naval war, see Morison, History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, Vol. II: Coral Sea, Midway, and Submarine Actions (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1949).

[4]Eichelberger, Jungle Road to Tokyo, pp. 9-10. Port Morseby was the capital of Papua (Southeastern New Guinea).

the American and Australian ground forces in New Guinea were able to take the offensive.[5]

The Allied offensive in New Guinea made slow headway. It was April 1944 before Hollandia, just inside the Dutch portion of New Guinea, became the first territory of the Netherlands East Indies to be recaptured.[6] The Allied forces were a long way from the source of their supplies in the United States. The Japanese put up a stubborn defense. But, a major reason for the slow progress of the campaign in New Guinea was the low priority given the Southwest Pacific Area by allied strategic planners.

On March 27, 1941, American, British, and Canadian military planners, meeting in Washington, completed a staff agreement for joint action if the United States entered the war. The agreement, A.B.C.-1, called for concentration on the defeat of Germany first, even if one or more of the countries was also at war with Japan. Germany had a far greater military potential than Japan. Germany already

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[5]Ibid., pp. 10-16; Churchill, The Second World War, Vol. V, Closing the Ring, pp. 15-20.

[6]By amphibious operation. The ground offensive had only reached a point four hundred miles to the East. Churchill, Closing the Ring, pp. 472-76. Eichelberger, Jungle Road to Tokyo, pp. 17-62, 89-112.

controlled most of the European coast, making her a greater threat. England, at war with Germany, was far easier to supply and reinforce than was China, at war with Japan.[7]

Fearing that the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor would shake American resolve to stand by this decision, Winston Churchill hurried to Washington in December 1941. His fears proved groundless.[8] Churchill's assessment was that

> the defeat of Germany, entailing a collapse, will leave Japan exposed to overwhelming force, whereas the defeat of Japan would not by any means bring the World War to an end.[9]

"Germany first" may have been the wisest global strategy. However, this policy was a prime cause for the long Japanese occupation of the Indies. Even with emphasis on defeating Hitler first, the Netherlands East Indies, being the extreme southern penetration by the Japanese, might still have been retaken at an early stage in the Allied counter-offensive. Again, strategic considerations dictated otherwise.

At the Anglo-American planning conference at Quebec in August of 1943, Churchill proposed an operation, code named

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[7]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Two-Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1963), pp. 33-34.

[8]Churchill, The Grand Alliance, p. 542.

[9]Ibid., p. 589, from memorandum to General Ismay--written as a discussion paper for talks with Roosevelt.

"Culverin," to seize the western tip of Sumatra. He could not, however, even get agreement from his own staff on this point. As this operation would divert forces from the attempt to re-open the Burma Road, he stood little chance of convincing the Americans, who placed great emphasis on re-opening supply routes to China.[10] The Allied leaders decided, at Quebec, to by-pass most of the Indies and strike directly at the Philippines.[11]

The plan developed at the first Quebec conference was basically the one that was followed until the final two months of the war. However, there were other proposals and shifts of emphasis. The United States Navy wanted to by-pass the Philippines also. MacArthur and Nimitz presented their plans for further action in the Pacific at a conference, in Hawaii, with President Roosevelt and his advisors on July 26 and 27, 1944. The Navy plan presented by Nimitz was to strike directly at Formosa. MacArthur successfully argued against this concept. He pointed out the strategic importance of cutting off Japanese supplies and the folly of leaving such a large enemy force as a threat from the rear; but he also stressed the "moral obligation to release this friendly possession from the enemy,"

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[10]Churchill, Closing the Ring, pp. 69-78.

[11]Ibid., p. 75.

the adverse psychological effect of failing to liberate the Philippines, and the fate of American prisoners there. His plans also included re-capture of the Netherlands East Indies "from the rear" after the Philippines were secure.[12]

Admiral William D. Leahy stated that MacArthur, commenting on reports that some members of Churchill's government were in favor of obtaining a controlling interest in the Indies, contended "that the British should not be allowed to assume control of any territory that we re-captured from the enemy."[13] According to Leahy, MacArthur also, immediately after the conference, wrote the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Ernest J. King, objecting

> in his own vigorous way to a proposal that military control of the East Indies be turned over to the British after this area had been neutralized by American forces, either by capture or in by-passing many of the islands in our steady advance toward the Philippines. The exact British intentions were not known, but past experience indicated that if they did get control of some Dutch territory, it might be difficult to pry them loose.[14]

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[12]Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), pp. 196-99. MacArthur complained that he had no advance information on the purpose of the meeting; whereas Nimitz had a complete presentation prepared.

[13]William D. Leahy, I Was There, with foreword by President Harry S. Truman (New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950), pp. 249-52. MacArthur does not mention this incident in his Reminiscences.

[14]Ibid., pp. 254-55. MacArthur also wrote Leahy but only to reiterate the necessity not to by-pass the Philippines.

This nineteenth-century view of British intentions was similar to that of the administration, but King was the wrong man to address this particular appeal to. King recognized that, whoever liberated the Indies, the United Nations were obligated to return sovereignty over the Indies to the Dutch. King did not want to put the United States in the position of "liberating" the Indies only to return them to the Dutch. He preferred to leave this task to the British.[15]

The "proposed military control" by the British appears to have been Churchill's attempt to revive operation "Culverin" (the SEAC attack on Sumatra). The British again proposed this alternative to a campaign in Burma in early 1944. Roosevelt still objected, stating that

> lucrative as a successful "Culverin" might be, there appears much more to be gained by employing all the resources we now have available in an all-out drive into Burma . . . and ensure the essential support for our westward advance to the Formosa-China-Luzon area.[16]

Roosevelt's objections to "Culverin" may well have centered on his hopes of supporting China. The commander of American forces in that area was certainly opposed to the operation.[17] However, by Elliott Roosevelt's account of his

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[15]Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1952), pp. 569, 611.

[16]Telegram, Roosevelt to Churchill, quoted in Churchill, Closing the Ring, pp. 491-92.

[17]American General Joseph Stillwell, technically Admiral Mountbatten's Deputy Commander, had, without Mountbatten's knowledge, sent a delegation to Washington to oppose

father's ideas, the President's objections were also based on a desire to see the Dutch free from British colonialist influence.[18] It was not, however, Roosevelt's opposition which dissuaded Churchill. Rather, it was the arrival of a powerful Japanese fleet, including seven battleships, in Singapore. This fleet denied the Southeast Asia Command control of the sea necessary for the proposed amphibious operations.[19] By the time the Japanese fleet was all but destroyed in the Philippines' campaign,[20] the offensive in Burma was underway.[21] Churchill still wished to pursue "Culverin," but when he again raised the issue in July 1944, the British Chiefs of Staff insisted that resources were not now available.[22]

"Culverin" on these grounds before Mountbatten's Deputy Chief of Staff, General Albert C. Wedemeyer (also American), arrived in Washington to present the plans to the combined Chiefs of Staff. Ibid., p. 492.

[18]Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), pp. 224-25.

[19]Churchill, Closing the Ring, pp. 492-93.

[20]Churchill, The Second World War, Vol. VI: Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 155-59; MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 222-31.

[21]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 139-48.

[22]Anthony Eden, The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon, Vol. II: The Reckoning (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), pp. 535-42. Churchill does not mention this particular advocacy of "Culverin" in The Second World War, but Eden's diary entries make it clear that over a month, from July 6 until August 10, was required to convince Churchill that the operation was impractical.

The remaining plan for re-conquest of the Netherlands East Indies was a continuation of the operations which had regained control of the north coast of New Guinea. This operation was code named "Princeton." The Operation Plan, issued October 31, 1944, called for initial landings in the Netherlands East Indies, on Borneo, on April 20, 1945, and on Java on July 10, 1945.[23]

The Netherlands East Indies were not on any direct road to Tokyo. MacArthur's campaign in New Guinea had initially been to protect his supply lines to Australia and later to obtain bases from which to attack the Philippines.[24] Churchill's proposed seizure of the tip of Sumatra was primarily aimed at denying the Japanese access to the Indian Ocean. The Japanese power in the Indies, cut off from the homeland, was expected to simply "wither and die without the need for costly fighting."[25]

This Allied attitude toward the islands for which the Japanese had gone to war was possible because the Japanese had been unable to exploit the resources which were vital to their war effort. By the time the Allies had adequate

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[23]Southwest Pacific Area Command, Outline Plan, "Princeton," MacArthur Memorial Archieves, Norfolk, Va., RG 3, Box 128, pp. 10-13.

[24]Eichelberger, Jungle Road to Tokyo, pp. 138, 158-161.

[25]Churchill, Closing the Ring, p. 75.

ground forces to re-capture the Indies, the Japanese merchant fleet had been virtually destroyed.[26] The Japanese expected to be importing enough oil from the Indies in 1944 (28.6 million barrels) to cover their usage. Instead, imports reaching Japan fell from a high of 14.5 million barrels in 1942 to only five million barrels in 1944. No oil reached Japan in 1945.[27]

The reconquest of the Indies had become a mere mopping-up operation of by-passed troops. Operation "Princeton" was expected to complete this mopping-up by mid-1945.

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[26]Japan started the war with six million tons of merchant shipping. They captured 800,000 tons in the early months of the war and completed 3,300,000 tons of new construction. Nevertheless, by December, 1944, there were only 2,500,000 tons left. Most of the Japanese merchant fleet was destroyed by United States Naval forces (60% by submarines, 30% by aircraft, and 10% by surface ships), Morison, Two-Ocean War, pp. 494-511.

[27]The last tanker to attempt the trip left the Indies on March 19. For complete statistics see Kirby, Surrender of Japan, app. II, pp. 467-70.

CHAPTER V

DUTCH PLANS, AMERICAN POLICY, AND THE EVENTS OF 1945

The Dutch were confident that they would again rule the East Indies after the Allied victory. While strategy to bring about the defeat of the Axis with the greatest speed and least bloodshed lengthened the Japanese occupation, the Dutch made plans for the restoration of their rule in the Indies. In spite of the Dutch record as colonial masters,[1] these plans were viewed by Roosevelt and Hull as conforming more closely to the American ideals of self-determination for colonial possessions in Asia than those of England and France. The President admired the Dutch and believed their promises of reform. He never criticized Dutch colonial policy as he did that of England and France.[2]

In August 1941, Queen Wilhelmina hinted at post-war reforms. In a radio address, she stated that

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[1]Above, pp. 7-9; Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia, p. 22, summarizes, "Despite the constitutional advances, the Netherlands East Indies was far removed from self-government at the outbreak of the Second World War."

[2]Smith, American Diplomacy during the Second World War, p. 92, also cites Roosevelt's Dutch ancestry as a factor in this different attitude.

> it will be necessary to form a post-war committee of all parts of the empire, to give due consideration to the needs and aspirations of individual parts of the realm . . . .[3]

On November 13, 1941, the Netherlands government replied to a request from native members of the Netherlands East Indies People's Council that the government define its attitude toward the Atlantic Charter.[4] The Dutch stated that the Netherlands Government had recently approved the Charter. They affirmed that, although the Atlantic Charter did not concern itself directly with the internal affairs of individual states, "every government accepting the Charter should also be willing to accept the principles as far as rules of conduct inside the State are concerned." The declaration concluded with a statement that the conference which the Queen had promised would consist of "prominent persons from all parts of the Kingdom." It would provide "an opportunity to form a clear idea of the stage of development which has been reached, and to plan reforms." Not very specific in its promises, this statement must have been further weakened in the eyes of the Indonesians by its protestation that "these principles were already adopted long ago by the Netherlands Government."[5] This statement might satisfy

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[3]Netherlands News, Aug. 15, 1941, pp. 105-06.

[4]Above, p. 22.

[5]Netherlands News, Dec. 1, 1941, p. 64.

Americans, but it could hardly satisfy the Indonesian leaders who were still in exile in New Guinea or the outlying islands.[6]

With the Dutch declaration of war on Japan, both their treatment of the Indonesian nationalists and their promises for future political reform changed. Some less radical exiled Indonesians were repatriated to Java.[7] At the height of the fighting in the Indies, the Dutch foreign minister, Dr. Eelco N. van Kleffens, visited Washington. He made an announcement, certainly designed to please his hosts, that post-war plans for the Indies called for independence in everything but foreign and military affairs.[8] Writing in August of the same year, van Kleffens admitted that the war had hastened the progress toward self-government. He explained that

> people in the Netherlands Indies, the Natives as well as the Dutch, succeeded remarkably well in looking after their own public affairs after the German invasion of the Netherlands had cut them off from the mother country. As always since 1900, the central government was quick to perceive that a new step forward could therefore be initiated.[9]

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[6]Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 222-25.

[7]Ibid., pp. 225-32.

[8]New York Times, Feb. 24, 1942, p. 10.

[9]Eelco N. van Kleffens, "The Democratic Future of the Netherland Indies," Foreign Affairs, XXI (October, 1942), 101.

Earlier in the same article van Kleffens defended the previous slow progress in emancipating the Indonesians on the grounds that the population had not been ready to govern itself because

> no sort of democratic atmosphere existed there to start with; on the contrary, the indigenous population had an ingrained static particularism, only a slight degree of civic conciousness, and little sense of unity . . . . The units of the Netherlands Indies which now exists depends on the presence of Dutch rule. . . . Take the Dutch element away, and the whole edifice would crumble into fragments.[10]

With the Dutch Foreign Minister believing that the Indonesians were incapable of governing themselves, it is understandable that the Netherlands government was unprepared to deal with the Indonesian independence movement in 1945.

The Netherlands Minister of Commerce, Pieter A. Kerstens, speaking in New York on July 17, 1942, took a different stance on the effect of the war on the development of the Indies. He stated, "As a matter of fact, the war and Japanese occupation of the Indies seriously interfered with the development of an autonomy which was evolving more and more quickly." His view of the future of the East Indies, however, corresponded with that of van Kleffens. He saw the area as "one of the four equal autonomous parts of the

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[10]Ibid., pp. 97-99.

kingdom of the Netherlands--the Netherlands, the Netherlands East Indies, Surinam and Curaçao."[11]

Queen Wilhelmina was also in the United States in the summer of 1942. She arrived in Washington on August 5.[12] It was during this visit that President Roosevelt extracted a commitment from the Queen to follow in the Netherlands East Indies the example of the United States in the Philippines. FDR said,

> She promised me that her government would announce, immediately after victory in Japan, that they were going to grant the peoples of the Dutch East Indies first dominion status, with the right of self-rule and equality.
>
> Then, after their government has been established, if the people, by free vote, decide that they want complete independence, they shall be granted it. Just as we are granting it in the Philippines.[13]

Elliott Roosevelt believed that Wilhelmina broke her promise.[14] Actually, she never had the chance to keep it. She did, on the eve of the anniversary of the Japanese attacks in the Pacific, December 6, 1942, broadcast a strong re-affirmation of the Dutch plan to make the East Indies

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[11]Netherlands News, Aug. 1, 1942, pp. 57-58. After visiting her daughter, Princess Juliana, and her grandchildren in their wartime home in the Berkshires.

[12]Ibid., Aug. 15, 1942, p. 83.

[13]Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, pp. 223-24.

[14]Ibid., pp. 250-51.

(and West Indies and Surinam as well) equal partners in what she now called a commonwealth. In this commonwealth, there would be "no room for discrimination according to race or nationality." While she assumed that the resultant governments would have a "combination of independence and collaboration," she recognized that "no political unity nor national cohesion can continue to exist which are not supported by the voluntary acceptance and the faith of the great majority of the citizenry."[15] Although the American President might talk of complete independence for the Indies, it does not appear that the Netherlands Government thought that a majority of the Indonesians might want independence.

The Dutch government-sponsored Netherlands News printed, for American consumption, a detailed analysis of the Queen's speech. Noting that Wilhelmina had, for the first time, officially referred to the area as "Indonesia," the paper speculated that it was impossible to foresee what would happen when the Indies completed "their growth towards nationhood." The analysis concluded with the hope that the Indonesians would not choose independence when ready for it. Rather,

> if the relations established between the Dutch and the Indonesian inhabitants over a period of centuries count

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[15]Netherlands News, Dec. 15, 1942, pp. 106-09.

> for anything, it is by no means incredible that the association should prove permanent.[16]

While the Queen promised everything short of total independence to the Netherlands East Indies, the remnants of the pre-war Indies government, in Australia, prepared for their return to the Indies. In September 1943, the American counsul general at Batavia--"temporarily at Melbourne, Australia"--advised General MacArthur that the Netherlands Indies authorities had established a school for the training of civil servants for the Indies. The course was offered to Europeans, Eurasians and native Indonesians, both those who were refugees or members of the Dutch armed forces in Australia and other Netherlands subjects who were being sent from other parts of the world to attend.[17]

Of more interest than the school which Foote described were his comments that, although he was doing his best to eliminate it, "Netherlands and Netherlands Indies authorities are still suspicious of our intentions as regards the Indies, although this fear is growing less," and that he would appreciate any advice that MacArthur might have on

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[16] Ibid., pp. 103-06. The analysis is attributed only to "well-informed Netherlands quarters."

[17] Letter, Sept. 3, 1943. MacArthur Memorial Archives, RG 4, Box 2.

what attitude he should take with the Netherlands East Indies officials. He added that he had "had no instructions of any sort from the Department of State on the subject."[18]

American military planners asked the State Department about policies to be followed in occupied territories. In the case of territories previously belonging to the United Nations (and France), the primary question raised was the limits of the military commander's powers and the nature of his relationship with the authorities of the colonial powers.[19]

The State Department replied with a summary of the status of United States-Dutch negotiations on the handling of civil affairs in the Netherlands East Indies and recommendations concerning the principles that should be included in agreements with the Dutch. They reported that the lieutenant governor-general of the Indies, Dr. Hubertus J. van Mook,[20] was in route to Australia for discussions with

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[18]Ibid.

[19]Director Civil Affairs Division, War Department (Major General J. H. Hilldring) and Officer-in-Charge, Occupied Areas Section, Navy Department (Captain H. L. Pence), to Director of Office of European Affairs (Dunn), Feb. 19, 1944, Foreign Relations, 1944, V, 1190-94.

[20]Van Mook was head of the Netherlands East Indies government. The Governor-General was in a Japanese P.O.W. camp, Netherlands News, Mar. 15, 1944, pp. 26-27.

General MacArthur before presenting the Dutch proposal for an agreement.[21]

The State Department recommended for military commanders that any agreements, in addition to providing full freedom of action for the commander, should follow the principles already agreed upon for administration of the European territory of the Netherlands. Agreements should be

> predicated on the assumption that the exercise of all attributes of sovereignty will be resumed by the Netherlands Government as soon as the situation, in the judgment of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, permits.

The United States interest in future government of the Indies was not, however, neglected. The recommendation went on to say that

> no commitments should be made which would prejudice the right of the Government of the United States to bring up certain proposals for discussion and agreement of a general character which it may believe to be of rightful concern to the United States Government and to all governments which have subscribed to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, and to the Four Nation Declaration at Moscow. . . .[22]

Cordell Hull explained, in retrospect, that

> we did not want agreements . . . which would militate against our presentation of proposals relating to the eventual independence of the Netherlands Indies.

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[21]Dunn to Hilldring, Feb. 28, 1944, Foreign Relations, 1944, V, 1195-97.

[22]Ibid., p. 1197.

Admitting that the United States might be thought to be presumptuous in telling the colonial powers what to do with their Pacific possessions, he excused the action on the basis of the American belief that the continuance of colonial possessions in the Orient "provided a number of foci for the future trouble and perhaps war," and that a lasting peace in that area

> was of greater ultimate benefit to Britain, France, and the Netherlands--as well as the whole world--than the possible immediate benefits of holding on to colonies.[23]

At least Hull was right in his belief that these areas would be the scene of future troubles.

The negotiations between van Mook and MacArthur were quickly concluded. Van Mook announced, on March 9, 1944, that a new government would be formed for the Netherlands East Indies in June. He was asked if the United States and Britain had given any specific guarantee concerning the territorial integrity of the Netherlands East Indies. He replied, "That has never been in question." He also stated that he had conferred with General MacArthur and had received assurances of the "closest cooperation."[24]

The actual agreement was signed by MacArthur and forwarded to van Mook on December 10, 1944. It contained no

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[23]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1600-01.

[24]At a press interview in Melbourne, Netherlands News, Mar. 15, 1944, p. 26.

language identifiable with recommendations by the State Department as to United States rights to future proposals concerning guarantees under the Atlantic Charter or anything else. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine what might have been put in a status-of-forces agreement that might have been prejudicial to such rights. After a short preamble which stated that the agreement was strictly to provide practical solutions to wartime problems and the arrangements "in no way affect the sovereignty of the Netherlands Government," it was devoted entirely to specific jurisdictional matters. Among these was the agreement by the Netherlands Government to "resume as rapidly as practicable, even in combat areas, full responsibility for the civil administration," and the commitment for the American Commander in Chief to notify, "as rapidly and fully as the military situation in his judgment permits," the Lieutenant Governor-General of the extent to which such responsibility should be resumed.[25] These provisions were in full accord with MacArthur's view that civil authority should be restored as rapidly as possible.[26] Although no formal arrangements had been completed at the time Hollandia,

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[25]Letter, MacArthur to van Mook, December 10, 1944, MacArthur Memorial Archives, RG 4, Box 2; the text of the enclosed agreement is printed in Foreign Relations, 1944, V, 1286-89.

[26]MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 234-35.

the first Dutch territory to be re-taken, was captured, the return to Dutch rule was accomplished with few problems.

Landings in the Hollandia area began on April 22, 1944.[27] On April 25, MacArthur's headquarters announced that officers of the Netherlands East Indies Civil Administration (NICA) had landed with the Allied forces.[28] These officials, who had been trained in Australia and the section of Dutch New Guinea which had never fallen to the Japanese, opened the first Netherlands administrative post in the Hollandia area on May 2. There were only about one hundred NICA officials available, but they were supported by elements of the Netherlands Indies Army who acted as Veldpolitie (rural police). Allied forces dealt with the native population through the NICA. The Dutch were pleased with the manner in which civil authority was returned to them. According to the Dutch reports, the natives were happy to have them back.[29]

The Dutch anticipated that the only enemy to be faced in the return of the Indies to Dutch rule was the Japanese. The Indonesian nationalist movement had been weak before the war. The Dutch had received reports of resistance to

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[27]Eichelberger, Jungle Road to Tokyo, p. 105.

[28]Netherlands News, May 1, 1944, p. 159.

[29]Ibid., May 15, 1944, p. 202-3.

the Japanese by the natives and of worsening living conditions, especially on Java, under Japanese rule. The Japanese were unable to keep their army in the Indies properly supplied and could certainly spare no shipping for normal imports. The Dutch believed that if they could relieve the natives' suffering and provide "certain necessities of life, for instance some textiles, medicines, etc." when Allied forces liberated Indies territories, they would create the conviction "which would spread like wild-fire through all the occupied territories" that the liberation by United Nations armies would bring such relief.[30]

The United States authorities had no reason not to accept the Dutch belief that there would be little problem with the native population. The American intelligence agency, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), prepared a report shortly before the Allied landings on Tarakan and Borneo which wholly supported this. The OSS report, which relied heavily on radio monitoring and press reports for indications of conditions in the Islands, cited food shortages, medical neglect, and transportation difficulties. From internal OSS resources the report contained information on the existence of an extensive underground organization among the Chinese population of Sumatra. While this group

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[30]Letter, C. O. van der Plas, Chief Commissioner, Netherlands Indies Commission, to MacArthur, Nov. 9, 1943, MacArthur Memorial Archives, RG 7, Box 2.

appeared to have had clashes with the Japanese, it had not yet carried out open revolt or guerrilla activities. Its main purpose was sabotage and aiding the Allies when they landed. Admitting that nothing was known of other guerrilla activities in the Indies, the report concluded that

> the whole trend of recent events and the existence of deplorable local conditions may well justify a suspicion that the time is near when the endurance of the population will reach a breaking point, and guerrilla bands will gradually come into existence, if they are not already active.[31]

The State Department's assessment of the prospects for the return of the Indies to Dutch rule began with the statement:

> At the conclusion of the war there will probably be a generally quiescent period in the relations between the Dutch and the native population of the Netherlands East Indies. . . . the great mass of natives will welcome the expulsion of the Japanese and the return of the Dutch to control. Only in some areas, as in sections of Sumatra, will the Dutch face a difficult problem because of anti-Dutch sentiment and the shortage of Dutch manpower.[32]

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[31]United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, The Amerasia Papers: A Clue to the Catastrophe of China, by Anthony Kubek, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Laws Print, 2 vols., 91st Cong., 1st Sess., 1970, II, 1584-88.

[32]Acting Secretary of State (Grew) to Secretary of War (Stimson), June 28, 1945, Foreign Relations, 1945, VI, 573.

This statement was a reasonable assessment of what might have occurred had the schedule of operations for "Princeton" been maintained and landings on Java executed on July 10, 1945.[33]

A decision to concentrate forces for the invasion of Japan itself had been confirmed at the Malta and Yalta conferences.[34] This decision entailed abandonment of other operations which did not contribute to preparations for this invasion. However, MacArthur was permitted to continue with the initial phases of "Princeton." An Australian force with American and Dutch elements landed on Tarakan on May 1, 1945, and organized resistance ended by June 24. Meanwhile the Allies landed in the vicinity of Balikpapan on Borneo in early June. The natives indeed did seem happy to have the Dutch return. General L. H. van Oyen, Commander of the Dutch Army elements involved in the operations stated, "What I have seen at Balikpapan and Tarakan strengthened my

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[33]"Princeton" Basic Outline Plan, p. 12. For an assessment of Indonesian feeling at the time, see Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 250-59.

[34]These conferences also resulted in the Russian commitment to declare war on Japan three months after the defeat of Germany. Leahy, I Was There, p. 311-12, 384-85, was opposed to both the invasion of Japan and encouragement of Russia to enter the Pacific war; MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 260-61, considered the invasion necessary, although many of his staff disagreed, but was opposed to Russian participation; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 333-34, went along with Roosevelt at Yalta in accepting the American army evaluation that the invasion was required, and if the Home Islands were to be invaded, the job would be made much

belief that we will be welcomed back with open arms on all the other islands of the Indonesian Archipelago."[35]

What General van Oyen, the OSS, and the State Department did not realize was the true state of the nationalist movement on Java. What they could not know was that the unexpectedly early surrender of Japan would result in an armed Indonesian Republic which would have been governing this key island for over a month before the first Allied troops arrived.[36]

These Allied troops were British. The American Joint Chiefs of Staff decided, on June 14, 1945, to limit future operations in the Pacific to activities directly supporting the invasion of Japan. The decision came too late to affect the Borneo operations, but in time to cancel the invasion of Java.[37] General MacArthur objected to this decision as it applied to the Indies. He claimed that he had never been able to determine why the invasion of Java had been vetoed in Washington "even in the face of my assurance that its full success was certain at minor cost." He noted that the

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easier if the Japanese could not bring home their army from Manchuria.

[35]Netherlands News, June 15, 1945, Aug. 1, 1945, passim.

[36]The British, who provided these troops, were equally unprepared for this "metamorphosis," Kirby, The Surrender of Japan, p. 307.

[37]Leahy, I Was There, p. 383.

decision "soon bore fruit in the chaos that ensued in that portion of Indonesia." He blamed the refusal on "political meddling in what was essentially a military matter."[38]

Although MacArthur objected to the postponement of the invasion, he no longer objected to the transfer of the Indies to the Southeast Asia Command, when MacArthur became Supreme Allied Commander of a unified Pacific Command for the forthcoming assault on Japan. He sent a message on February 25, 1945, recommending that this transfer be made after the completion of Australian operations in Borneo. On June 27, he again recommended that areas south of the Philippines be turned over to the British and handled by them in coordination with the Dutch.[39] This apparent change in attitude[40] is explained by the fact that MacArthur assumed that the British would now use the same Australian and Dutch forces which he had committed to the campaign.[41] Before the British could take any action the war had ended and the Indonesians had declared their independence.

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[38]MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 256.

[39]United States, Department of the Army, Reports of General MacArthur, Vol. I: The Campaigns in the Pacific, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), pp. 391-92.

[40]MacArthur had previously objected to the British-run SEAC taking any part in the liberation of the Indies, above, p. 57.

[41]MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 262, states flatly that "the Australian and Dutch units would garrison the Netherlands East Indies," in his discussion of the new command structure approved at the Potsdam Conference.

The Dutch had quite effectively suppressed the pre-war Indonesian nationalist movement.[42] The Dutch themselves began the breakdown of this suppression when they returned some of the anti-Japanese leaders of the movement from exile before the Japanese conquest. The Japanese, after initially ignoring the nationalists, attempted to use them to promote cooperation with the occupying troops. Instead, the Indonesians used the Japanese.

Soekarno's treatment by the Japanese disappointed him, but he remained convinced that collaboration was the key to eventual independence.[43] Hatta was anti-fascist but he ran the Japanese-sponsored Poetera for Soekarno.[44] Sjahrir, on the other hand, led the underground.[45] These three leaders, who were to become the president (Soekarno), vice president (Hatta), and prime minister (Sjahrir) of the Indonesian republic, maintained communications during the occupation.[46] When rumors of the Japanese capitulation

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[42]Above, pp. 11-12.

[43]Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 245-46.

[44]Hatta, Putera Reports, pp. 3-5. Analysis of Hatta's motives is in introduction by William H. Fredrick. Soekarno was the "Great Leader;" Hatta was the "General Director," Ibid., p. 41.

[45]Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 111-15. The Allied intelligence reports were correct in that there was a strong pro-Allied underground--there were four--but these organizations were not pro-Dutch.

[46]Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 245-53.

reached Java, they spurred into action the several underground organizations which had been poised to rise against the Japanese when the Allies should land. Sjahrir was anxious that the Indonesian Declaration of Independence not be tainted as a Japanese gift.[47]

The collaborators, led by Soekarno and Hatta, were hesitant to defy the Japanese, who had just moved the promised date of independence from 1946 to September 1945. Soekarno and Hatta were finally convinced when the Japanese told Hatta that, since the surrender, the Japanese occupation forces were agents of the Allies and could not allow independence.[48]

The final draft of the Indonesian Declaration of Independence was prepared on the night of August 16.[49]

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[47]Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 134.

[48]After Soekarno and Hatta had been kidnapped and released by an underground group, Ibid., p. 134-45; Sjahrir, Out of Exile, pp. 256-57.

[49]At the house of the Senior Japanese Naval Officer in Java and head of Naval Intelligence Operations in the Indies, Vice Admiral Mayeda. Sjahrir, who provided a draft declaration, did not attend these meetings because of the taint of Japanese control. However, Mayeda had simply lent his house, Out of Exile, p. 258; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 136. Mayeda's role in the Indonesian independence movement is still the subject of controversy. He appears to have truly supported it--contrary to the Navy policy. He was possibly attempting to subvert it with anti-Stalinist communism. He may have even been attempting to split and control the movement, Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, pp. 115-19.

Soekarno read it to a small group outside his house on the morning of August 17. It was soon broadcast throughout the Indies, by Indonesians behind locked doors, over the Japanese radio and telegraph networks.[50]

The Japanese Army command was in a quandary. The terms of surrender required that they maintain the status quo until Allied troops arrived. But to do so would have produced a full-scale war, with the Japanese fighting on behalf of their recent Western enemies. They compromised. They sought to prevent further arming of the Indonesian troops who had immediately turned against their Japanese commanders and, in many cases, either seized arms or persuaded local Japanese garrisons to surrender them. However, they allowed the Indonesians to establish their government and gain civil control over much of the island.[51]

An Allied intelligence group of seven officers parachuted into the Batavia airport on September 8. They apparently contacted only the Japanese and more moderate Indonesian leaders.[52] Their report recommended that initial

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[50]Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 136.

[51]Ibid., p. 138. An example of the Army's indecision is the fact that they arrested Vice Admiral Mayeda and his staff for aiding the nationalists, but they did not arrest the nationalist leaders. Ibid., pp. 136-37.

[52]Ibid., p. 142, n. 8.

landings consist of only British troops, but they stated that

> the bulk of the native population are indifferent to all political movements. . . . The problem follows pre-war pattern. Most Nationalist leaders draw their following from intellectuals, . . .

The report noted that the Japanese took the possibility of disturbances very seriously and that Dutch internees and other Europeans were "seriously perturbed." Nevertheless, the group thought the Nationalists were "confused in their aims and badly organized," and their report concluded that "once transport and security problems are solved, other tasks will be comparatively simple."[53]

British Naval forces arrived on September 16, but it was two weeks later before the first troops were landed. As Prime Minister Attlee explained to the House of Commons on December 1, 1945, after the extent of the problems in the Indies became evident, the transfer of area responsibilities

> was intended to be gradual, with a view to ultimate, but not immediate, war-like operations. . . . The Japanese offer to surrender transformed the whole position . . . . Instead of concentrating all our forces on successive strategic objectives in Southeast Asia, we had to disperse our manpower and means of transport . . . to take the Japanese surrender over an enormous area.

He went on to explain that it was necessary in some cases to depend on the Japanese to maintain order, but in Java this did not happen. The cease-fire in the Pacific occurred on

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[53]Report quoted in David Wehl, The Birth of Indonesia (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1948), pp. 37-38.

August 15, 1945. The Indonesians declared their independence on August 19. Japan formally surrendered on September 2. The British could not have occupied Java before that date. The British forces actually arrived on September 29. They found that the Japanese had allowed the Indonesians to take complete control. Some of the Japanese forces had even surrendered and turned over their arms to the Indonesians. Although the Indonesians allowed the British to land with no difficulty, they threatened to oppose Dutch landings. Attlee emphasized that the British did not want to fight the Indonesians. He suggested that the terms which the Dutch were offering appeared to be a sound basis for negotiations.[54]

The American policy toward the problems developing in the Netherlands East Indies in the final months of 1945 was essentially negative. On December 19, 1945, the State Department issued a press release recognizing that "the primary responsibility for arriving at an agreement lies with the Netherlands authorities, as representatives of the territorial sovereign, and the Indonesian leaders." The State Department advised the United States delegation to the United Nations General Assembly that all they should say on the question was that the parties concerned should settle the dispute by negotiation. If the Netherlands insisted

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[54]Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1943-1945, pp. 75-79. For details of the worsening military situation and the initial attempts of negotiated settlement in late 1945, see Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, pp. 39-108.

that the problem was not properly of concern to the United Nations, the United States delegate should state that any problem relating to peace and security was proper for United Nations consideration and that the solution of the conflict "should be in harmony with the principles and ideals of the United Nations Declaration."[55]

This was hardly a continuation of the strong anti-colonialist policy of Cordell Hull and Franklin Roosevelt. Hull had resigned because of ill health after the 1944 election, and Roosevelt had died in April of 1945. Hull's successor, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., remained after Roosevelt's death only until the completion of the organization of the United Nations at San Francisco in June 1945. During his short term, he was occupied with reorganizing the State Department, attending conferences, and establishing the United Nations.[56] President Truman's first Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, took office just in time for the Potsdam Conference and was soon enmeshed in the problems of post-war Europe. In particular, he was

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[55]Memorandum for American delegation, Dec. 26, 1945, Foreign Relations, 1946, VIII, 787-89.

[56]Richard L. Walker, E. R. Stettinius, Jr. and George Curry, James F. Byrnes, Vol. XIV of the American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy Series, ed. by Robert H. Ferrell, Advisory ed. Samuel Flagg Bemis (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 83, states that "in the crucial months before and after the death of Roosevelt the United States needed a Secretary of State of major stature. Unfortunately, the genial dreamer and idealist, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., was not the man."

occupied with the rapid deterioration of the wartime alliance with Russia. In his account of the period, Byrnes mentioned the problems in the Indies only as an embarrassment. The Russians challenged United States and United Nations pressure to evacuate Russian troops from Iran by pointing out that British troops remained in Indonesia.[57]

During 1945, the new President attempted to carry out Roosevelt's policies, as he understood them. But he was faced with surrender of Germany and Japan, pressing European problems, and increasing Russian intransigence, not to mention domestic responsibilities. Truman did mention, in his memoirs of the year 1945, his intent to continue the opposition to colonialism, which he described as "hateful to Americans." He repeated the familiar theme that by granting independence to the Philippines the United States would set an example for the other powers with Pacific and Asian possessions.[58] He did not even mention the Indonesian revolution as one of the concerns of American foreign policy.

One writer attacked the lack of American action during the early months of the Indonesian revolution as having been

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[57]James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), pp. 111, 123, 129.

[58]Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: Vol. I, Year of Decisions (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1955), p. 275. Truman makes no mention of the problems that arose in Java during the year.

a result of anti-colonialist public opinion in the United States, "except, as the London Times recently remarked, in the case of Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico."[59] The dilemma of whether to support an ally or the principle of anti-colonialism still remained.[60] Public opinion in the United States was generally sympathetic to the Indonesian nationalists. A principal goal of the American government, however, was the economic recovery of Europe. Policy makers concerned with the recovery of the Netherlands feared serious adverse effect from the loss of the East Indies.[61]

Between 1946, when the United States again became active in attempts to resolve the problems in the East Indies, and 1949, the American government limited its efforts to attempting to persuade the Dutch to take a reasonable stance toward the insurgents' demands. The goal of influencing the Dutch to grant self-government to the

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[59]F. Barents, "New Trends in Dutch Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, XXV (Jan., 1947), 331.

[60]A problem that the British now also faced in Indonesia. The Labor Government was committed to implementation of self-government for India and Burma and hesitated to appear to support continued Dutch colonialism in the Indies. Kirby, The Surrender of Japan, p. 312.

[61]William Reitzel, Morton A. Kaplan, and Constance G. Coblenz, United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1955 (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1956), pp. 222-23.

Indonesians and prepare them for eventual independence continued to guide American policy.[62]

In the crucial period from the end of August 1945 until the end of that year, the United States had not abandoned this policy. The United States was not, therefore pursuing a policy of "salutary neglect," which could not achieve these goals. The American policy makers were simply unprepared for the situation which developed. Furthermore, military considerations in the closing months of the war had left the United States in a position where it was difficult to exert much influence on the events in the Indies immediately after the Japanese surrender.

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[62] Ibid., pp. 222-26. The success of communist-led movements, particularly in China, as well as the refusal of the Dutch to adopt a reasonable stance, led, in 1949, to a shift in American policy to support of the non-communist Indonesian nationalists movement.

CONCLUSIONS

Franklin D. Roosevelt hoped that Allied victory in World War II would provide an opportunity to use American influence to bring self-determination and, eventually, independence to the Asian colonial possessions of European powers. The United States would set an example by granting independence to the Philippines and a new international peace-keeping organization would be dedicated to ending colonialism.

Roosevelt and his advisors anticipated that these anti-colonialist goals would be met with reluctance from the British and resistance from the French. The Dutch colonial record of repression of native independence movements gave no cause for expecting Dutch acceptance of these objectives. Nevertheless, based on Queen Wilhelmina's assurances, Roosevelt was confident that the Dutch would follow the American example. The Dutch government-in-exile issued statements that appeared to justify this confidence. The Dutch promised that, after the war, the Indies would become a self-governing member of a Dutch Commonwealth and the native Indonesians would have the same rights as the Dutch. The Dutch did not promise independence, but Roosevelt expected that independence would eventually come.

The American leaders anticipated British hostility to independence for the Netherlands East Indies because the granting of independence by the Dutch would accelerate demands for independence in India, Burma, and the other British possessions in Asia. British influence on the Dutch would have to be minimized. For this reason, the restoration of Dutch rule in the Indies by forces under American command became an essential element of the American plan for the future of the Indies.

Military considerations delayed the liberation of the Indies until the closing months of the war. During the last year of Japanese occupation, the Indonesian nationalists were promised independence. During the final days of the war, they were promised immediate independence. Between the announcement of the Japanese surrender and its formal signing, the nationalists--who had become much stronger than the Dutch, British, or Americans realized--seized control of Java.

The American-led reconquest of the Indies--operation "Princeton"--was stopped before the planned invasion of Java. Roosevelt was dead, and the military chiefs of staff convinced President Truman that pursuing this operation would interfere with the invasion of Japan. The area commander, General MacArthur, believed that this unwise decision was based on political rather than military considerations. One of the chiefs of staff, Admiral King,

did believe that it would be poor policy for the United States to be the country that returned the Indies to Dutch rule. This belief could hardly have failed to influence his position on the continuation of "Princeton."

The British were assigned the task of accepting the Japanese surrender in the Indies and returning the area to Dutch rule. With a Labor government in power, the British did not act as Roosevelt had anticipated. They fought the Indonesians when necessary to establish control, but they insisted that the Dutch negotiate with representatives of the Indonesian Republic.

The Dutch also failed to act as Roosevelt had anticipated. Finally convinced that they must negotiate, they made concessions which they honored only until they believed that they had sufficient forces in the Indies to suppress the nationalists.

During the critical period in the last four months of 1945, the United States failed to take any action. The American goal of ending colonialism in the Netherlands East Indies was achieved. However, it was achieved through revolution and four years of bitter struggle. The United States did not exercise the leadership in ending colonialism which Roosevelt had envisioned. The conflict between the Dutch and the Indonesians became an embarrassment to the United States in the United Nations, and the drain on Dutch

resources adversely affected the American goal of restoring Western European strength. The American goal for the Indies was achieved in spite of the failure of the United States to follow the policy which the Roosevelt administration planned for the area.

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