

Report made by LT. COL. ROELOFSEN of the ROYAL NETHERLANDS MARINES, about his stay and work as Chief of Staff to Captain P.J.G. HUYER, R.N.N. at Sourabaya from 29th. September, to 1st. November, 1945. 010 A

The journal of all actions taken, kept by me, also all notes, were stolen from me by the representatives of several organisations purporting to call themselves "Republic Indonesia".

This report is, however, compiled from memory and is not specially in chronological order.

The report only contains the principal matters of my personal experiences and can be looked upon as an appendix to the report which will be handed in by Captain Huyer in due course.

29th. September 1945.

A meeting in the Oranje Hotel with the Jap Commanding Admiral and General, who were ordered in most final and definite terms

- (a) to maintain order and peace until the arrival of the Allied troops;
- (b) to recall for this purpose and re-arm if necessary the Japs ~~as well as already~~ *put into internment camps.*
- (c) *to ensure that all buildings etc. occupied by the Japs as well as all stores were kept intact.*

30th. September 1945.

In the morning by plane to and from Malang with the following instructions:

- (a) to get a general impression;
- (b) to inspect the Naval barracks;
- (c) to order the Jap Commanding Officer (Colonel) to maintain order and peace with all available means.

- Re (a) above, Malang made an impression of not being entirely quiet
- Re (b) above, buildings and furniture were seriously neglected.
- Re (c) above, I gave the order to the Jap C.O. (According to ~~misheard~~ rumours reaching us later, it seemed that the Jap C.O. followed this order up.)

1st. October 1945.

Made the ordered inspection of the buildings of the Naval Military Court, Sumatra Street, and the Naval Barracks at Goebeng. Gave the order to the Officer-in-Charge to prepare the buildings in readiness for the Allied Troops. The M.H.G. Barracks area had been extended with the houses situated between Slamet Street (included) and the Cannalaan (not included) up to the grounds of the High School. (Some houses near the above mentioned ground not included) The Naval barracks at Goebeng contained a greater number of small firearms, some machine guns, field guns and approximately 50 motor cars half of which had no tyres. I gave the order to keep all this intact, in the strictest terms.

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In one of the houses annexe there was a workshop for woodwork and in another house a workshop for metalwork, both in very good condition and with complete inventories. In the afternoon Sourabaya became very unquiet. Scores of motor cars filled with people belonging to the lowest classes of the local population, armed with all kinds of weapons, drove through the town, shouting "Merdeka". On the Darmo boulevard I saw a Jap Army patrol stop a truck and chase the people off with the greatest of ease, collect bamboo poles etc. and have the car pushed on to the grounds of the Police post by the very same people they had chased off. In my opinion this shows that the people were still afraid of the Japs, and that the Japs could keep them in order by very simple means. The people did not possess any firearms, but during the course of 2nd. October, and the following days they disarmed and imprisoned in the beginning only single posts then entire guards and afterwards whole troop concentrations with hardly any resistance from the Japs, except for some make-believe resistance in some cases. From this moment onwards the mob acquired all kinds of Japanese hand and firearms, sub-machine guns, machine guns etc., even armoured cars and tanks, with which they drove through the town at a furious rate.

2nd. October 1945.

Groom

Sourabaya in full rebellion. Wing Commander Groom (R.A.F.) brought some representatives from Soedirman to Captain Huyer, R.N.N. namely Widjosewojo, Angka and a third. They informed us that the "taking over" ~~exercise~~ had started. In the strictest terms they were told that whoever did the "taking over" from the Japs would held fully responsible for everything that happened afterwards, and that the maintenance of order and peace would rest in the hands of those who took over as well as the responsibility for all Jap stores and Jap occupied buildings etc., etc., as they were the property of the Allied Command.

3rd. October. 1945.

(a) During the absence of Captain Huyer, R.N.N. three persons (not in uniform) unorganised but armed boys) came and proposed to me in the name of B.K.R. that they should take over the guard duties as well as the management of the Oranje Hotel, which was refused.

(b) In the evening went to the house of Soedirman in Van Sandickstraat with orders from Captain Huyer to Soedirman to restrain the mob from attacking the aerodrome. ~~Captain Huyer would then order the Japs to restrain the mob from attacking the aerodrome.~~ Captain Huyer would then order the Japs to remain quietly in the aerodrome camp, so that no more blood would be shed, the mob could be quieted down and the damage of the aerodrome camp cease. I was received rather well, and after some superfluous talk it was decided to use the Dutch language. With Soedirman were a score of "leaders" seemingly rather overwrought, one of them a young hothead who through his "big mouth" had quite a lot of influence.

(c) During one of the inspections made by me of the Jap Naval Staff quarters during these days, I found there a German (Dr. Schreiber) interpreter of the ex German Navy. He said "he merely lived in the town" and could not or would not give any information about his work at the staff Headquarters. I put him under arrest in the building and instructed the guard from the town police to that effect.

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4th October 1945.

The biggest part of the Japs disarmed and imprisoned by the mob. There was still a Jap guard at the Oranje Hotel. Again the request was made by the Indonesians to take over the guard duties at the hotel as they said the Jap guard provoked "the people". This was accepted by Captain Huyer on the following conditions:

- (a) the guard of police personnel to be in uniform;
- (b) the guard and the post to salute Captain Huyer, R.N.M. and his Chief of Staff;
- (c) the weapons of the Japs to be handed in to Captain Huyer.

In the afternoon I was called by the guard and there found that an Inspector of the Police Force had already taken over the guard duties, driven the Japs together and collected all weapons. He refused to hand same over as they were the property of the "Republic". In view of these facts Captain Huyer submitted to the situation.

In the meantime the Indonesian leaders had agreed after many long talks to have a liaison man at the hotel as contact by phone with the leaders was practically impossible. This system did work though incompletely and in rather a vague way. After two days the liaison man disappeared without any warning. In the morning I made an inspection at the Jap Naval Head Paymaster's office and found there approximately f.7.000.000. The next day, accompanied by Paymaster Lt. Cdr. Siegers, R.N.M. I went there again and demanded f.2.000.000 which I gave to Paymaster Lt. Cdr. Siegers. In the afternoon I went to the Naval Base to inspect same. Notwithstanding the Police escort (strong, 8 armed town policemen) which had been there for two days I was refused admission in the name of the Nationalist Committee. This was done by a group of people (the lowest class) from the pre-war native base personnel armed with a variety of arms who informed me that the Resident Soediman and his Police Force had no say whatsoever in the Naval Base area. (They said: "In the early days it was exactly the same with your own Naval Base Police Force"). The Police Inspector of the Town Police Force lost 'face' and was furiously angry, but didn't dare to force the entrance to the base so that I had to return to the hotel.

5th. - 9th. October 1945.

The chaos increased steadily. Captain Huyer's car with it's police guard disappeared. The hotel guard of Police personnel was relieved by the B.K.B. (boys not in uniform lead by "Prijadi-potlood" dressed in fantastic clothing, and using Jap methods). All Dutch people isolated in the Oranje Hotel.

9th. October 1945.

Captain Huyer left for Batavia by night express, under the protection of Soediman's men. He left the order for me and the rest of the staff to stay in Soerabaya.

- (a) to have preparatory talks with the Jap General and Admiral's staffs about the re-occupation of Soerabaya by Allied Forces;
- (b) to survey the Headquarters of the Jap Army and Navy, and all Japanese P.O.W. as they belonged to the disposition of the Supreme Allied Command
- (c) not to do anything else.

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At about 8 p.m. an officer of the Jap Naval staff brought me the translation of a signal from Batavia received via Saigon, which said: "The British Warship H.M.S. RECRUIT will be at the entrance of the swept channel on 10th. October at 0700". As a result of this signal the Jap admiral recalled the Jap warships which were on their way to Batavia, and had them anchored near the Djamoelang reef. I ordered the Jap Staff Officer to send a signal to the C-in-C. Batavia via the Jap Naval Staff at Batavia. The contents of this signal from memory were:-
"Received news H.M.S. RECRUIT 10th. October at 0700 at entrance swept channel. Jap ship ? can take her in under command Senior Officer. Commanding Officer Jap Ship imprisoned by Indonesians. Request anchorage upstream Madpera Strait and contact me for explanation. Signed Lt. Col. Roelofsen." H.M.S. RECRUIT never arrived and I never heard any more about it. I did not dare to use the wireless sender already installed in the Oranje Hotel through the good offices of C.P.O. Telegraphist Sanders, to get confirmation of the Jap signal as I thought the arrival of a warship at Sourabaya rather too delicate a question to be made known too soon.

10th. October 1945.

In the course of the day, I received word from a Chinaman about the experiences of Captain Huyer and his party. This story was true as Mrs. Blok-bergen who was one of the party, told us afterwards. Wing Commander Groom informed me that Captain Huyer was locked up at the ex-British Consulate at Kajoon, Sourabaya. Investigations about papers had not taken place. Further, they were preparing the house to receive more "guests", and rumours reached me that all Europeans would be taken into custody on the following day. This I signalled to the C-in-C in Batavia. I decided not to destroy my journal and to divide up the money in my possession as follows in order to try and save it: Myself - f.100.000; Lt. Hulseve - f.100.000 and Pay. Lt. Cdr. Siegers - approximately f.70.000. This we camouflaged as packets of cigarettes. In the course of the night C.P.O. Sanders signalled on his own initiative to Melbourne: "If nothing more is heard we will have been arrested." Melbourne signalled a receipt of said signal.

11th. October. 1945 - 27th. October 1945.

After inspecting rooms and possessions the B.N.R. arrested all Dutch people staying in the Oranje Hotel and many of their possessions disappeared during the search. When I opened my door at 7 a.m. 6 firearms were pointed at me handled by as many boys under the leadership of a certain "Djaja" an official of the Ministry of Justice who came to arrest me in the name of the Indonesian people. They allowed me to have a shave and dress which bored the native on guard duty to such an extent that he just disappeared. I made use of this disappearance to hand my revolver plus ammunition to Wing Commander Groom at the same time requesting other British officers to take the papers from Captain Huyer from the place where they were hidden and keep them. (The natives later took these papers away from them as some of them were in Dutch) During the night of the 10th. I had ordered the officers of Captain Huyer's staff and of the RAFWI not to resist when arrested firstly as ~~these~~ were four women and children with the RAFWI and secondly as I feared heavy reprisals for women and children in Sourabaya as a result of eventual fights. I am of the opinion that later happenings in Sourabaya proved that this decision not to resist arrest was well-advised. Consideration was given to an attempt to leave Sourabaya by night under disguise, but this idea had to be abandoned as there was nowhere to go, nowhere to stay and no means of transport whatever.

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