

THE PROBLEM OF RICE

[Stenographic Notes on the Fourth Session of
the Sanyo Kaigi, January 8, 2605, 10:00 A.M.]

Translated, with an Introduction, by
Ben Anderson

Introduction

The document translated below is part of a stenographic report of the discussions held by the Sanyo Kaigi (Council of Advisors to the Government) on January 8, 1945, in reply to a request by the Japanese Military Government for suggestions for improving its rice policy. Although this report is in itself an important addition to the still quite limited volume of documentary materials on the Japanese Occupation, the vital problems that it deals with, and the prominent Indonesians who figure in it, seem to make it at least as significant as a document on the modern social history of Java, of which the Japanese Occupation was an important but by no means all-important part. It is with the aim of situating the document in this larger context, that the following background sketch is appended.

Rice in Java

The social history of rural Java for a hundred years and more has been an almost unrelieved story of growing overpopulation, social dislocation, chronic indebtedness, cultural deprivation and over-all economic decline. Yet with the exception of Clifford Geertz' fine study in Agricultural Involution, the dimensions of this social tragedy have never been systematically studied. As Geertz described it, the operations of the Culture System in the early and middle part of the 19th Century, and the extraordinary ability of wet-rice agriculture to sustain almost indefinite increments of labor productively, set a pattern of social and economic organization which persists to our own time. As a result of the Culture System the Javanese peasantry was ever more inextricably involved in the network of modern agricultural capitalism without being able to take any considerable economic, social or educational benefits therefrom. Whereas in other ecological environments the contradictions and tensions resulting from agricultural peonage on the government and private estates would have probably very soon produced "modern" forms of opposition, either trade unions, revolutionary parties or even anarchic uprisings, the wet-rice agricultural system for decades provided a buffer against extreme suffering. The "cushion" provided by a labor-intensive wet-rice economy allowed the peasantry to remain psychologically,

intellectually and economically outside the modern sphere, while their labor was essential to its development. Thus the "positive" modernization of the Javanese countryside (education, social mobility, technical expertise, industrialization) was almost non-existent a hundred years after the Culture System had been instituted, while the "negative" modernization (overpopulation, land alienation -- in fact rather than in law --, proletarianization, and social disintegration) had developed already to almost unmanageable proportions.

Periodically the presence of this deep social malaise stirred the concern of the more fortunate strata of Indies society. The Ethical Movement of the turn of the Century was at least partially the result of a growing, if still quite unsophisticated, awareness of deteriorating conditions in the villages of Java.

The rapid growth of a Western-educated nationalist intelligentsia in the 1920s and 1930s offered for the first time the hope that Indonesia was beginning to produce an indigenous elite with the desire and the capability to lead rural Java out of the impasse in which it was stagnating. In 1930 the peasants who testified at the trial of Ir. Soekarno in Bandung, expressed in simple, confused words the anguish of their entrapment in a limbo between tradition and modernity and the obscure hopes aroused by the oratory of the young P.N.I. leader. Yet the learned citations and the half-Marxian periods of Soekarno's most famous speech (in which these peasants scarcely figured) already illustrated by sheer contrast the vast social and psychological abyss which separated him from his would-be followers.

Whereas in the 1930s the nationalist intellectuals who aspired eventually to lead an independent Indonesia were in more or less overt opposition to the colonial government and chiefly concerned themselves with criticism of the colonial order and the strategies of accession to power, the coming of the Japanese Army in 1942 placed them in an unprecedented and ambiguous situation. On the one hand the intelligentsia remained without any direct executive or legislative power -- which the Japanese kept firmly in their own hands. On the other, the Japanese endeavored, particularly as the fortunes of war turned against them, to enlist the energies and talents of the intellectuals in direct support of their policies.*

A series of "advisory bodies" was set up, such as the Tyuuoo Sangi-In (Central Advisory Council), the Committee on Adat and State Law, the Committee on the Building of a New Economic Order, etc., on which the most prominent Indonesian politicians and

* Far and away the best account of Japanese Occupation policies is to be found in Harry J. Benda, The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945 (The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1958).

administrators sat, and where their views and suggestions on many of the most important questions of the day were elicited. For the first time the national intelligentsia were brought face to face with the basic problems of Java, not simply as social critics, but as part of the governmental apparatus, with responsibility (however partial) for the resolution of these problems. For the first time they began to have a foretaste of what they would be confronted with when Indonesia was free.

When the Japanese Premier Koiso made his explicit promise of future independence on September 7, 1944, the prospects of an at least partial transfer of power became increasingly immediate. By an evolutionary process ironically similar to the British "dyarchy" system, shortly after the Koiso Declaration the Japanese set up the so-called Sanyo Kaigi or Council of Advisors to Departments. The Council consisted of the senior Indonesian advisors to each department of the Japanese military administration. Almost all of them were mature men in their 40s and 50s, with many years of political and/or administrative experience behind them at however a subordinate level. Since in most cases they were more familiar with the political and social scene in Java than the official Japanese heads of these departments, the Council immediately took on the character of an "embryo Cabinet," in which (effective) department heads discussed problems of state. And indeed when Independence was proclaimed some months later, the first Indonesian Cabinet was, with a few exceptions, a virtual replica of the old Sanyo Kaigi.

The fact that the Sanyo Kaigi met in camera and received very little publicity from the day of its first meeting (December 16, 1944) indicated both that the Japanese took it quite seriously and were not using it as a propaganda device or as a way of flattering the nationalist intellectuals, and also that the membership was able to discuss problems in a relatively free and uninhibited manner. In contrast to other advisory bodies instituted by the military government, the Sanyo Kaigi had no Japanese members to cramp its style.

The normal working procedure of the Council was to discuss practical problems of policy and administration posed by the Japanese military government. It would then attempt, by voting on and amending specific suggestions by individual members, to arrive at a consensus "reply" to be forwarded to the authorities.

By an accident of history, the stenographic report of one important session of the Sanyo Kaigi has become available to scholars, though of course at the time it was prepared it was a classified document. This is an account of the extended debate on a detailed, statistical report prepared by a sub-committee of the Sanyo Kaigi with regard to the problems of collecting and distributing rice on Java. Though this was the

official starting point of the discussion, it soon widened into a general discussion of the condition of rural Java. The document thus gives a unique glimpse of the thinking of the top Indonesian leadership on Java's (and thus Indonesia's) most intractable problems a few months before that leadership assumed command of an independent Indonesia. In a sense it represents the first "Cabinet paper" to be made available to the general public.

It will be recalled that the Japanese, faced with a critical shortage of transportation facilities and heavy demands for supplies for the front and the occupation army, and influenced by conceptions drawn directly from Japanese experience, instituted a system of compulsory deliveries of rice (which were bought by the Government at very low controlled prices). The idea had in fact already been pioneered by the Dutch in some areas, but it was left to the Japanese to apply it universally (if not uniformly) across all of Java and Madura. The point of the plan was to ensure a large and steady supply of food to the Japanese Army and the officials (Japanese and Indonesian) of the occupation government.

This policy was combined with an attempt to set up an overall food distribution system, mediated through a government-sponsored Rice Merchants' Association. The idea was to circumvent the effects of a sky-rocketing inflation by ensuring that the politically important groups (the army and government officials at least) got most of their food outside the normal market system.

Thirdly, to prevent evasion of the rice-deliveries, to make collection easier, and to permit effective guerilla operations in the event of an Allied landing, a policy of Residency autarchy was instituted, whereby strict controls were imposed on the movement of foodstuffs and other vital war materiel from one Residency to another.

Fourthly the notorious Rōmusha program was set up to recruit "surplus" labor in the villages to work on defense construction and other public works projects on which the military thought fit to insist. The inhuman conditions under which most of these Rōmusha worked has been the darkest blot on the Japanese record in Indonesia.

While these measures added up to a generally successful attempt to exploit Java's agricultural base for the needs of the war and the governmental apparatus, the consequences for the villages of Java were very serious. Corruption, hoarding, black-marketeering and theft were rife. Malnutrition, always endemic, in many cases became outright starvation. A combination of brutality and inefficiency in the administration of the policy compounded its ill effects. By early 1945 the consequences were plain for all to see and peasant uprisings in

Indramaju and Singaparna indicated the extent of rural suffering.

It is probable that this was at least one of the motivations of the Japanese in presenting the Sanyo Kaigi with the rice problem. What the Japanese essentially asked the Council for was some method of continuing in practice the main features of existing agricultural policy while at the same time alleviating the agrarian desperation which resulted from them.

The Sanyo Kaigi, however, took the insoluble problem presented to it very seriously. The detailed report prepared under the chairmanship of Mr. Oto Iskandardinata which became the point of departure for the discussions is undoubtedly the best overview of social and economic conditions on Java during the Japanese Occupation that we have. (It remains, however, an overview, tragedy in the form of statistics and percentages. For a closer, more poignant view, compare the two short stories by Idrus contained in this issue of Indonesia). Moreover the Council not only took its responsibilities very seriously, it also clearly saw those responsibilities as primarily governmental. While deploring the social effects of some aspects of Japanese policy and suggesting possible remedies, the Council confined itself to consideration of improvements in the instrumental rationality of Japanese policy, not its substantive validity. It is of course quite possible that this was due to the repressive character of the Japanese regime and the fear of punishment should Japanese premises be put seriously in question. But even here a little scepticism is not out of place. For the ill-fated Padi Sentra program instituted under Guided Democracy in the early 1960s represented an significant resurrection of the agricultural policies of the late occupation period. Once again compulsory rice-deliveries were enforced on the peasants, once again in the name of the struggle against imperialism and once again to the immediate advantage of the army and the official class. Nor were the villagers unaware of this return to more traditional practice.

For two things emerged very clearly from the Sanyo Kaigi's debates. 1) The ruling intelligentsia, while aware of the critical conditions in the villages, saw them as temporary difficulties resulting from war and occupation, hardly at all as deep-rooted malformations of the agricultural economy. 2) The psychological and socio-economic gulf between the intelligentsia and the peasantry, already clear at the time of Soekarno's trial, was if anything growing wider, and the nearer the intellectuals moved to power, the more their interests tended to coincide with those of traditional authority.

It was thus with the idea not only of adding a little documentary material to the study of the still largely obscure period of the Japanese occupation, but also of providing some insight into the thinking of the nationalist elite as it stood on the brink of power with regard to Indonesia's most formidable

problems, that the present translation has been prepared for Indonesia.

The length of the original document is such that the editors have found it advisable to divide it into two parts, only the first of which appears in this issue. The original document is in the Archives of the Indies' Collection at the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie in Amsterdam (Doc. No. 036627). The translator would like here to express his thanks to Mrs. Joustra for her kindness in making a copy of it available to him.

Not being an agricultural economist, the translator wishes to apologize in advance for any mistakes in terminology or other matters which may have crept into the text inadvertently. He would most eagerly welcome any comment or criticism from more expert readers.

Stenographic Notes on the Fourth Session of the Sanyo Kaigi, January 8, 2605 [1945], 10:00 A.M.

Chairman: Ir. Soekarno.

Not Present: Dr. Abdoel Rasjid and Mr. R. Soewandi.

Subject under Discussion: Sale of padi.⁽¹⁾

Commodity prices.

* * *

Chairman: Gentlemen, I hereby open the fourth session of the Sanyo Kaigi. I propose as the subject of discussion the sale of padi by the population [sic] to the Government. At the first session a committee was formed under Mr. Iskandardinata to compile a report [on this question]. Since this report has now been completed, I will give the chairman of the committee the opportunity to present it.

R. Oto Iskandardinata:⁽²⁾ Before I read out this report, I would like to explain that the committee has collected its data with the aim of providing study material for the other

(1) To avoid clumsiness and ambiguity, I have retained throughout the technical Indonesian words for rice in successive stages of production. Thus: sawah is wet-rice land; padā is harvested, unhusked rice; beras is husked, but uncooked rice.

(2) R. Oto Iskandardinata (1897-1945) was one of the best-known

honorable members of the Sanyo Kaigi. Our method for reporting on the results of the committee's investigations will be as follows: first I shall myself report on the broad outlines of our study; then there will be a special report on [various kinds of] dishonesty and disorganization, which, if the Chairman permits it, will be presented by Mr. Prawoto. After that, if it is felt necessary, the members of the Sanyo Kaigi, under the leadership of the Chairman, can put forward their questions with regard to the committee's report. Each member of the investigating team is prepared to give whatever [additional] information may be required.

Mr. Chairman, our report reads as follows:

Conclusions of the Committee.

Introduction: At the first session of the Council of Sanyo, which was held on December 16, 2604 [1944], at 3:00 P.M., the Gityoo [chairman]⁽³⁾ read out, among other things, a Question by His Excellency the Gunseikan [Head of the Japanese Military Administration] which ran as follows:

Question no. 1: "On the basis of the reply given by the Sixth Session of the Tyuoo Sangi-In [Central Advisory Council],⁽⁴⁾ what is the correct way of ensuring that the population fulfils its proper obligations to sell padi to the Government as equitably as

Sundanese politicians of the Dutch and Japanese periods. He was a member of the Volksraad and for many years chairman of the Sundanese political-cultural organization Pagujuban Pasundan. In the Japanese period he edited the Bandung newspaper Tjahaja, and was a prominent member of the Djawa Hookookai and the Barisan Pelopor. He sat on the Sanyo Kaigi as Advisor to the Chianbu (security department). He was murdered under mysterious circumstances in the fall of 1945.

- (3) Japanese for Chairman. Where the members of the Sanyo Kaigi use Japanese terms, they have generally been retained in translation to give some idea of the popularity of such terminology among the elite of Djakarta.
- (4) Tyuoo Sangi-In = Central Advisory Council. This was the Japanese substitute for the pre-war Volksraad, a sort of pseudo-legislature nominated and controlled by the Japanese, which functioned mainly as a safety valve for the politicians, and as a means for the Japanese to keep in touch with elite opinion. It was customary for the Gunseikan to pose practical problems of administration to the Tyuoo Sangi-In and request advice and suggestions. This advice was in no sense binding on the government.

possible?" (Answer in 1 month). No clarification.

The Council of Sanyo felt that since this question touched on the deepest and most intimate feelings of the population, any attempt to answer it with precision would necessitate carrying out a preliminary investigation in the provinces. Accordingly, at the same session a "Reporting Committee" was formed, consisting of the 6 (six) members listed below:

1. R. Oto Iskandardinata, Advisor to the Security Department (Chairman).
2. Dr. R. Boentaran Martoatmodjo,⁽⁵⁾ Advisor to the Health Bureau (member).
3. R. Prawoto Soemodilogo,⁽⁶⁾ Advisor to the Production Department (member).
4. Mr. R. M. Sartono,⁽⁷⁾ Advisor to the Interior Department (member).
5. R. Soekardjo Wirjopranoto,⁽⁸⁾ Advisor to the Propaganda Department (member).
6. R. P. Soeroso,⁽⁹⁾ Advisor to the General Affairs Department (member).

When the Committee met that same day, the regions to be studied were allotted as follows:

- Member 1: Residencies of Priangan, Bogor and Banten.
- Member 2: Residencies of Semarang, Pati and Kedu.

- (5) Dr. R. Boentaran Martoatmodjo (1896-) first came to the fore in the Japanese period. He was Vice-Chairman of the Tyuwoo Sangi-In, and prominent in the Barisan Pelopor.
- (6) R. Prawoto Soemodilogo (1889- ?), had been a prominent member of the Volksraad from 1931-1942 and had sat on a number of Dutch colonial economic commissions.
- (7) Mr. R. M. Sartono (1900-) was a leading member of the pre-war PNI and defended Sukarno at his trial in Bandung in 1930. Later he headed the pre-war Partindo. In the Japanese period, he sat on the Tyuwoo Sangi-In and headed the educational section of the Hookokai.
- (8) R. Soekardjo Wirjopranoto (1903-1962) assumed real prominence in the Japanese period as chief editor of Asia Raya and member of the Tyuwoo Sangi-In. Before the war he had been a nationalist journalist.
- (9) R. P. Soeroso (1893-) was a member of the Volksraad from 1924-1942 and a leader of the cooperating nationalist party Parindra. In the Japanese period he was a member of the Tyuwoo Sangi-In and Resident of Kedu.

- Member 3: Residencies of Djakarta, Tjirebon and Pekalongan.
 Member 4: Residencies of Bodjonegoro, Kediri and Madiun.
 Member 5: Residencies of Banjumas and the Special Regions of Jogjakarta and Surakarta.
 Member 6: Residencies of Surabaja, Malang and Besuki.

At the same meeting it was decided that the main subjects for investigation should be:

- 1) The management of the B.O.K. [Rice Merchants Association] and the B.S.K. [Rice Millers Association].(10)
- 2) The general food situation among the people.
- 3) The size of deliveries to the Government.
- 4) Rice-milling (conditions, etc.).
- 5) Information provided by [regional] offices.(11)
- 6) Distribution to the people.
- 7) Regular and blackmarket prices of padi and beras.
- 8) Results of Residency and Kabupaten autarchy.
- 9) Types of dishonesty.
- 10) Comparison of production costs and wet-rice harvest yields.

Based on the reports of the individual members, the Committee, at a meeting on January 7, 2605 [1945], drew up its conclusions as appended below.

Conclusions.

I. Padi-collection is still not working properly.

The reasons for this are: a) the recent extremely hot dry seasons and late arrival of the rains, especially in 2604 [1944], have resulted in harvest yields far below expectations.

b) the explanations given to the peasants and to the people in general about the deliveries of padi to the Government are still

(10) Beikoku Orosisyo Kumiai was the main organization for wholesale distribution of rice under the Production Department. It was a lineal descendant of the Rijst Verkoop Centrale set up in April 1941. Beikoku Seimaigyo Kumiai was also under the Production Department.

(11) Ambiguous. It appears to mean statistics available at regional offices.

far from being sufficiently clear, with the result that people by and large believe that all the padi is taken out of their Residencies, and even outside Java itself.

c) the Indonesian social structure, and social conditions in general are still not adjusted, still not fully adapted to wartime conditions. This is proved by the fact that:

1) the complement of village leaders is still insufficiently developed to cope with a problem as large as these padi-deliveries.

2) the sense of social solidarity is still quite superficial at all levels [of rural society], but especially among the wealthier peasants, indeed rich and influential people in general.

3) the influence of the black market forms an immense obstacle to the proper inflow of padi-deliveries.

4) all kinds of dishonesty and muddle occur as the padi travels from the peasant to the Government, which naturally weakens the people's loyalty and enthusiasm.

d) insufficient supervision of the transmission of the padi, especially from the point where it leaves the middleman (rice-dealer) till it reaches the Government as beras.

Explanation.

Till now the method used for collecting padi has been as follows: The Central Government establishes the randjen (delivery quotas) for each Residency and Special Region, based on estimates of their padi requirements and economic productivity. The resident then gathers his bupati together and divides up the Residency randjen among the kabupaten, also on the basis of estimates of their productive capacity. The bupati does the same for his wedana and kewedanaan; the wedana for his tjamat and ketjaman; the tjamat for his village chiefs and villages, and ultimately the village chiefs for the village people.(12)

(12) The Japanese introduced the following terms: Syuutyookan for the old Dutch resident and Syuu for residency; Kentyoo and Ken for the older bupati and kabupaten (regent/regency); Guntyoo and Gun for the older wedana and kewedanaan (district-chief/district); Sontyoo and Son for the older tjamat

Now the methods or criteria for levying this randjen from the people is by no means the same everywhere, in fact it is sometimes not even uniform within the same kabupaten -- for example in the kabupaten of Bandung. Generally speaking the deliveries of padi are based on the size and quality of the sawah, but there are also areas where they are based on the rate of tax-payments, i.e., payment of f.l.- tax requires the delivery of 60-80 kilograms of padi (in the kabupaten of Garut and certain kewedanaan in the kabupaten of Bandung).(13)

Now the reasons for the unsatisfactory results of the padi collections can be classified into three groups:

- 1) Inadequacies in methods of collection;
- 2) Inadequacies in the society;
- 3) Inadequacies of effort.

And in 2604 [1944] especially, there has been a further reason for the decline in padi collection, i.e., unusual climatic conditions.

By inadequacies in methods of collection, I mean primarily the lengthy (slow) passage of the padi from its initial delivery by the peasant till it reaches the Government: from peasant A to the collection centre (middleman/dealer) in B; from there to the rice-mill at C; and from there to the B.O.K. in D. The subsequent passage of the milled rice (beras) from the B.O.K. also involves several hands, and is equally roundabout. The slowness is accentuated further by inadequate transport facilities. The lengthiness of this transmission system causes a number of unsatisfactory features in padi-collection. It adds to the difficulties of supervision and increases the chances of padi "disappearing" en route, either intentionally (by dishonest manipulations) or accidentally (by spoiling, rotting or leakage). When the padi cannot be carried away from the collection centres for long periods of time, it often rots, in

and ketjamatan (subdistrict-chief/sub-district); Kutyoo and Ku for the older lurah and kelurahan or kepala desa and desa.

(13) f.l.- means 1 (Dutch) guilder (in theory the Rupiah is the same thing under an Indonesian name). 60-80 Kg. of padi is roughly 132-176 lbs.

fact even sometimes starts sprouting again. This undermines the willingness of the peasant [to cooperate], since naturally he is attached to the product of his own labors. Delays in the flow of beras from the B.O.K. to the people stimulate the desire to hoard. Semarang provides a good example of losses due to dishonesty (the losses were almost equal to the amount supposed to be delivered to the Government).

Small-scale efforts to improve these methods of collection have been started in various regions, primarily with regard to the local threshing of the padi in the area of collection itself. (Tasikmalaja, Pekalongan, Bodjonegoro, etc.). Large-scale improvements for 2605 [1945] have been planned in the Residencies of Bogor and Banten. What is most interesting about these efforts is that both aim in the same direction: i.e., towards the collection of all padi in the hands of the Government, and simultaneously the capability of distributing food (beras) in a satisfactory manner.

For this coming year (2605) new methods have been devised for padi deliveries in the Residencies of Bogor and Banten. Essentially both point in the same direction: the surrender of all padi to the Government. More concretely -- for the Residency of Bogor:

1. For those who work their own land:

Area (by hectares)	Delivery (% of yield)
less than 1	40%
1 - 3	50%
3 - 5	60%
5 and over	75%

2. For those not working their own land, but sharing the produce of their sawah [with their tenants], etc.:

a) if they have sawah in Bogor Residency and do not live in a town (where there is regular distribution of beras)...90% must be sold to the Government.

b) if they have sawah in Bogor Residency but live in a town (where there is regular distribution of beras)...95% must be sold to the Government.

c) if they have sawah in Bogor Residency but live outside the Residency...then 100% goes to the Government (in each case 90%, 95%, and 100% of their share of the harvest).

3. For tenants [of category 2], the conditions of category 1 apply.

4. In the Tanah Partikulir,⁽¹⁴⁾ each of the above quotas is to be cut by 20% provided the tjuko⁽¹⁵⁾ has already been paid. Whenever harvest-time comes round those concerned must report to the authorities, who will then carry out a yield-test (on about 4 square meters of the land). The delivery quota will then be determined on the basis of this test, and the extent of sawah being harvested. Any infractions will mean that 100% of the harvest will be bought up.⁽¹⁶⁾

Distribution of beras will also be determined and organized by the authorities. So long as the padi has not been bought up, and is still in the hands of the individuals concerned, they will receive no distribution from the Government. The length of time [that the beras is withheld] will be calculated on the basis of the amount of padi due and the distribution rate per man per day.

The system to be put into effect in the Residency of Banten:

Two thirds of every harvest yield will be automatically sold to the Government regardless of the size of sawah holdings. Tenant farmers will be dealt with by a separate regulation. The tenant (jang memaro) and the landlord (jang memarokan) will

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- (14) The Private Lands (Tanah Partikulir), mainly in the region of Djakarta, were lands sold to foreigners (usually Chinese and Europeans) by the Dutch East India Company and Raffles. The owners of these lands had virtually feudal rights over their tenants. The lands formed a striking exception to the general rule in the N.E.I. that no foreigners might own rural land. At the beginning of the Japanese occupation, the Military Government took over these lands from their former owners. Corvee duties were somewhat lightened, but the essential relationships were not altered, the peasants in these areas remaining the tenants of foreigners (now the Japanese).
- (15) Probably what is meant here is the pre-war land-tax (based on a percentage of the crop), levied by the landlords.
- (16) This clearly indicates that both Indonesians and Japanese fully realized the "penal" character of the rice-deliveries.

each get 1/6 of the harvest. The tenant however may keep his own share, while the landlord must sell his to the Government.(17)

By inadequacies in the society, I mean primarily various types of dishonesty, which stem from a low sense of social responsibility (excessive hoarding, using one's position or influence to evade the padi deliveries) and sheer greed for money (theft, selling on the black market, accepting bribes, etc.).

As for inadequacies in effort, [one can list] among others:

1. The absence or ineffective implementation of detailed supervision. The passage of the padi from the peasant to the collection centres (middlemen) can still be satisfactorily checked by a committee of inspection comparing the peasant's receipts and the middleman's books -- like the system in Bodjonegoro for example. But after that stage no further control is possible.

2. The unsatisfactory quality of the people in charge of collecting the padi, especially in the villages.

3. Shortages of labor, both human and animal, for intensive working of the sawah (e.g., in Indramaju, Sumedang, etc.).

4. Poor quality seeds.

5. Insufficient and unclear explanations of the purpose and the necessity for the padi deliveries -- with the result that various unfounded misconceptions have arisen.

II. The Distribution of Beras.

a) In the capitals of the Residencies and kabupaten and also in the municipalities (including the Special Municipality)(18) people as a rule get

(17) For greater clarity: 2/3 of the harvest will automatically go to the Government. The remaining 1/3 will be divided evenly between tenant and landlord; but the landlord must sell his sixth to the government as well.

(18) The terms Si and Tokubetu Si were introduced by the Japanese. The only Special Municipality was Djakarta (Batavia).

a regular distribution of beras, amounting to between 100-230 grams per person per day. (19)

Djakarta Special Municipality....	180 grams p.p.p.d.
Garut adults	120
children under 10	60
Pekalongan	230
Kediri	150
Bodjonegoro adults	200
children under 10	150

b) Outside these "capitals," the general rule is that the regular distribution of beras is limited to civil servants (sometimes equivalent -- sometimes not -- to the distribution rates in the cities).

c) Outside the "capitals," the distribution of beras to the common people [rakjat djelata] is not only irregular but also far from sufficient.

For the village of Babakan Tjiparaj in the kabupaten of Bandung, for example, the distribution rate is 1/4 litre per person per week, i.e., 132 grams a day. In the kewedanaan of Tjitjoeroeg (Residency of Bogor) the rate is 100-300 grams for 3-7 days per household. In the kewedanaan of Bowerno (Residency of Bodjonegoro) the rate is 500 grams per family per month. (20)

In situations of this kind, the food supply of the common people is above everything else a cause for deep alarm. In contradiction to the aims expressed in Conclusion No. 4, the consequences of food shortages among the common people have been an increase in the number of petty thefts, for example

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- (19) In 1966 the average (theoretical) beras distribution for a civil servant and his family (regardless of age) seems to be about 265 grams per person per day. Javanese estimate that "adequate" beras consumption per day should be about 400 grams.
- (20) Assuming that the average family numbers five "souls" (which is probably conservative) this means that Tjitjoeroeg was getting maximally 20 grams per person per day, minimally 3 1/2 grams; Bowerno about 3 grams per person per day.

thefts of the palawidja and its consumption on the spot.(21)

III. The blackmarket price of beras is extremely high, between f. 1.20 and f. 3.25 per litre (except in Besuki, where it is 17 cents a litre).

	<u>f. per litre</u>
Pasarminggu (Djakarta Residency)	3.25
Bogor (Bogor Residency)	3.25
Tjiamis (Priangan Residency)	2.40
Semarang	1.50
Pati	2.70
Bodjonegoro	1.20
Kediri	1.50

The official price is 10¢ per kilogram.(22)

IV. The consequences for the common people of disorganization in the supply of food are various:

- 1) the health of the people has been severely impaired;
- 2) the people's physical stamina and ability to resist disease has sharply declined. In general the death rate now exceeds the birth rate;
- 3) the War Spirit has been weakened;
- 4) there has been a decline in war labor (romusha, multiplication of crops, etc.).(23)
- 5) the work of enemy spies has been made easier.

(21) Palawidja. A second crop, usually maize, soybeans, groundnuts, etc., grown in between rice harvests.

(22) In Java a litre of beras is usually slightly less than a kilogram.

(23) Romusha. A system of recruitment was set up by the Japanese to procure labor for work on defense construction in and out of Indonesia (e.g., the Death Railway in Siam). Those recruited were promised all kinds of benefits, but were usually treated with appalling inhumanity. The implication of the second half of the sentence is obscure; it may mean that the labor drain imposed by the Romusha recruitment (in addition to declining health standards) lowered agricultural production by making multiple-cropping no longer possible. Many wet-rice areas of Java can, in a good year, produce 3 rice crops.

Every doctor whose opinion we asked acknowledged that malnutrition has caused a serious decline in the people's health, as well as in their ability to work and strength to resist disease. The deteriorating health of the people has been further accelerated by the shortage of medicines to prevent and cure disease, by the shortage of adequate clothing, and by the returning romusha, who usually bring back to their native villages all kinds of infections, particularly malaria and skin diseases.

Research carried out in the Residencies of Pati and Kedu demonstrates that in general the death rate now exceeds the birth rate.

In the Residency of Kedu, the first quarter of 1944 still revealed an excess of births over deaths: 31.5 births per thousand persons, compared to 29.5 deaths. By the second quarter this excess had already begun to vanish: the death rate was up to 33.9, while births were only 32.4. By the third quarter the death rate had reached 39.2, while births had declined to 25.8. The highest percentages in this Residency occurred in the kabupaten of Wonosobo (death rate 53.7, births 29.1) and Purworedjo (deaths 42.7, births 23.8).

In the Residency of Pati, the second quarter of 1944 showed a death rate of 38.0, while in the fourth quarter of 1943 it had only been 23.0. The birth rate in the second quarter of 1944 was 25.0, whereas in the last quarter of 1943 it had been 22.0. (It is true that there was thus a small rise in births, but this still represents an enormous drop from the birth rate of 38.6 in 1939.) The most dramatic rise in the death rate in the Residency of Pati occurred in the kabupaten of Kudus: from 22.0 in the fourth quarter of 1943 to almost 45.0 in the second quarter of 1944.

I think it is hardly necessary to explain any further here why malnutrition among the people weakens the War Spirit, diminishes the war work force, and facilitates the activities of enemy spies.

Chairman: I would like to thank the Syusa [Inspector] of the committee for his report. Now Mr. Prawoto will give his report.

R. Prawoto: As an appendix to what you have already heard, Soemo- may I begin by telling you something about the situa- dilogo: tion in Pekalongan?

The padi is brought by the peasant to the house of the village chief by carrying-pole. Usually some of this padi falls off.(24) This is called unu. There is one village chief who manages to get as much as 5-10 quintals [500-1,000 Kg.] per harvest from this unu.

From there the peasant takes his padi to the collection center. There too there is usually some dishonesty in the deductions, since these deductions are established as the middleman sees fit. If the padi is brought to the collection center damp, then a "weight deduction" is levied, sometimes as much as 30%. When the padi is being weighed, dishonesty in the method of weighing sometimes amounts to 20%. Next the rice-mill will demand further "deductions" because of "poor quality" -- sometimes up to 10%. By these means, deductions in the peasants' rice-delivery may sometimes reach 60%.(25)

Aside from all this, there are still other burdens, e.g., a "collection contribution" of 10%. In Tjirebon there is a "fund" (10¢ per quintal of padi) laid aside as a reserve in case it should turn out later that the overall rice-delivery quotas are still unfilled. In that case the "fund" would be used [to make up the difference].

Furthermore, in those places where there is a Noogyoo Kumiai [Agricultural Cooperative], the peasant is required to pay a "subscription" of 2¢ per quintal. As a consequence of all these deductions, the peasant gets for each quintal only f. 1.88 of the f. 4.- official price.

It frequently happens too that payment at these collection centers is not made immediately, but as much as 5 or 10 days later, because the padi has not yet been accepted by the rice-mill. Thus the peasant has to go back again to the collection center 5 or 10 days later to get his money, supposing that a rice-mill employee has in the meantime come to take his padi away.

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- (24) Usually this occurs when the sheaves are temporarily stored at the village chief's house before being moved elsewhere.
- (25) In each case then the official in effect claims that the peasant has not fulfilled his quota, and seizes the surplus.

So long as the padi has not yet been accepted by the rice-mill and is kept at the collection center, there is no one to guard it. All "losses" of padi, by theft or "deduction," between the day it is delivered to the collection center and the day it is weighed at the rice-mill, are the responsibility of the peasant himself. It is impossible to calculate what percentage is lost during this period, but it is usually quite considerable.

Naturally the peasant receives his payment, f. 1.88 per quintal, with feelings of deep disappointment, since it falls far short of his hopes. This is the main reason for the peasant's hatred for the padi-deliveries to the Government.

If the tjamat is unable to exert any control, it is usually because there are so many villages [under him] collecting their padi at the same time. As a result, unless the Government itself takes appropriate action, dishonest practices will not be eliminated.

A second type of dishonesty. In the Semarang area, for example, the peasant brings his padi and receives a certificate from the rice-mill, as proof that the mill has received 1 quintal of padi, say from Saleh. This certificate is then handed over to the village chief. All the peasants in the village must hand over their certificates to the village chief. The village chief then reports to the tjamat, the tjamat to the wedana, and the wedana to the bupati. In this process very strange things take place. I dare to bring this up here because I have clear evidence.

According to a report given me by the provincial pangreh-pradja [traditional Javanese administrative corps], a particular kabupaten had sold in an 8-month period more than 160,000 quintals to various rice-mills; yet the rice-mills reported to the Residency that they had only bought 110,000 quintals. In other words 50,000 quintals had vanished. And this from just one kabupaten! Try to imagine the situation if the investigation was extended to one Residency, or to the whole of Java!

In Pematang alone, in one month, the amount reported by the pangreh-pradja was 10,642 quintals. The rice-mills reported 7,856 quintals, a difference of almost 3,000 quintals. In just one month then, complete confusion!

I hear from Dr. Boentaran that these "deficiencies" are admitted by the rice-mills, but they claim that only 1,400 quintals, not 3,000, are still unreported.

Dr. Buntaran Marto-atmodjo: They say "still unreported" but in fact the time interval is already a long one.

Prawoto: Now this is what has caused the difficulties. Let us try to calculate. For example, if Saleh harvests 100 quintals, and the Government buys 20%, i.e., about 20 quintals, then possibly another 20% will be taken from Saleh by dishonest means. The question then arises: why is it that there are no statistics on the stocks of padi taken by the Government, by the village chief, by the rice-mills, etc., etc.? For your information: the Government has instituted controls for the rice-mills. But the people who sit on these control bodies are owners of rice-mills themselves.

Drs. Mohd. Hatta: Zelf-controle!

Prawoto: Honor among thieves you know!⁽²⁶⁾ If these control bodies are not drastically reconstituted, the peasant will go on feeling that he is being fleeced on every side, and his hatred of the padi-delivery system will continue to grow.

Chairman: Thank you. My original intention was to give you gentlemen an opportunity, after hearing the committee's report, to put forward your questions and then for the Syusa himself or a rapporteur on the committee to answer them. Only then would we begin our joint consultations. But considering the importance of the reports which have been presented by the Syusa and Mr. Prawoto, I would like to ask you all whether you would prefer the reports to be typed up beforehand and distributed, so that you gentlemen could study them in more detail? Or would you like to put forward your questions straight away?

Hatta: Straight away.

Buntaran: Straight away. We [need] only take up the broad outlines. Considering all our other work, I don't think it is necessary to have these reports typed up beforehand.

(26) Literally: no cat will bite another.

Mr. R. Singgih:(27) I think it would be better to have them typed up in advance.

Ki Hadjar Dewantoro:(28) As a matter of fact, an oral report like this is clearer. But I don't see any harm in granting Mr. Singgih's request.

Chairman: I ask again, would you prefer a written report or is the oral report enough?

(The meeting feels that the oral report has been enough.)

Now I would like to open the meeting to questions.

Prawoto: I forgot just now to give a report on the situation in the Tanah Partikulir. They still do not use the standard landrente.(29) No one really knows the extent of sawah under cultivation there. There is no reliable map. When the padi is ripe it is harvested and tied into sheaves; 1/5 of the harvest goes for tjuke, 2/5 is sold to the state, 1/5 is for bawon,(30) and 1/5 for the landlord and tenant.

People say that what happens there is like this. Once the padi sheaves have been brought down from the fields, they pick the largest sheaf. The weight of this sheaf is then multiplied by the total number of sheaves to get the "weight" of the whole yield.(31)

(27) Mr. R. P. Singgih (1894- ?) had been prominent as a lawyer and member of Budi Utomo and Parindra. He was advisor to the Labor Bureau within the Department of the Interior under the Japanese.

(28) Ki Hadjar Dewantoro (1889-1957), the founder of the Taman Siswa school system, was in the Japanese period Advisor to the Education Bureau in the Department of the Interior. He also sat on the Tyuuo Sangi-In.

(29) Landrente. Land-tax (based on extent and productivity of land) progressively introduced into Java from the time of Raffles.

(30) The percentage of the harvest given to the harvesters as their wages. 1/5 is a quite unusually high figure.

(31) Obviously the peasant's crop will be grossly overestimated -- thus also his delivery quota and his taxes.

Obviously such conditions are bad and very harmful to the peasant. It has even happened that one peasant whose padi was weighed in this way, ended up unable to fulfill his delivery requirements even by surrendering his entire crop.

This particular kind of dishonesty can easily be suppressed simply by weighing each padi sheaf.

Singgih: I would like to know whether the certificates issued by the rice-mills don't give some indication if deliveries have exceeded quotas?

Oto: The estimates are only made on a Residency basis. We cannot give you any calculation for the ketjamatan level. I can only report on the deliveries in the three Residencies that I investigated: Banten: the quota was 25% of production, i.e., 60,000 tons out of 230,000. Of the 60,000 requested, the Government actually obtained only 16,000. Of this, 8,000 tons were returned to feed the local population. Bogor: the quota was 20%. But only 60% of this has so far come in. Priangan: the quota was 15%, i.e., 100,000 out of a production of 679,152 tons. But so far only 40-45% of this [100,000 tons] has come in. In these three Residencies, we understand that the total padi left over after the deliveries, divided by the total population, should be enough; nonetheless, the people's food supply is a complete mess.

Chairman: But Mr. Singgih's question still hasn't been fully answered!

Oto: Possibly Mr. Sartono knows more about this than I do, as he studied the situation in Bodjonegoro.

Sartono: Is Mr. Singgih's question whether the quotas have turned out to be excessive?

Chairman: Yes, for example, if the quota for a particular Residency is 20 tons, does the Residency then require the kabupaten to send in, not just 20 tons, but 25 for example? Is this then added to again at the kewedanaan level? In other words there is an excess. Is there anything like that?

Sartono: Not in the area I was investigating.

Soekardjo: What Mr. Singgih means is estimates which are exaggerated by the pangreh-pradja. In the area I studied, this didn't happen. There were [false estimates] but by the office of the Resident, not by the pangreh-pradja. For example, Banjumas Residency

received orders from Djakarta that, according to the overall plan, they were expected to deliver 900,000 quintals from a normal harvest of 4,500,000 -- i.e., +/- 25%. In practice the office of the Resident then asked the pangreh-pradja for more than 25%, and the pangreh-pradja in practice demanded 50% from the people. Less than half actually came in.

Prawoto: The situation in Pekalongan answers Mr. Singgih's question very well. There the quota has been 880,000 [quintals], but to make sure of their estimates they have made it 1,000,000. The quotas in the villages, ketjaman, and kabupaten have not been determined yet. What has been determined is the Residency's requirements. The Residency may thus take about 118% of the quota fixed at the Center. This is the reason for the unusually [high] distribution of beras in the Residency of Pekalongan -- 230 grams per person.

Buntaran: In Pati Residency the request has been for 56.6% of the estimated harvest. The yield there is estimated at 303,000 tons. Thus according to their calculations they should be getting 170,000 tons. This is what the people have to be asked for. In fact, of course, the real yield is not at all consonant with the estimates, but far lower; not 303,000 but a mere 130,000 tons. Thus the deliveries requested from this area exceeded the total harvest. At this point the people in Pati Residency were very badly shaken. I was told that in some cases the peasants were required to surrender their entire crop; in fact, there were even cases where they were expected to deliver more than their entire crop. It was up to them to find a way of doing so.

Subsequently, perhaps because of the shaky situation among the people, orders came from Djakarta that the quota for Pati Residency should be lowered to a mere 70,000 tons. At that point further collections were ended, since 70,000 tons had already been fully delivered.

For Semarang the initial request was 100,000 tons. But when 72,000 tons had been collected, Djakarta passed the word that they were only asking for 78,000 tons. The difference is yet to be made up.

In reality then, the delivery of rice from Semarang and Pati according to Djakarta-fixed quotas can be termed satisfactory.

In Kedu, only 60,000 tons were requested from a 460,000 ton harvest: not very much.

Prof. Dr.

R. Supomo: (32) I would like to ask for some information from the Syusa. He said in his report just now that "the sense of social solidarity is very superficial," in other words unsatisfactory. Can we really make such accusations against the masses [Rakjat djelata], when we have heard from the members of the investigating team themselves how badly they [the masses] are being victimized? In my view, once one has heard these reports, especially Mr. Prawoto's, one cannot accept these charges any longer. I would like therefore to ask for some further clarifications. Secondly, on the basis of the committee's investigation, do the people regard the sale of padi to the Government as an obligatory tax, or is there also some feeling that it is necessary for the war effort, for the building up of Greater East Asia or for Indonesia's own needs?

Oto:

Let me begin with the second question. At least in the areas I visited, it is certainly true that the padi regulations are felt as an immensely heavy burden, particularly when the villagers see the difference between their own lot and that of the people in the cities. The feeling of the peasants is: We plant the padi, but can not eat. This is the climate of feeling in the hearts of the people. The [idea] that these regulations are meant to fulfil the requirements of the war hasn't yet really penetrated. That is what I meant when I mentioned the "superficial sense of social solidarity." But those with the most superficial sense of social solidarity of all are the rich. In Banten and Priangan there are many village chiefs who have sawah; yet many of them take no part in the padi deliveries. The division of quotas is arranged in such a way that it is someone else who actually bears the burden of delivering the padi. In Banten especially, the position of the ulama is very strong. Usually the village ulama are rich, and the village chiefs do not dare to fix a delivery quota for them to fulfil. There have been some raids in this connection in the Residency of Banten, and it appears that they got 2 tjaeng (1 tjaeng = 20 pikul)

(32) Prof. Mr. Dr. R. Soepomo (1903- ?) was modern Indonesia's most distinguished jurist, and a prominent member of the pre-war cooperating nationalist parties Budi Utomo and Parindra. In the Japanese period he sat on the High Court and was Advisor to the Department of Justice.

of padi from the village chief.(33) The results of the raids made it clear that many people were hoarding padi; in fact even people working in the propaganda service themselves were storing it under their own floorboards. The same goes for Priangan. In Bandung 11 rich men have been arrested for violating the law, i.e., brazenly raising prices and hoarding padi. By and large the poor peasants fulfil their obligations because they are afraid.

Sartono: In Central Java there is none of this "superficiality of social solidarity" mentioned by the Syusa. I should explain however that the people there regard the selling of rice to the government as an order which they are quite accustomed to carry out in a disciplined way. Even before the war their padi was sold [to the government], leaving them only a 2-3 months' supply of rice, and even this was usually combined with other foodstuffs. Ordinarily, the peasants carry out the [delivery] orders conscientiously, but complain that the price is too low.

Prawoto: The areas that I studied have one common outlook: the people have been asked to give a contribution to the war and they are ready to give it. So apparently the seeds of a feeling of public service already exist. But because the people are now increasingly influenced by other feelings, these seeds, which had begun to take root, are starting to disappear.

Soekardjo: In Jogjakarta and Surakarta the landholdings are already very small. Coolies there have, on an average, about 1/4 hectare of sawah, while the village leadership(34) has 5. In the Residency of Banjumas the average holding is 1/2 hectare, while the village leadership has more than 10. Thus there are obviously irregularities going on. Generally speaking the padi deliveries are regarded by the people as a tax. If they get an order to fulfil their quotas, they will obey. If there is any dishonesty or would-be dishonesty, it is the work of the "haves" -- the well-to-do. For example, the village leadership or the wealthy peasants.

(33) A pikul is approximately 137 lbs. A tjaeng is roughly 400 litres (c. 850 lbs.). Thus there is some confusion in Oto's figures.

(34) The phrase pengurus desa is ambiguous. It is not clear whether just the village chief (lurah) is meant, or the village elite as a group.

K.R.M.T. What I have been hearing everywhere tallies
Wurjanin- generally with what the gentlemen on the committee
grat:(35) have reported. The villagers deliver their rice as
if they were obeying an order. This is the way it
is with the lower orders.(36) Usually if they get
an order, they simply go along with it.

But there are a number of very regrettable features in the collection of the padi. It is these features that deserve our attention. There is a lot of confusion, and this is also cause for regret. I would therefore like to ask whether the system of padi collection is the same in every Residency? For example, in Solo the peasant has to deposit 50% of his crop, which is then simply kept as a deposit. Naturally it is very hard to maintain effective supervision over it. Anyway I would like to ask whether the peasant in other areas also has to deposit 50% of his crop. Or is the system different? My second question is about the handling of the padi which has already been delivered. Very large quantities of the padi collected by the rice-mills are kept in storage for long periods of time. According to reports I have received, this is because the milling-machines cannot keep up with the collections. The villager who sees this happening, says: Look how much rice there still is at the collection centers and the rice-mills! Yet I don't have enough to eat.

Well, how about it, gentlemen?

My third question is whether or not one area is supposed to help another, if there is a shortage of food there?

Oto: It varies. I stated just now in the committee's conclusions that collection methods are not always the same in each region. For example in the kewedanaan of Soreang, collection is based on the land-tax. Each f 1.- of land-tax paid on first class sawah forms the basis for assessment: i.e., 80 kg, of dry padi, which must be sold to the Government.(37) In Tjimahi the

(35) K.R.M.T. Wurjaningrat (1885-1953) was a prominent Solonese civil servant and politician in the Dutch period, active in both Boedi Octomo and Parindra. In the Japanese period he was a member of the Tyuuo Sangi-In.

(36) "orang2 dilapisan bawah." A fine Solonese euphemism.

(37) In other words 80 Kg. of the total crop harvested on each unit of sawah assessed at f 1.- for land-tax purposes. Soreang is a kewedanaan in the kabupaten of Bandung.

base is the extent of sawah holdings: each hectare must deliver 9, 8, 7, or 6 dry quintals. The amount depends on the quality of the land.

The scale of assessments in Tjiparaj is as follows:(38)

<u>Hectares</u>	<u>Quintals per Hectare</u>
1 or less	1
1 - 2	2
2 - 3	3
3 - 4	4

Thus, the collection system does vary in different places. It is also true that the capacity of the rice-mills is inadequate. This is the case in several areas. There are also problems of transport. Delays in transportation mean that some of the padi rots or sprouts in the collection centers. In all honesty, this sort of thing is a kind of "Punishment of Tantalus" for the common people: they see the padi piled in heaps, yet they themselves go hungry or have to eat things like banana nodes. In other areas the same situation exists.

As for the question of helping other areas, e.g., say there is a surplus in one area, this doesn't fall within the authority of the Residency. It is a matter for the Central Government, and we haven't been able to find out much about it.

Wurjanin-grat: The Committee can ask at the central office.

Oto: I haven't done that yet.

Wurjanin-grat: One more thing, is it the same in every Residency that 20% is earmarked for the Army?

Oto: No, it varies. In Banten it is 25%, in Priangan 15%, in Bogor 20%.

Sartono: To be honest, in our investigations we did not ask what percentage of the crop was sold to the government, because we already knew it varied. The difficulty here lies not in the kabupaten, kewedanaan or ketjamatan, but in the village. It is there that the amount of padi to be collected is determined,

(38) Both Tjimahi and Tjiparaj are kewedanaan in the kabupaten of Bandung.

on the basis of each hectare's yield. And the method of establishing this yield is little more than guesswork, since any real survey is very difficult to set up. There has never been any study of how large the harvest actually is in any given year; so that very often it is just left to the discretion of the pangreh-pradja or the guidance of the Resident to regulate the deliveries and establish how much padi has to be delivered by each village. In Madiun for example, 50% is for the Government, 1/4 for the Hookookai. They already have Hookookai padi there. This padi is stored in the village and used later if the owner [owners] need it. If it turns out not to be needed, it is sold to the villagers at a low price.

Thus the peasant actually only keeps 1/4 of his crop. Now, if, for example, one area has already fulfilled its quota, while another area for some reason or other has not yet or can not yet do likewise, then the former is frequently required to sell its rice on a "voluntary" basis, since it tends to be regarded as a "plus" area. In such cases the people are sometimes very upset.

In fulfilling the Residency quota, the kabupaten do not in fact all bear an equal burden. Some assessments are clearly too high while others are too low. The kabupaten of Madiun has had a very good harvest. It has been able to deliver more than its quota because of its high production level. This kabupaten may well find its quota doubled in order to make good the deficits in the deliveries from other kabupaten.

Such conditions are obviously unsatisfactory, and only persist because the situation compels it. As things now stand, the common people feel they have been cheated, since the pangreh-pradja told them before: once you have sold so much, then it's finished with. Yet subsequently situations develop such as the one I have just described, where additional "requests" are made. Therefore great care must be taken to ensure no repetition of such occurrences in the coming year.

In Kediri they have set up a progressive system:

- 2 ha. must sell 20% of the crop.
- 2 - 5 ha. must sell 50% of the crop.
- 5 ha. and over must sell 70% of the crop.

i.e., the smaller the sawah, the smaller the percentage of the crop. Yet here and there it has been necessary to take padi from peasants with only 1 ha. and over.(39)

(39) Literally so. The implication however is that Sartono means holdings of between 1 and 2 hectares.

Oto: According to the system they have in the Besuki area, the bupati is responsible for fulfilling the kabupaten quota. Now if this year, say, there is a kewedanaan which is given a quota above its means -- i.e., if the crop is reduced by a shortage of rainfall or the seedlings are attacked by vermin and disease -- then the quotas are adjusted so that the other kewedanaan, which have been able to fulfil their quotas easily, are obligated to contribute extra.

Buntaran: The percentages of the crop which have to be delivered vary widely by region. Just now I mentioned 56.6% for the Residency of Pati -- at least according to the original estimates -- +/- 25% for Semarang and +/- 15% for Kedu. But actually these percentages are not really fixed. What is fixed is the actual amount of padi to be collected according to the plan. These percentages have been adopted mainly, I think, to facilitate the establishing of these concrete amounts. What is actually "fixed" is the gross tonnage [to be delivered]. Then the pangreh-pradja and other officials make their own calculations; and to make their work easier, they rule that so many % must be delivered.

As for one Residency helping another, in practice this does go on, but not on an official basis. For example, padi does flow from the Residency of Semarang into the Residency of Bodjonegoro. But it isn't official. In fact it's illegal. But evidently the officials close their eyes to it.

Chairman: I would like to open discussion about formulating our "reply" to the Gunseikan's question. Who has some ideas on this?

Hatta: In keeping with our practice up to now, I think it would be best if the drafting of our reply were left to the Sanyo on the investigating committee. The main points we already know. I would only like to bring up one thing -- the need to establish as the basis of our collection system the principle of starting from the bottom up. We should start first of all by estimating the food requirements of Java's village population. For example, if a village requires 500 quintals a year and production is 1,500 quintals, then 500 quintals should be excepted [at the beginning], and the remaining 1,000 quintals delivered to the government. Thus no fiat from above saying that a particular Residency must produce so much. When the calculations are made in this way, the results are what we have all been experiencing -- great percentage variation in the deliveries. Since

village production varies greatly, the present system is quite unsatisfactory. Furthermore, our transportation system is already very deficient. The burden on it will be all the heavier, if padi has to be taken out of the villages and beras brought back into them. I therefore suggest that we should include in our reply an easier method of collection, based on the distribution of beras. The starting point should be estimates of how much each village consumes; only the surplus above and beyond this should be taken out of the village. In this way the people will receive the same rations everywhere on a regular basis, and transport needs will be cut. This is what I feel we should include in our reply.

Soekardjo: If we look at it carefully, the jumping-off point for the Government's question was actually the reply and the suggestions of the 6th session of the Tyuoo Sangi-In as to the best method of organizing the padi deliveries. This being the case -- and there is a close relationship here with the decisions of the 6th session of the Tyuoo Sangi-In -- in my view, the Council of Sanyo should urge the formation of an apparatus competent to handle both the collection of padi, and the distribution of beras to the common people (both milled rice [beras gilingan] and threshed rice [beras tumbuk]). This would also be in line with the reply of the Tyuoo Sangi-In which urged the formation of peasant cooperatives or noogyoo kumiai. This would be the first condition for an apparatus for the collection of padi and distribution of beras. Once this apparatus has been formed, we naturally come next to the problem of apportionment. As Dr. Hatta stated just now, it would be best if this were organized from the bottom up. For example, so much per person per day; then divided up further on that basis. This is one way at least. On the question of establishing a just and fair system of apportionment (both with regard to the collection of padi and the distribution of food to the common people, I would like to broach an idea which I think is fairly practical. At this point there are rice-mills scattered throughout our [rural] society. If they are all working properly, they can process roughly 10 million quintals....

Hatta: Quite impossible!!

Sukardjo: If they are working properly they can get through about 10 million quintals. This is just a part of total padi production. Total padi production is

somewhere between 80-90 million quintals.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Now if we set up effective controls at the rice-mills, and the distribution system is properly administered, I calculate we will have enough for: 1) the needs of the Japanese Army plus the Peta⁽⁴¹⁾ and the romusha; 2) the needs of the people in the larger cities, including the kabupaten capitals and the municipalities.

If we can take this initial step, we will be able to improve the situation right away.

The question arises: how can we help the villagers themselves (the people in the kewedanaan, the ketjaman and the villages) and also the civil servants there, who own absolutely no sawah, and are thus forced to live by buying beras?

Naturally the body which I have been suggesting (and which was suggested earlier by the Tyuwoo Sangi-In) should not only exercise supervision over the rice-mills, but also over beras tumbuk.⁽⁴²⁾ This would mean then that each village and ketjaman would have its own kumiai, which alone would handle the storing and threshing of the padi. This beras tumbuk would then be distributed to the groups I just mentioned. If even this much can be put into effect, we shall have accomplished a lot. From what I have seen in Delanggu and Tegalondo,⁽⁴³⁾ the people's experience with manual threshing of the padi is more satisfactory in every way than with the rice-mills. So I have great hopes of this system. If we can at least get this much done first, we will be

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- (40) 90 million quintals = 9 million metric tons of padi. At the accepted conversion rate of 100:52 this is equivalent to 4,680,000 metric tons of beras. Compare the most recent available figure for Java and Madura of 5,021,600 metric tons (1960).
- (41) PETA was the "Home Guard" army organized by the Japanese on Java and Bali in the fall of 1943.
- (42) Beras tumbuk is rice which is dehusked by being pounded manually with rice-blocks and rice-stampers. The Javanese generally regard it as preferable to the rice processed by machinery in the rice-mills. (Partly because it tends to be fresher).
- (43) Delanggu and Tegalondo are two villages in the kabupaten of Klaten.

improving the collection of padi both for milling and for storage in the granaries of the Noogyoo Kumiai: i.e., about 50% of the whole crop. We will thus be able to help the Government itself, the cities and those people in the villages who need to be helped. And this still doesn't cover even half of the total harvest. The remaining half would not be interfered with, but left to flow freely within the local community, of course with a limit, say the boundaries of the ketjaman. In other words it would not be permitted to leave the ketjaman. My feeling is that this would be a solution consonant with traditional practice and yet would mean an improvement on the present situation. As for the apparatus which I proposed just now, one could say that it has already got started. I have seen it working for example in the special region of Surakarta, both in the Sunanate and the Mangkunegaran, where Mr. Margono and Mr. Gunung Iskandar have already begun to put it into effect.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Of course, there are still many defects, but this is because the plan is still in its early stages. This is my contribution to the Kaigi in formulating our response to the Gunseikan's Question.

Prawoto: We should look at the question of padi collection from two points of view: a) the needs of the government; b) the people's food supply. If we look at it in this way, we really should take such action as will allow us to check up periodically on conditions among the common people. We should thus bear in mind certain key points: 1) I was dumbfounded to hear Dr. Buntaran's report on the rising death rate and the declining birth rate. I would like to ask if it is true that there are now 50 million people on Java? The basis for this figure of 50 million is really only the 1930 census, with an addition of 1 1/2% per year. I'd like to raise the question whether it wouldn't be possible for the Tonarigumi⁽⁴⁵⁾ to make some demo-

(44) R.M. Margono Djojohadikosoemo, father of the controversial Dr. Soemitro Djojohadikoesoemo, was in the Japanese period head of the economic section of the government of the Mangkunegaran Principality in Solo. Just before independence he was appointed Deputy Chief of the Central Foodstuffs Control Bureau in Djakarta.

(45) Tonarigumi were neighborhood associations set up by the Japanese in imitation of the village security associations originated by the Tokugawa and considerably strengthened thereafter, especially by the military-dominated governments of the 1930s. The Indonesian Tonarigumi had security as well as welfare, distribution and propaganda functions.

graphic estimates, so that we can have some fairly exact statistics? Since we now have a beras distribution-system, perhaps the job of making the calculations would be quite easy. 2) Since we are considering the people's welfare, I am very glad to be able to give you an example of two kabupaten, Sumedang and Tasikmalaja, which have been carrying out rapid, simultaneous estimates of their food supply (moment voedselopname), so that the tjamat can find out any time whether his people have enough to eat or not. What a good thing it would be if this system could be put into effect all over Java! I have with me a concrete example of how to set up this kind of rapid, simultaneous estimate. 3) I agree with the broad outlines of Mr. Soekardjo's proposal. But once again, the "control apparatus" must be improved from the bottom up. If it isn't, no matter how good the over-all system may be, it won't get off the ground. The Noogyoo Kumiai will increase the burden on the people rather than becoming a means of inter-communication, especially if they exist only in theory, with the village pangreh-pradja as "supervisors" -- I mean the village chief and the village secretary, the tjarik. If this happens, the kumiai will be disliked both by the village officials as giving them additional work, and by the common people, since they will feel that they simply add to the burden of existing "heerendienst" [corvée]. In effect, this amounts to an absence of control.

Thus if Mr. Soekardjo Wirjopranoto's proposal if going to be put forward, I hope that the suggestions of the New Economic Order Committee⁽⁴⁶⁾ will be implemented as quickly as possible: i.e., large-scale training of administrative personnel for the Noogyoo Kumiai, so that they will have enough competent people in them from top to bottom to carry out effective administration. Furthermore to develop factory supervisors, we should place SMP [Junior High School] and SMT [Senior High School] graduates as officials in the factories, so that when they come out, they will have had some experience and know the ins and outs of factory organization, i.e., can exercise real control. 4) As for the collection of padi, in every area that I studied, the people spoke

(46) Soekardjo is referring to the Panitia Persiapan Oentoek Membentoeck Soesoenan Perekonomian Baroe (Preparatory Committee for Establishing a New Economic Order) set up in the spring of 1944 to impose stricter controls on the Javanese economy.

of the great hardship suffered by the peasant with less than 2 hectares of sawah, since his crop is not large enough to satisfy his own varied needs, if half is taken away -- let alone if more than half is removed. Everywhere I got reports that the rich are getting richer, since even after the Government has taken its quota, they still have large reserves which can be sold on the black market. In this connection I would like to suggest that:

Those with 1 hectare of sawah or less should contribute 10%; 1-2 hectares 20%, and so forth. But in any case no one should be permitted to store more than 50 quintals of padi. This is enough for his own food supply and for seeding. Please God may the Noogyoo Kumiai work well -- since if they don't, the rich will get richer and the poor poorer. That's why I really hope that these kumiai will get help from the rich: that they won't just think of themselves, but take only the amount of rice they really need and hand the rest over to the public, for the Army and for distribution to the people in general. (This would be administered by the Noogyoo Kumiai under adequate supervision and with periodic food inventory-taking.) In this way the requirements of both the Army and society will be guaranteed.

Abikoeno:(47) I am going to put forward a suggestion. But before I start, I should give a little explanation first. The facts reported to us by the head of the committee are the results of our present difficulties. The origins of the process whereby the health of our people is being ruined, their vitality undermined, the war effort weakened and thus the work of enemy spies facilitated, all lie in the food situation. There are clear signs of an almost universal corruption in this regard. It is obvious that our society is suffering from an extremely grave sickness. Since this sickness is what one could call a disease of our economic life -- and we know that our economic life is an organism or at least part of an organic unit -- if it is permitted to continue, our aims will certainly not be achieved.

(47) R. Abikoeno Tjokrosoejoso (1897-) was the younger brother of H. O. S. Tjokroaminoto, the first major leader of the Sarekat Islam. He succeeded his brother as the leader of the pre-war P.S.I.I. In the Japanese period he was a key figure in the Hookookai, the Tyuwoo Sangi-In, the Barisan Pelopor and Masjumi. He was also Advisor to the Bureau of Public Works.

It is now all too clear that this sickness is already deeply rooted in the fields of production, consumption and distribution. Therefore all three must be investigated systematically.

I am quite deliberately not going to make any detailed suggestions right now. Why? Actually, because the members of the Sanyo Kaigi have their own expertise in these matters of detail. My own proposal therefore will be cast in only the most general terms.

First. We all of us here know that within the organization of the Military Government the offices that have particular responsibility for the problems which we are now facing are the Sangyoobu and the Syokuryoo Kanri Kyoku,⁽⁴⁸⁾ (the office which deals with the people's food supply under the Sangyoobu). The Government clearly would not have pressed its Question on the Sanyo Kaigi if the government agencies involved had managed to solve their problems satisfactorily. Therefore, by the very fact of being given this Question for reply, we may suspect that the sections of the Sangyoobu concerned have generally been experiencing difficulties. If we look at the present situation, it's as if our society were already breaking down. In the field of production the peasants are now evidently unwilling to plant padi, since the return they receive is out of proportion to the work they put into cultivating it, and so on and so on -- in the face of the present universal corruption. With all this in mind, I propose the creation of an agency within the Military Government, whose sole concern would be the problem of organizing the supply of food to the people. This agency should have its own center and its own director, and be given the widest possible powers under the Gunseikan. It would not simply deal with the various difficulties arising directly out of the food supply situation. Rather, if we consider the evidence adduced by the reporting committee that all kinds of different regulations are being implemented in different Residencies, I would also hope that from the start some kind of coherent plan would be devised, a planmatige ordening, for production, distribution and consumption.

Our agricultural experts have still to be effectively mobilized in dealing with problems of

(48) Syokuryoo Kanri Kyoku. Abikoesno appears to mean the Syokuryoo Kanri Zimusyo (Foodstuffs Control Board).

this kind.

That is why I hope that a directorate can be formed (and alongside it a council of experts), which can of course, supposing the meeting basically accepts my proposal, have its over-all policy directives determined later. For example, the question of whether all padi should be processed in the rice-mills, or whether some of it should be threshed manually in the villages, would be something for this body to decide.

Furthermore, we know that the morale of the people at present is very low.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Any effort to improve it will automatically mean the mobilization of everyone involved in our economic life. If we ask them about the situation in Japan, the Japanese always say: The Noogyoo Kumiai are very strong and healthy; right now they handle everything for the government, both production and consumption. This is why I hope that we can get the Noogyoo Kumiai really and truly put into operation here.

Even this aside, I would hope for some kind of movement to strengthen morale, which is very weak just now -- I mean the morale of the peasants, who seem almost unwilling to plant padi any more.

In short my suggestions are as follows: 1) to set up a high level body within the administration to handle the food question; 2) to create a grass-roots organization -- since no matter how extensively people hoard blackmarket goods and act dishonestly in other ways, if they can be mobilized into working together to heal [menjehatkan] our society, all these [negative features] will disappear very quickly.

Moreover I feel that since we have been exposing the real conditions in our society -- the hard facts -- we are not only under an obligation to frame a response to the Question presented to us by the Gunseikan, but we are also duty-bound (if our proposals are accepted and put into effect by the Government) to have the courage to take responsibility for things returning to normal.

(49) The language is ambiguous: the Indonesian reads "sekarang moral masjarakat sudah rusak." This could mean "popular morality has been corrupted", in which case "moral" should really be "moril", or "the morale of the people is very bad", in which case "rusak" should really be "turun" or "merosot."

Oto:

Actually we should look at this whole question first of all in a broad perspective, broader than the specific character of the Government's Question. Certainly right now social conditions are extremely bad and our war potential may well be declining. We should also not forget to pay sincere attention to the strength and ability of our people to become a free nation one day.

The condition of the people's food supply and the padi collection system have actually already been studied by various bodies acting as representatives of the people. For example, in the Committee on Customary and State Law these matters were the subject of violent debate, perhaps too violent. Secondly, when the Samsuoddin proposal was debated in the second session of the Tyuwoo Sangi-In the question was given the widest possible consideration. At that time Hatta put forward what he is proposing now -- i.e., that the distribution of food to the people should form the basis [for the assessment of padi deliveries]. Thirdly, the proposals of the Tyuwoo Sangi-In itself.

If we consider the steps that have already been taken in tackling these problems, we can see that actually Mr. Soekardjo's viewpoint is not a new one. Only his method of implementing it is different. The same goes for Mr. Abikoeno. If we read the bulletin of the New Economic Order Committee, we find the same thing in the discussions of Bunkakai 3 [Subcommittee 3] on the question of organizing the Noogyoo Kumiai.

In other words, in furthering our endeavors, there is already a great deal of material available for our consideration.

For example, supposing we go back and make another study like the one we have just made -- we will still find a single dominant conception prevailing everywhere, namely that the main reason for the chaos in the food supply is the fact that several areas, such as Bogor and Madiun, have been administering a system of padi collection which approaches 100% of the crop. As an example: in Bogor for instance, if the man who farms his own land owns less than 1 hectare of sawah, he has to deliver 40% of his crop; if he owns between 1 and 3 hectares, 50%; from 3 to 5 hectares, 60%; and above that 75%. Those who do not farm their own land themselves but lease it out [maro], have to surrender 90% of every harvest. The same goes for Banten. In my view then the Government has instituted

regulations which in practice amount to taking almost 100% of the total crop.

What Mr. Prawoto said just now was very pertinent -- as was the "basis" idea put forward by Mr. Hatta. The food situation is in total chaos, undermining the people's vitality and hampering the war effort. Naturally the price of padi and beras, which form the basis of the people's livelihood, has become chaotic too.

For this reason I fully agree with Hatta's view that in our reply we should put forward proposals to change the whole basis [of the collections]. Hatta suggested just now that the food needs of the common people be made the starting point for all assessments. This is not far from my own suggestion. Only my proposal is still broader in scope -- i.e., to use the following principle as our starting point in the whole padi question: in time of war beras and padi should be regarded as vital materiel, just like bullets, and therefore should not be subject to the operations of the market. The Government must buy up the entire padi crop in order to arrange regular supplies for the Army and the people.

This of course raises a question which we shall have to consider, the question of property rights. Naturally the people who own the padi are not going to be pleased by this take-over of their rights.

If we wish to avoid the resulting dissatisfaction, we should be ready to compromise by adopting the resolution of the 6th session of the Tyuuoo Sangi-In, which called for full-scale establishment of rice-barns and peasant cooperatives. The padi can then be stored in the barns. I can go along with the resolution of the 6th session of the Tyuuoo Sangi-In (which was actually the jumping-off point for the Gunseikan's Question no. 1 that we have been discussing), provided that the words "as far as possible" are replaced by "be made compulsory."

What I mean is this. For the sake of comparison, if a man has a lot of money, he puts it in the bank. Similarly with food: except that now it is not a question of money and banks, but of padi and rice-barns. To guard against hurting popular sensibilities, we should avoid taking over their property rights, but oblige them to store their padi, once the amount needed for immediate food consumption has been deducted. This will then be like a man putting his money in a bank.

The directives of the Committee on the Formation of a New Economic Order are enough, I think, to determine the outlines of the organization we need. Since the "formation" will obviously take some time, -- as indeed was requested by the resolution of the 6th session of the Tyuuoo Sangi-In -- for the time being the duties which will eventually have to be carried out by the Noogyoo Kumiai should be put into the hands of a commission set up jointly by the Hookookai, the pangreh-pradja and the Suisintai.(50)

The question of the rice-mills should also be considered. My own view is that the best way of handling this is for the Government to take them all over and then rent them.(51) We must not let the present situation persist where there are still so many positions, so many opportunities for causing obstruction or confusion.

We should also not forget that the buying price of padi should be raised from f.10.- to f.20.- per quintal. Though it started at f.20.-, it has been gradually lowered to f.10.-, and this is clearly too low. If the price is set at f.20.- a quintal, this will mean that a litre of beras will sell for 50¢ -- which is not very much. Above all we must eliminate the possibility of the peasant being forced to sell his whole crop.

Sartono: First I want to say that the basis for my thinking on this matter is as follows: 1) It is my duty to put forward ideas which can be put into immediate operation. 2) This is the year which, according to Government statements, will be most decisive for victory or defeat, so that padi-deliveries to the Government must be guaranteed this year in any case.

(50) The Djawa Hookookai was the last and most effective of the mass organizations set up by the Japanese on Java; its functions were mainly war propaganda, social control, counterintelligence and the distribution of limited quantities of textiles and rice. It was headed by the Gunseikan and was multiracial. Sukarno and Hatta held pseudo-executive positions in the Head Office in Djakarta. The Suisintai or Barisan Pelopor was the activist core of the Hookookai, which developed into an autonomous organization.

(51) In other words the owners would be forced to rent their mills to the Government, presumably at a very low rental.

3) The Government's request for ways to improve the sales of padi -- even if the solution is far from perfect -- should be answered, in view of the existing situation, with an eye to what is really practicable.

With regard to the deliveries of padi, the obvious deficiencies have already been listed. I myself think that the padi-deliveries work most satisfactorily where the padi is picked up directly from the individual peasant and taken straight away to the collection centers. This is the method that has been applied in Bodjonegoro, and it seems to minimize the desire to hoard. For example, if the padi is first taken home and dried there, and then, say, some of the peasant's relatives are in trouble, he will probably give them part of his padi. To limit the opportunities for those who find it hard to control their desires and resist temptation [to succumb], it would be best for the padi to be taken directly from the sawah to the collection centers. There it should be weighed, dried and then handled in the ordinary way. The proportion of the crop which is properly intended for the needs of the ketjamatan should be kept there in reserve. The proportion allotted for the Residency and for the Army should be threshed on the spot. This is the way it is handled in several villages in Bodjonegoro. It has the advantages of reducing transport needs, giving a food wage to the laborers and making the people realize that their whole sawah yield is not being taken away to the cities, etc., etc. The result is that in general the rice is delivered honestly. What we should really be worried about is anything which may undermine the peasant's willingness to deliver his part of the padi honestly: in other words, chaotic distribution of the food "remainder." This is something which must be tackled at once, even if imperfectly. What is the best way of administering the "remainder" of the food supply in the village, left over after the government's collections? An organization should be set up as soon as possible, a kumiai, a peasant cooperative -- not a kumiai in the sense of a naamlooze vennootschap [corporation], which includes the idea of collecting monetary contributions. What I mean is that it would be a good idea for the peasants to form their own associations, like those set up in the old days of the nationalist movement, and including all the peasants -- not just those who own some sawah, but also the landless.

The food "remainder" does not simply cover beras, it also includes the palawidja. Since the palawidja

can't be stored over long periods, it is something to be dealt with at once. It would really be best for the village to handle this matter itself so that the distribution of the palawidja can be adjusted to the particular conditions in each village. But establishing the apportionments is a complicated, difficult business. One would like to have an ideal situation here, but realistically the actual situation is that each individual peasant's landholdings differ in size. Some have a lot of palawidja, some just a little, some have sawah, some only tegalan [dry rice-land]; or some have both, a little tegalan and a lot of sawah, or vice versa. Thus an ideal system such as the one proposed just now by Mr. Hatta -- although of course everyone would prefer it -- can not work. We must therefore take a middle course. As in the example of the village of Palangredjo and in Madiun, the food "remainder" should be divided up with 1/4 going to the Hookookai and 1/4 being returned to the owner. In a nutshell, we must do what we can to prevent the peasant feeling that the entire produce of his land is being taken away from him. We must also ensure that those who have no land can buy food at a price only a little higher than what the Government itself pays. Every village must now organize its own means of economic support; yet at the same time measures must be taken to make sure the villages help one another. Since each village is different in its own way, there should be some link between them, a kind of federation of villages -- for example, the ketjamatan might form such a unit. The real basis would actually be the village. But since conditions in one village differ considerably from those in another, the ketjamatan should be made the unit. The ketjamatan unit would provide a limit beyond which food would not be permitted to travel except under special regulations.

Put briefly then, my idea is that aside from improving the deliveries of the padi (which I think should be taken directly from the sawah to the collection centers), it would be a good thing if the peasants themselves handled the padi at the collection centers, and also dried it on a rotating basis. The peasants would thus take it in turns to run the whole business of preparing the padi (padi which is still wet from the sawah has to be dried out), under strict supervision by the pangreh-pradja. We must put an end to the complaints we keep hearing nowadays that everything is still much too like what it was in the old days. Although we know these people are now Government servants, nonetheless in the eyes of the common people they seem just the same as they were

before -- not government employees but middlemen from the rice-mills. This misconception must not be permitted to persist. But it will only vanish if we organize peasant cooperatives. The government at the center should therefore start by carefully determining the needs of the ketjamatan so that nothing is taken out of them which is really needed for local consumption. We should take from the ketjamatan only what is needed for the Army and the cities (the capital and the kabupaten).⁽⁵²⁾

These then are my ideas -- far from perfect, not at all idealistic, I know -- but I think they are ideas which can be put into practice with the means at our disposal.

Wurjanin-
grat:

Yes indeed. What we now need are practical steps which can be put quickly into effect. I agree with the subcommittee's line of thinking. We should do whatever can realistically be done, and avoid hurting the peasants' sensibilities. I also agree with the suggestions of Mr. Wirjopranoto and Mr. Sartono about threshing the padi. If the padi can be threshed in the villages, that in itself will ensure the villagers enough to eat. And aside from that, I agree with [the idea of] a progressive scale of assessments, not a uniform rate irrespective of size of landholdings.

Supomo:

Just a few words. I agree with Mr. Hatta's proposal that the draft reply to the Government be drawn up by the subcommittee or some of its members, since they have been studying this problem right from the start. In my view, the duties of the committee include in fact not simply a study of these problems but also the drafting of our reply, of course paying due attention to the discussions at this meeting.

What Mr. Wurjaningrat said is also important. I would urge the subcommittee to include in its draft-reply ways of winning the people's hearts, both by making the food supply a state monopoly as conceived by Mr. Oto Iskandardinata, and by setting up a special agency as suggested by Mr. Wirjopranoto

(52) The parenthesis -- (iboe kota dan Ken) -- is ambiguous and obscure. It may mean Djakarta and the kabupaten (but Djakarta was not yet generally referred to as the Capital) or, more probably, "dan" may be an error for "dari", in which case the phrase would mean "capitals of the kabupaten."

and others. The essential point is to please, and to avoid wounding the sensibilities of the people.

Chairman: Gentlemen, a good number of views have now been expressed. But I think that a drafting committee still can not be formed until we know what our positions are on various matters which are obviously in dispute. Let us sift out the material we have been discussing, and whatever falls through the sieve we can turn over to the subcommittee. With this procedure in mind, I would like to open discussion on Mr. Abikoeno's proposal. This is something that we should decide immediately. Do you all agree with the Abikoeno proposal, -- which boils down to asking the government to set up a directorate directly responsible to the Gunseikan? For this discussion, I will pass around just one copy. The complete version of Mr. Abikoeno's proposal will be included in the official minutes.

Prawoto: I agree with Mr. Abikoeno's suggestion, in view of the present situation. Even though I am the Sanyo for the Sangyoobu [Production Department], it is obvious that [in practice] the "highest" advisors of the Syokuryoo Kanri Kyoku [Foodstuffs Control Bureau] are the rice-mills themselves. Therefore it would perhaps be a very good thing to set up a directorate, a body formed of Indonesian nationals⁽⁵³⁾ with some expertise and experience in these matters, to ensure that the Government really understands the feelings of the ordinary peasants on the padi question.

Hatta: Basically of course Mr. Abikoeno's aim is to induce improvements. But the road [he is urging] is a long one. [I suggest] we postpone for the time being anything that can not be accomplished immediately. Furthermore the morale of officials in the existing government agencies is certainly not going to be raised by a directorate of this kind. Then again, if the whole business is turned over to a directorate, then the directorate will need to set up a commission. All of which takes time. I think it would be better this way: we should think up a practical scheme and forward it to the Government as material for their consideration -- i.e., on the best way to organize the food supply.

Abikoeno: My idea was to propose both the creation of a directorate and the drafting of a plan.

(53) The use here of the words "bangsa Indonesia" clearly alludes to the fact that the rice-milling industry was and is notoriously dominated by the Chinese.

- Hatta: A directorate isn't practical in relation to the question we are supposed to answer. In other words we can abandon it in dealing with the matter at hand. It's better that we settle this question first of all.
- Singgih: Basically I am in agreement with the Abikoeno proposal since it harmonizes with my own proposal in the New Economic Order Committee. But there I proposed that the Hookookai be made the directorate (but not given this designation), and that it should handle not merely agricultural affairs but the economy as a whole. Nonetheless I do agree with Mr. Hatta's suggestion that our first priority should be making our reply to the Question before us as relevant as possible. Later on we can set up a directorate which will not only set about solving the padi problem but also the problems of the entire economy.
- Chairman: I think these are still differences between you. Mr. Abikoeno's idea is a central body with full authority [to make policy]. Mr. Singgih means an administrative agency (executive).
- Singgih: The Hookookai's executive is the Tonarigumi.
- Chairman: Mr. Singgih means a dictatorship.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Mr. Abikoeno would give full powers to his directorate.
- Buntaran: I understand Mr. Abikoeno's proposal, but it does go well beyond what has been suggested and discussed in the Council. As Mr. Hatta explained, it would slow down our work and delay fulfilment of the people's hopes. They urgently need some concrete implementation of the proposal first put forward at the second session of the Tyuuo Sangi-In. At that time it was already known that the people's physical health and strength would decline if the food supply were not optimally administered. I don't think we should be thinking at this stage about anything too grandiose. We should first try to find a way of solving the problems of padi delivery and food distribution. The areas I visited have already prepared organizations in the villages to handle the whole food supply problem -- by taking over both the padi to be sold to the government and the food for local

(54) The Indonesian here is extremely obscure. A literal translation has been given with no confidence that Sukarno's meaning has been conveyed.

distribution. They are now simply waiting for instructions and orders from Djakarta.

In Kedu too I hear they are just waiting for a Government ordinance. I would urge that the decision of the 6th session of the Tyuuoo Sangi-In -- that agricultural cooperatives be instituted -- should be put into effect as rapidly as possible by the issuance of an Osamu Seirei [decree] law.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Once the Osamu Seirei law has been promulgated, they will get these peasant cooperative bodies into motion at once, not simply to handle the collection of padi but also the distribution of food.

If each village sets up its own body to give attention and thought to the food situation, the common people will be satisfied very quickly, since bodies of this kind will naturally know the best way of distributing the food available.

Sukardjo: Mr. Abikoesno's proposal deals with two important matters: 1) the setting up of a directorate; 2) the creation of Noogyoo Kumiai. As to the first, the directorate, I'm afraid that it won't be acceptable to the Government, since in the Japanese system of administration I can't conceive of the possibility of the type of agency envisioned by Mr. Abikoesno. If there are defects and "oddities" going on in the section of the administration which handles food supplies, they can both be corrected by clear, firm guidance and suggestions on our own part, and also by our maintaining close and constant contact with the particular governmental agencies, with a view to perfecting them further. Once again then, I can not agree with Mr. Abikoesno's idea of having a directorate. On the other hand I do support the setting up of an apparatus of Noogyoo Kumiai or Rukun Tetangga.

Abikoesno: What stimulated me to propose the creation of this directorate was not primarily the wish to see the sickness of our society completely and instantaneously healed. It was really quite simply the general situation up to now, in which one could say that our people have lost their livelihood almost entirely, especially with regard to food, and no longer have any protection at all. To whom can they communicate what they suffer from the severity of orders from high-up to get the padi in, if the village chief himself and the pangreh-pradja above him are corrupt?

(55) Osamu Seirei = the name given to decree-laws promulgated by the Japanese Military Administration on Java.

If we consider that Java (which used to be able to export food, and where food production could always be increased by further planting of tegalan) is now experiencing a quite unparalleled situation which seems clearly to violate Islamic justice, since the peasants now have the feeling: the man who plants doesn't eat; if we consider that the Sangyoobu and the Syokuryoo Kanri Kyoku are having great difficulty in trying to solve the problems of collecting and distributing the food supply; if we consider that we have in our society Indonesian experts who have not yet been recruited into an organization for overcoming all these current difficulties: then, however much I agree with the suggestions of my colleagues who prefer other methods, if we really do feel the need to propose the creation of some sort of body, let it be a directorate in which both Japanese and Indonesians can be put to work to hasten the settling of these problems. In other countries too, if the society experiences widespread difficulties of the kind we are now facing -- a generalized corruption as we have now -- it is quite usual to take rapid steps to set up a directorate which can act with dispatch.

Why does Soekardjo talk as if he were a government representative, "pronouncing" that a proposal such as mine is ipso facto unacceptable? Can't we at least try? Times have changed after all. We know that every Bu [office] in this city is piled high with suggestions that have been sent in. But we are now faced with a new situation and a new era. Are we really going to avoid doing what our duty tells us to do?

Besides, we are urging that serious discussions be held before [a decision is taken], so that we will be in a position to propose a body which can really rectify the present situation, and also that statements can be prepared for use as material for the drafting subcommittee.

Gentlemen, if we create a directorate, I believe that all the unsatisfactory aspects of this business will be eliminated.

Oto:

I would like to read here a passage from the report of the Committee on the Formation of a New Economic Order, indicating objectives which are almost identical with the general idea we have just been discussing. In other words, it is not a new conception.

7. Agricultural cooperatives in the villages should be combined into Rengokai (combines) in the kabupaten, while the kabupaten Rengokai should have shibu (affiliates) in the ke-tjamatan. The kabupaten Rengokai should be combined in Residency Rengokai, and above the Residency Rengokai there should be a Central Rengokai in Djakarta. For the time being the Residency Rengokai and Central Rengokai should deal only with matters of guidance and education.

In fact quite similar to Mr. Abikoeshno's intentions. Therefore, if the Council feels that the Abikoeshno proposal is not out of place, it would be better if the proposal of the Committee on the Formation of a Economic Order were put into immediate effect, thus not forming any new agency.

Hatta:

There is no need to take action to set up a directorate, since it will only delay our work. Not only because it is irrelevant to the reply we are supposed to give, but even aside from that, it would simply multiply the number of useless agencies. The important thing now is that we give an answer as to the best method for dealing with the present situation and leave its implementation up to the Government. In connection with Mr. Abikoeshno's suggestion, I would really like to give some further explanation of my own proposal. But that can wait. We must try to express our wishes unanimously and let the Government itself decide how it will put them into effect.

Mr. Abikoeshno's suggestion for Sangyoobu "combines" etc., etc. won't work. We made suggestions in this regard long ago. All kinds of proposals to this effect were made in the Committee on Customary and State Law, but the Government invariably rejected them on the grounds that they weren't in harmony with the basis of the present administrative system. In any case they would be of no [practical] use. Let the agencies which already exist be put fully to work. We can then abandon the directorate entirely.

(The Abikoeshno proposal was then voted on. Three members voted in favor: Mr. Singgih, Mr. Prawoto and Mr. Abikoeshno. The rest voted against. Thus the proposal was not accepted by the Council.)

[to be continued]