

## Declaration by Hubertus Johannes van Mook on Dutch policy in the Netherlands East Indies (Batavia, 6 November 1945)

**Caption:** In a declaration on 6 November 1945, the acting Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies, Hubertus Johannes van Mook, proposes a programme intended to establish the future status of Indonesia.

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Official English text of the Netherlands Government declaration  
issued by Dr. H.J. van Mook in Batavia on November 6th 1945.

*Indis Nierl*  
*(Government official)*

The course of events after the surrender of Japan has caused a considerable confusion and circumstances outside the control of the Government have prevented them until now to make public the main outline of the intentions with regard to the political reorganisation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Indies. As long ago as 27th January 1942 a round table conference for this purpose was announced, to be held after the liberation of all the occupied territories, and on December 6th of that year the principles of reorganisation were sketched in a speech of Her Majesty the Queen. The main clauses were:

" I visualize, without anticipating the recommendations of the future conference, that they will be directed towards a commonwealth in which the Netherlands, Indonesia, Suriname and Curaçao will participate, with complete self-reliance and freedom of conduct for each part regarding its internal affairs, but with the readiness to render mutual assistance. It is my opinion that such a combination of independence and collaboration can give the Kingdom and its parts the strength to carry fully their responsibility both internally and externally. This would leave no room for discrimination according to race or nationality. Only the ability of the individual citizen and the needs of the various groups of the population will determine the policy of the Government."

The conviction that the Kingdom can only be re-built on these principles of racial equality and co-operation has since become widespread. The idea of a partnership, which is new in history, has developed as a form that can give complete satisfaction to a national consciousness that has grown under enemy occupation. In the confusion of these days, however, this national consciousness not only chose the direction of proclaiming a Republic of Indonesia, with the co-operation of the Japanese Military Government, but at the same time there were put into effect an anti-Netherlands propaganda and a system of terrorism against the people of dissenting opinion of such violence, that publication would have been useless and incompatible with the dignity of the Government. As long as thousands of defenceless Netherlanders, who had only just come through the worst of enemy oppression, were exposed to danger and a free discussion was thwarted by threats, it remained impossible to commence the work of common reconstruction. Now that the danger for the liberated internees has been greatly lessened through the aid of our Allies and the situation with regard to freedom of speech and contact seems to have somewhat improved, the

moment has come to elaborate the Government's programme, based on the speech of Her Majesty the Queen on December 6th 1942.

The Government recognise the legitimative aspirations of the Indonesians towards a national existence and are convinced that these aspirations can be realized by a process of evolution through a friendly co-operation between Indonesians and Netherlanders.

Their general purpose is, therefore, the rapid development of Indonesia as a partner in a Kingdom, which will be constructed, to guarantee the national self-respect of all the member peoples. To that end the Central Government of that country will have to be reconstructed, by legal process, in such a way that it will consist of a democratic representative body, with a substantial majority of Indonesian members, and a Council of Ministers, under the Governor-General as the Representative of the Crown. This organization will govern the internal affairs of the country, assisted by subordinate organisations to take care of the regional and local public interests. The suffrage shall be a subject of further consideration, but it will have to rest on the foundation of a freely shaped public opinion and of an adequate representation for all important sections of the body politic. Indonesia will be called upon to become a full partner in the Kingdom, which will be organised as a Commonwealth, consisting of participating territories. The manner in which this basic idea will be realised is to be proposed by the round table conference and to be decided by the constitutional authorities of the Kingdom.

Problems like that of a regional Flag beside the Flag of the Kingdom, will also have to be decided on the recommendation of the same round table conference. The administration of Indonesians and other non-Dutch citizens to the general services of the Kingdom, can be systematically increased forthwith. Regulations and institutions based on racial discrimination or considered as such, will be abrogated or reformed. The distinction between a Netherlands and an Indonesian Civil Service shall be abolished; the unification of Penal Courts and procedures shall be completed. The admission of Indonesian and other citizens of non-Netherland origin to the highest posts in all public services will be rigorously extended and full mutual co-operation ensured. It will also

be necessary to find a place for Indonesians and other non-Netherlands citizens in the staffs and management of business. The educational system will have to be reformed in such a way that illiteracy is eradicated as rapidly as possible and that it can offer to the inhabitants every form of training, needed by the community. In order to broaden its base an exchange with the Netherlands and with foreign countries will be promoted. The development of Indonesian civilisation will retain full attention. The organisation of honest and full public information can be mentioned in this connection. The Indonesian language and other important native languages will be systematically developed for modern use in order to make them fully serviceable for the needs of cultural, social and economic life. The recognition of the Indonesian language as an official language besides Dutch will be made complete. The knowledge of Dutch and of the main world languages will be increased. The economic policy will have for its objective the rehabilitation and the extension of the general prosperity of the population. It will be implemented, under a strong and systematic Government guidance, by specially designed organisations and efficient planning. Room will be made for the development of business of every size for all racial groups and the participation of Indonesians, Indo-Chinese and Indo-Arabs in big business will be furthered. By all means, including industrialisation, an increased production and an improved distribution of income will be pursued, and the expansion of native capital will be vigorously advanced.

An efficient co-operation with the Netherlands and with other countries will strengthen the base of this policy without influencing its aim. As a result of the disorganisation, caused by war and occupation, a social policy extending to all classes will be more necessary than ever. The monetary situation shall have to be straightened out as quickly as possible by provisional measures in order to stabilize it, due account being taken of the economic and financial position of Indonesia. A strong armed force will be built up on a base of general integration of defence to which all races will contribute and in which they will take their part. The citizenship of Indonesia will be clearly defined on a foundation of racial equality, without neglecting the special legal needs of the several groups. Problems like the agrarian question will have to be solved within that framework. The reconstruction of Indonesia can only be attained by a real co-operation between its citizens of different race and between

the Netherlands and Indonesia, who are far stronger together than apart. That reconstruction will have to be quickly taken in hand, as otherwise the general impoverishment and lawlessness will grow to such an extent, that recovery will hardly be possible. The continuous deterioration and the destruction must end. Only by following the lawful way of reform the process of reconstruction can begin. The Government therefore urgently appeal to all people who have the interests of this country at heart to join their forces to that end. The Government fully realise that years of Japanese oppression and Japanese propaganda, years of isolation from the outer world, and the confusion and distress during the period of transition, following the war, have been the cause of violent acts and demonstrations, which under normal circumstances would have been prevented, or repressed under the penal code. They realise that co-operation can only be achieved when these circumstances are fully taken into consideration in judging various acts. Such co-operation is impossible if Netherlanders and Indonesians remain under the influence of feelings induced by violent happenings.

But if much of what happened during and after the occupation is better forgotten, a number of acts will have to be adjudicated to satisfy the sense of justice. Those who knowingly and actively harmed their co-citizens and their country either by voluntary co-operation with the enemy or by committing or inciting to commit crimes against persons or their possessions will have to be brought to justice. Furthermore, the lawful possessions stolen by the enemy or by others, must be restored to their rightful owners as far as possible.

The problem of war damages will have to be treated separately, taking into consideration the individual position of the victims and the collective capacity of the country. In solving this problem we must be guided primarily by the necessity of restoring general prosperity. Finally all the arms which have been passed over illegally by the enemy, or which have been stolen must be restored to the Allies and the carrying of arms must be restricted to people who legally are entitled or licensed to do so. It is urgently necessary that the reconstruction of Indonesia is started as soon as possible. The present dissensions carry the country even nearer to chaos, which neither the people nor the international world can tolerate. The moment has come for all who

want to undertake the work of reconstruction to join hands. Moreover, as it is the intention of the Government to convene the round table conference at the earliest possible date, it is doubly necessary to restore order to enable us to proceed with the nomination of representatives by a general consultation, that is free of threats and intimidation.

The whole country is waiting for the moment when reconstruction can begin and the misery which many are suffering can be alleviated. The Government observe with the greatest concern the growing divergence caused by misunderstanding and excitement. They are convinced that on both sides the will is there to solve the conflict and to commence constructive work. In the foregoing Declaration of policy they have pointed the way by which the present barren discord can be ended.

10.11.45.  
NH/HB