

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 969000
By NARA Date 7-1-01

ORIGIN/ACTION
Ca-6

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

Pal 19 Mathian
FOR RM USE ONLY

RM/R	REP	AF
1		
ARA	EUR	FE
	5	
NEA	CU	INR
		5
E	P	IO
		1
L	FBO	AID
AGR	COM	FRB
INT	LAB	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR
ARMY	CIA	NAVY
3	28	1
OSD	USIA	NSA
34	10	3
		NSC

A-278

CONFIDENTIAL

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO : CANBERRA, THE HAGUE, MEDAN, SURABAYA, USIA, PAC FOR POLAD

Assigned to
ANALYSIS BRANCH
Action Taken
DATE: July 9, 1969

FROM : Amembassy DJAKARTA

SUBJECT : WEST IRIAN: The Nature of the Opposition.

- REF :
- A. Djakarta's telegram 3614 of June 9, 1969.
 - B. Djakarta's telegram 3445 of June 3, 1969.
 - C. Djakarta's A-199 of May 14, 1969.
 - D. Djakarta's A-69 of February 19, 1969.

Date of Action 7-1-69

Office Symbol

Name of Officer

SUMMARY

The Free Papua Movement (OPM) is not the all-pervasive revolutionary organization some believe it to be. Other than a small leadership cadre operating in the Djajapura area having cross-border contacts, anti-government dissidents have virtually no liaison with each other, receive no outside assistance or direction, and are generally incapable of mounting an insurrection in the face of the relatively large Indonesian military establishment in West Irian. Grievances and anti-GOI sentiment are quite real, however, and there is little question that a great majority of the non-Stone Age Irianese favor a termination of Indonesian rule. Opposition to the GOI stems from economic deprivation over the years, military repression and capriciousness, and maladministration. Limited efforts of the GOI to rectify these problems to date are generally "too little and too late," and it is uncertain whether the Indonesians will actually try to ameliorate the sources of local discontent in coming years. Despite the undercurrent of opposition, anti-government elements have been unable to translate words into deeds and there is little likelihood that the few existing internal security threats will be allowed to get out of hand. It is difficult to predict whether the GOI will be prepared to take harsh repressive measures or seek to establish good government and further economic progress in the region. The outcome is likely to be mixed and uneven.

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals,
not automatically declassified.

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

In Out

FORM 4-62 25-323

rafted by: POL:AFIa:rho 7/8/69

Contents and Classification Approved by:
POL:RFS:Stutz, Jr.

learances:

1969 JUL 11 PM 5 34

COPYFLO-PBR

CONFIDENTIAL

2

The Opposition

The Free Papua Movement (OPM) is widely believed to be the core of opposition to the Indonesian Government in West Irian. But it is difficult to track down the OPM as an organization, although not because its security is tight or people unwilling to talk. On the contrary, everyone talks about the OPM; it has few, if any, secrets, and many Irianese proudly proclaim they are "members" of the OPM. A foreigner travelling in West Irian has no difficulty in contacting anti-government activists. They stop you on the street and groups of them gather around when you visit a native village; in short, no one is reluctant to discuss the OPM and their reasons for disliking Indonesians. One American missionary explains this by saying that "the Papuans simply are unable to keep a secret." Of course, information known to foreigners is also available to the Indonesian authorities, the Army, and even to the most casual observer.

The OPM is not an Irian-wide centrally-directed or even loosely-federated organization. Outside of Djajapura and the border area, there is little contact among dissidents, although the elusive "central board" of the OPM in Djajapura claims to have "contacts" in four (and only four) West Irian towns. External contacts are restricted to the Papua/New Guinea border area and there is no evidence that external aid is coming into other parts of West Irian, particularly since the 11-man propaganda publishing ring in Djakarta, which periodically sent anti-government leaflets to Biak, was broken up by the police in early May. More importantly, there is no contact between the centers of armed dissidence in north Biak, the Bird's Head, and Enarotali. J. Rumbobiar, an Awom lieutenant and former Manokwari police official during the UNTEA administration, told the reporting officer that Awom's group was not in contact with any other armed dissident group or any OPM "central leadership"; Awom had never received any assistance from outside sources but had "seen" (not disseminated) a few leaflets smuggled in from Djakarta; and that Awom expected no help from the Dutch, whose aid he would not accept, or from "so-called" OPM leaders Marcus Kasiepo, Nicholas Jouwe, and Herman Womsiwor, whom Rumbobiar criticized for living comfortably overseas off Dutch money.

The OPM, however, does represent an amorphous mass of anti-Indonesian sentiment. Card-carrying members of the OPM as such must be few, although partisans claim that it has anywhere from 1500 to 5000, or even 500,000 members. Irianese political leader Frits Kirihio, a recently purged member of the provincial assembly (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah or DPRD), estimated the number of hard-core anti-government leaders to be only about 150, not including politicians like himself who privately support West Irian independence but, realizing the unlikelihood of achieving such a goal in the near future, were keeping to the sidelines, preferring to lay the groundwork for political maneuvering in the post-Act of Free Choice (AFC) period. The goal of these pragmatic politicians is to capture more provincial government positions for themselves and Irianese in general. In adopting this view, there is plenty of room for personal ambition and at least six leading Irianese, including Kirihio and former governor Bonay, are rumored to be angling for the governorship.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

969000

By

NARA Date 7-1-01

Djakarta A- 278

CONFIDENTIAL

3

Regarding the magnitude of the opposition to Indonesian rule, probably a decided majority of the Irianese people, and possibly 85 to 90 percent, are in sympathy with the Free Papua cause or at least intensely dislike Indonesians. An American missionary in Biak described a situation there which reflects, in microcosm, the attitudes of the West Irianese. The Biak congregation of the Indonesian Pentecostal Church split a year ago into two approximately equal factions: those favoring continued union with the Indonesian church headquartered in Djakarta and those anti-Indonesians (politically as well as religiously) who favored the creation of an independent Irianese Pentecostal Church. While a year ago, only 50 percent of the congregation exhibited pro-independence views, the missionary estimates that over 75 percent now are hostile to the Indonesians.

Translating words and sentiments into action is quite another thing, however. Father J. Duivenvoorde, secretary to the Bishop of Merauke, characterized anti-government movements as "much talk, no action." Despite rumors that there would be a general uprising on some specific date, the magic day inevitably passes without a ripple. Bold activists declare their intention to assassinate UN Ambassador Ortiz-Sanz (or Ambassador Sudjarwo, Interior Minister Amir Machmud, or military commander Sarwo Edhie) the next time he comes to town; again, there has been no indication of any serious attempt to fulfill such threats. Conversely, Father Duivenvoorde pointed out, three times the desired number of recruits turn out to join the Indonesian Army and no one in Merauke, not even the most violent activist, passes up an opportunity to attend a party given by the bupati or some other government official. If there were serious plans to launch a rebellion, he concluded, the population of the town would have long ago fled to the bush, there would be boycotts, strikes or other signs of mass resistance, and some dramatic act of defiance would have occurred by this time.

In short, there is a great deal of talk which has not and probably will not be translated into action. There is no indication that the OPM, under the leadership of its "committee of twenty" in Djajapura and encouraged by other Irianese leaders has the capability of directing a revolt against the Indonesians. The necessary coordination and lines of communication presently do not exist, resources are lacking, and the will to act is fragmented.

Sources of Discontent

There is no doubt that the sources of Irianese discontent with Indonesian rule are real and the scars left from past abuses will continue to fester for many years to come. In more candid moments, Indonesian officials admit to the GOI's poor record in administering West Irian and they agree, for instance, that the GOI has not acted quickly enough to remove incompetent and politically questionable appointees from the Sukarno and Subandrio heyday. Prior to the appointment of Brigadier General Sarwo Edhie as military commander in July 1968, West Irian was administered as a fiefdom of vested, particularly military, interests. As noted in reference D (pages 9-11), the "New Order" cleanup has

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

4

begun, but barely. Efforts are still being made to oust the more corrupt officials, but the GOI is proceeding very slowly and there has been no initiative to remove Djakarta-based officials, such as the Ministry of Interior's Director for West Irian Affairs Marwoto, who are identified with the old regime.

In addition to the failure to remove these inept officials, maladministration is common, especially in areas having large concentrations of military personnel. Local military commanders often run the large towns, like Manokwari, and civilian officials have little authority. The military is generally noted for its rapaciousness stemming from, among other things, low pay and inadequate rations, as well as for a tendency to degrade the Irianese because of their darker skin and lack of civilized attributes. The military community in Manokwari, for instance, numbering approximately 3000, places an almost intolerable burden on the local economy. The Manokwari area produces enough food, excluding rice, for its population, but the large influx of military personnel for mopping up the Arfak rebellion has resulted in shortages of fruits and vegetables, so crucial in this region with its poor soil. Soldiers commonly expropriate agricultural commodities intended for sale in the local marketplace. Local merchants now remove rice from their shops when a troopship enters port to avoid selling their entire supply to disembarking soldiers who purchase the grain (from savings earned while aboard ship) and then resell it in the market at higher prices. Retail shops in Manokwari are, with few exceptions, military owned or operated. The army also has an adverse effect in certain other areas where merchants are not allowed to operate unless "licensed" by the military or where soldiers simply take goods from the shops without payment.

Military repression has stimulated fears and rumors of intended genocide among the Irianese. These fears in large part have been generated by shooting incidents involving trigger-happy, jittery troops. In mid-May, for example, a suspected OPM courier was hunted down and shot by a twelve man army patrol which might just as easily have captured him. A serious military atrocity was narrowly averted in the relatively peaceful area of the south coast near Agats when a boatload of Police Mobile Brigade troops, ready to fire into a wooded shore area lined with natives armed with bows and arrows, was prevented from doing so by a newly-appointed district head whom the troops were escorting. Rather than forcing his way into the area at gunpoint to solve a local dispute the district head (an Irianese) returned the next day without an armed escort and successfully resolved the problem.

Perhaps the most oft-cited grievance of the Irianese is that the Indonesians cleaned out the shops and storehouses in the period immediately following their takeover of West Irian administration in 1963. Missionaries reported that they had witnessed Indonesian military personnel loading up Air Force planes at night with goods taken from local merchants. Within two months of Indonesian takeover on May 1, 1963, there was an acute shortage of food and consumer goods. It is

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

5

little wonder that the Irianese look back fondly to the Dutch days when such items were in relatively abundant supply.

The Enarotali affair is a good example of how general and local grievances can combine to spark trouble. The GOI explanation that the revolt of the local police was inspired by purely local causes, not involving opposition to the AFC is in conflict with the testimony of local missionaries. The latter reported that three local district heads, the rebel leader Wanmafma among them, insisted on application of the one man-one vote system and forced the departure of Indonesian teachers and officials so that there could be a free and unfettered election. Other causes of the incident were: (1) the police had not been paid for two months prior to the April 30 incident; (2) the people wanted the Paniai kabupaten capital moved from the coastal town of Nabire (population approximately 6000) to Enarotali with a surrounding population of about 40,000; (3) the government failed to replace the bupati who, in addition to feuding continually with his district heads, was accused of large-scale corruption in selling at high prices the food, clothing and tools meant for free distribution among the people; (4) the government's failure to begin construction of a road from Enarotali to Nabire despite repeated promises to do so; and (5) the allocation of more AFC council seats to the less populous town of Elaga which was considered "safe" by the government in contrast to the "political unreliability" of the Enarotali people.

The sources of discontent, then, have diverse roots. Although many of these problems, particularly those involving the military, are similar to those faced by the inhabitants of other parts of Indonesia, the situation in West Irian, if not rectified and drastically improved, will continue to provoke widespread discontent and unrest.

Internal Security

The Indonesian Armed Forces have between 6000 and 8000 troops in West Irian at present, composed of two undermanned battalions of the local Tjenderawasih division and elements of the Hasanudin (Makassar), Brawidjaja (Surabaya), Siliwangi (Bandung) and Merdeka (Menado) divisions. Navy and Air Force detachments are small and confined to their respective bases. The Marine detachment previously stationed in Biak was repatriated to Java in May. In addition to locally-raised police forces, there is one battalion of Police Mobile Brigade troops stationed on the south coast. In the Manokwari area most of the troops were introduced in mid-1968 to quell the Arfak rebellion led by Loedwijk Mandatjan. Since the official termination of the rebellion in January 1969, several of these units have been assigned to other areas. Although military commander Sarwo Edhie's stated policy is to rotate troops in and out of West Irian annually, the reporting officer encountered troops of the Hasanudin and Brawidjaja divisions which had been stationed there for four and five years. Sarwo Edhie has stated that his primary duty between now and the completion of the AFC is to keep law and order. There is little doubt that he will be able to do so with his impressive array of forces.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 969000
By NARA Date 7-1-02

CONFIDENTIAL

6

The location and strength of the three active insurgent groups have been reported in reference B. It is interesting to note that the GOI has officially branded insurgent leaders as criminals. Moreover, Indonesian officials refuse to acknowledge publicly that these insurgencies are politically inspired. For example, both the leader of the north Biak rebels, Frits Awom's brother, and Wanmafma, leader of the rebellious Enarotali policemen, have been charged with embezzling government funds. Thus, they can be hunted down, imprisoned and dealt with as criminal code violators rather than as political prisoners who might at some point be eligible for amnesty, possibly at the instigation of the UN.

It is questionable whether these insurgent groups can hold out much longer. To date, the military has not begun to root out the north Biak rebels (numbering approximately 150) due to lack of roads into the area and a shortage of small boats needed to effect coastal landings. Awom's forces, presently estimated at only 50 or 60, are being contained in the mountains of the Bird's Head and no military pressure is being applied to them. The only actively prosecuted anti-insurgent operation is that against the Enarotali rebels, whose strength is calculated by GOI sources to be down to 90 as a result of recent defections. The military strategy in this situation is to isolate the rebels and persuade them to abandon their resistance. As Sarwo Edhie told a gathering of native leaders in Enarotali on June 5, all will be forgiven if the rebels come out of the bush and surrender their weapons.

In all areas but Enarotali where the rebel policemen are well-armed, having taken their weapons with them, the insurgents have few modern weapons, very little ammunition and no supplies. Awom's Bird's Head forces were reportedly extremely short of food and his lieutenant, Rumbobiar, said that the men have fewer than a dozen World War I and II vintage rifles. Missionary sources in the Manokwari area believe Awom will be forced to surrender within a few months, despite protestations that he will fight to the end. The north Biak rebels are in even worse straits. Reportedly they have only three or four rifles and are unable to find food in the scraggly forests of that coral island. According to Mansoer Achmad, a government Information Service official, these rebels were told by their leaders that a foreign submarine would appear, bringing food, goods and weapons. This reversion to the "cargo cult" idea was also found in other areas of West Irian. The reporting officer on several occasions was told by anti-government activists that they were waiting for plane and boatloads of supplies from an unspecified foreign source.

Information is very scarce in West Irian concerning recent border incidents and concentrations of criminal or anti-GOI political elements in the Papua/New Guinea border area. Government officials, including Sarwo Edhie, have declined to comment on the situation. It is known that some of the border crossers had arms, and rebels in a border camp east of Tanah Merah are reputed to be in possession of a machine-gun. Also, frequent border crossings by canoe have been reported on the north coast. Indications are that the border will continue to be the scene of incidents, as more Irianese flee from the Army's campaign to repress anti-government sentiment as the AFC is concluded.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

966000

By

NARA Date 7-1-02

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

7

In conclusion, it is just a matter of time before the Indonesian military cleans out the pockets of armed dissidence. The only remaining question is to what extent (and expense) the GOI is prepared to go in quashing active dissidence. Overreaction and brutal repression would have an undesirable effect on international opinion but, then, the Indonesians have been known to ignore these consequences in quashing other revolts in the past.


ALBRAITH

CONFIDENTIAL