

NSC BRIEFING

27 August 1953

INDONESIA

President Sukarno's independence day speeches on 16 and 17 August gave little indication of the policies which the new Indonesian government will adopt. While their moderate tone probably points to those policies he would prefer, his views cannot be interpreted as a clear outline of the course which will be followed by the cabinet. Except in cases of crises, he normally assumes the role of an impartial chief of state largely divorced from policy making and the business of government.

On 16 August Sukarno mentioned security measures against dissident forces, and referred specifically to the Darul Islam, a fanatical Moslem organization against which the Communists and National Party leaders of the present cabinet are conducting a violent propaganda campaign. He also mentioned the Bambu Runtjing, an important element among the 5,000 Communist-led dissidents. In speaking of foreign aid, he mentioned both TCA (Technical Cooperation Administration) and the Colombo Plan, stating that aid was being "continued with good results." He pointed out that important regulations, which a few months ago provoked criticism from leftist elements in parliament, have so far produced satisfactory results. In discussing rubber, he made no reference to seeking new markets in China

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as members of the cabinet have done, but stated that the quality of Indonesian rubber should be improved and that the decrease in Indonesia's foreign exchange which resulted from the slump in rubber prices should be offset by increased production of other products.

In his 17 August speech, he emphasized that Indonesian democracy is "still in a process of growth" and must be permitted to seek "its own form, its own accent." He said that the new cabinet was the result of democratic efforts and "truly evidence" that Indonesia would not abandon democratic parliamentary procedure. He stated forcefully that the army should not interfere in politics and that the government should bring charges against any member of the armed forces who did so -- a statement which could be used by the cabinet to rid the army of anti-Communist officers.

To date the new government has taken no definite steps. Its working program, adopted on 13 August, differed little from that of previous cabinets. The program is to be presented to parliament early in September.

The chief threat presented by the cabinet does not appear to be the imminence of a complete Communist takeover or the imposition of strikingly leftist policies. The danger lies in the opportunity presented for widespread Communist infiltration of the various government departments and agencies, the armed forces and the national police. Although Sukarno might take

drastic steps in the event of a Communist coup or marked cooperation with the Communist bloc, he is unlikely to recognize a creeping form of Communism and take steps to halt it.

So far anti-Communist elements in the army and parliamentary opposition appear to have adopted a policy of watchful waiting, limiting their activities to democratic processes. There are no firm reports of plans by rightist elements for a coup d'etat.