CHAPTER III

Indiërs

Some Indo-Europeans welcomed the awakening of Asian in general and Indonesian nationalism in particular. Most illustrious among those who tried to break out of the narrow confines of race was Ernest François Eugène Douwes Dekker, Nes to his friends, a second cousin of the Dutch author Multatuli, born in 1879 in Pasuruan in East Java of a Dutch father (a broker) and a mother of German-Javanese descent. The movement he begun was probably the most radical of all in the Netherlands Indies in the years before the Great War. His contemporary and friend D.M.G. Koch (1960:118) described Douwes Dekker as

a remarkable man with an acute, lively mind, a strong desire for action tinged with romanticism, impressed with the intuitive certitude that what was true and good should be possible in the end [...] a man who felt himself an Indies D’Artagnan, called upon to fight against the sorrows of and wrongdoing against the poor and oppressed, born into a family where the tradition of Multatuli was vividly alive.

Van Kol, a socialist and not a friend, called him ‘an agitator, but not an organizer by a long chalk’.¹ After his schooldays – he went to the Hogere Burgerschool (HBS, Dutch secondary school) – Douwes Dekker had wanted to go to Holland to study engineering, but lack of money frustrated this ambition. Instead he found employment in the plantation industry. His strong sense of justice and the manner in which he vented his anger with the way the Indonesians were treated did not make him a model employee. His job on a sugar estate, his second (his first had been on a coffee plantation) he lost, according to his own account, after he had told the second-in-charge that he would throw him into the pulp machine (De Jong 1979:35). A misfit in colonial society Douwes Dekker did what other like-minded people also did and became a journalist.

Douwes Dekker was to become the main thorn in the side of colonial government. He was a great source of concern to Batavia not just because he

¹ Handelingen 1913-14, I:47.
turned the political movement of the Indo-Europeans in a radical direction, but especially because of his efforts to reach out to the Indonesian population. A movement confined to disgruntled Indo-Europeans was nothing new and the colonial administration could cope and rest easy with that. A campaign that transgressed the boundaries of this community and inspired Indonesians to speak out was potentially much more dangerous to law and order and was less easy to contain. For a time, Douwes Dekker’s influence on the ‘native movement’ preoccupied the minds of the highest authorities in Batavia and in the other cities, especially in Java, where he and his associates pursued their activities. His ideas struck a favourable chord, and, what was more, Douwes Dekker indubitably possessed personal magnetism. Many Indonesians, young and old alike, found Douwes Dekker a pleasant person, who inspired feelings of sympathy and even affection. He was also a good orator. Koch (1960:122) compared him to Soekarno when he recounts Douwes Dekker’s power to capture an audience: ‘He dominated a mass, which was relatively not large, but which he mesmerized’. Governor General Idenburg was similarly impressed. In August 1913, he wrote that ‘from the person of Douwes Dekker emanates a significant influence especially on the younger, better-educated Native [...] by his personal appearance he exercises a kind of fascination on them from which they are unable to extricate themselves’.  

Douwes Dekker had been in contact with the Indonesian nationalist movement right from its inception. He was well acquainted with the students of the STOVIA among whom the movement took concrete shape. Douwes Dekker’s house was nearby and STOVIA students frequently visited him to discuss social and political issues (Nagazumi 1989:56). One of them, Soewardi Soerjaningrat, who was to become a close comrade-in-arms, later recollected that Douwes Dekker’s home became a club-house as well as a reading-room and library for STOVIA students (Setiabuddhi 1950:39). From close by and as a personal friend of some of the Indonesians involved, Douwes Dekker witnessed the founding of Boedi Oetomo (Noble Endeavour) in 1908, generally acknowledged as the first modern Indonesian organization and the starting point of the ‘national awakening’ (in this ignoring earlier Chinese initiatives). 

There was talk that Douwes Dekker was to become the first editor-in-chief of a magazine to be published by Boedi Oetomo, but nothing came out of this, nor did he reach a position of any prominence within the organization (Nagazumi 1989:125-6). The discrepancy was too great. His ideas were too radical and those of the majority of the Boedi Oetomo members too moderate. As he wrote at the end of 1912, Boedi Oetomo degenerated, the idealism

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2 Rinkes to Idenburg, 16-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
3 Idenburg to De Waal Malefijt, 25-8-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56.
created ‘was soon permeated by the spirit of officialdom. And, thereupon, the national idea deserted this inhospitable home. I myself had already foreseen this and commented on it before it happened’ (Douwes Dekker 1912e:248).

In February 1910 Douwes Dekker accompanied by his wife and two children left Java for Europe. In Europe he travelled extensively. He visited the Netherlands, Belgium, Saxony, Prussia, Bavaria, and Switzerland, went to France, Spain, the Balearic Islands, Algiers, and Italy, and after a brief return to Holland, travelled to England and the Scandinavian countries. His tour brought Douwes Dekker into contact with the radical anti-colonial movement. In Paris he struck up friendship with Shyamaji Krishnavarma. Douwes Dekker was impressed. He wrote a special report about his meeting for the Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad and described Shyamaji Krishnavarma as ‘the first Indian of note I had ever met’. It was an acquaintanceship which made Douwes Dekker suspect in the eyes of the British authorities. Krishnavarma, editor of The Indian Sociologist, was among the first who – in 1901 – had called for swadeshi, an economic boycott of the British in India. He was considered a dangerous revolutionary and accused of having inspired Madan Lal Dhingra, who had murdered Sir Curzon Wyllie, Adjutant to the British Colonial Secretary in 1909. Shyamaji Krishnavarma struck Douwes Dekker as a ‘political anarchist’. In January 1916, he recalled the conversation they had:

He favoured individual acts of anarchy rather than the combined resistance of the masses. He said that individual acts of bombing people and so forth had a greater demoralizing effect on the Government than a revolution by the whole of the Indian nation was likely to have.

Returning from his trip in June 1911, Douwes Dekker took up Residence in Bandung and embarked on a path that shocked the colonial establishment. As a former journalist he started two journals, intended ‘for the education of the masses in democratic ideas’. Within a year their contents would be closely monitored by the authorities. In September 1911, Douwes Dekker launched Het Tijdschrift (The Periodical), a bi-monthly. The following year a daily newspaper, De Expres, was published.

In Het Tijdschrift Douwes Dekker could disseminate his militant political views, calling for active opposition – and the evocation of fear – to fight the abuses of colonial society. National and international developments were closely followed, always championing the underdog and those whose rights and freedoms were being threatened or abused. The most outstanding feature of Het Tijdschrift was its international character. In this it was unique in the

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Netherlands Indies. Other periodicals were almost exclusively filled with articles by Residents of the Netherlands Indies. In launching his magazine Douwes Dekker made good use of his European trip. From its inception he could draw upon a score of international contributors with leftist, if not anarchist and libertine, opinions; and others with more esoteric ones. From Munich articles were sent in by Lydia Hertlein, who defended the right of motherhood for unmarried women in one of its first issues; while from Paris, ‘the indomitable apostle of freedom’, Shiyamaji Krishnavarma, argued that British rule in India was in the second of three phases of political despotism ‘the final one of which inevitably ends with its being swept away’.7 Other articles were by Sir Walter W. Strickland, contributor to The Indian Sociologist. Douwes Dekker introduced him as ‘a scholar, naturalist, explorer [...] a brave champion of the rights of the natives in British colonies’.8 From Paris there were also contributions by Mathilde Deromps and Edward Holten James. Mathilde Deromps had won the ‘How can Egypt liberate itself efficaciously from the English yoke’ award, a prize offered by the Young Egyptian League, with an essay on the ‘Martyr Wardani’ about the person who had been executed in 1910 for murdering an Egyptian minister.9 Holten James regularly submitted revolutionary-tinged articles about Christianity; a subject also taken up by Jos van Veen from The Hague, ‘a modernistic ex-curate’ who ‘has chosen poverty and privation above a well-manured life of hypocrisy.’10 Nor should Har Dayal, a radical Indian nationalist, be forgotten.

In Het Tijdschrift these authors wrote about the violent crumbling of European rule in the non-Western world and did not repudiate political assassination as a weapon. In his own writings Douwes Dekker articulated the same thoughts. He stressed that, in view of legislation in Europe curtailing the rights of workers, he did not believe that a parliamentary system could bring about the society he wanted. On other occasions he hinted that violence might have to be used, adding that the revolutionary path he advocated did not necessarily imply that actual violence had to be resorted to. Among the many expressions that greatly disturbed the authorities was Douwes Dekker’s claim in Het Tijdschrift in February 1913 that resistance to colonialism was a moral obligation. A colonial administration had to be defied. However friendly a face it might present, colonialism remained a system based on inequality of justice, in which those born as rulers would never yield their prerogatives. Of necessity it was a form of despotism, of tyranny. Listing the methods that could

7 Krishnavarma 1911:107. The qualification is by Douwes Dekker: Het Tijdschrift, 1-12-1911, p. 216.
8 Het Tijdschrift, 1-12-1911 p. 205.
10 Het Tijdschrift, 15-11-1911, p. 199.
be employed to combat it, here and in other articles Douwes Dekker freely used words such as demonstration, agitation, revolution, passive resistance, strike (singling out such important sectors as the postal, telegraph and railway services), boycott, and rebellion.\textsuperscript{11} A fortnight later, referring to the American Revolution, he wrote about the indigenous population preparing itself ‘to tear away with hostility from the mother country’.\textsuperscript{12}

Douwes Dekker’s were reminiscent of the words of socialist and anarchist agitators in Europe. He welcomed the Chinese Revolution during which ‘the power of China’s people expressed itself’, and praised sabotage and syndicalism: ‘The man of action now is fed up with reform. Reform, that is indeed socialism, has failed’ (Douwes Dekker 1912a:411, 1912f:747). Another example was provided by what had happened in the Philippines. Douwes Dekker applauded the Emilio Aguinaldo rebellion and used it to draw comparisons with the situation in the Netherlands Indies. One of his central ideas was that concessions could only be won by evoking fear. He argued that in British India ‘only after dynamite bombs had been thrown, people had been killed, buildings and institutions destroyed, did the oppressors realize that they had to make concessions in the end’.\textsuperscript{13} He condoned a murderous assault on the life of the Russian Czar ‘because each new so-called “attempt” must keep alive the stimulus of fear in persons who, by accident were born to the purple, yet because of character flaws do not belong on a throne’. He himself, Douwes Dekker continued, would reveal where people could find their ‘political Browning-guns’. A month later, entitling his editorial ‘Browning-guns’ he elaborated on the theme, promising his followers ‘to show them where they could find their political Browning-guns. [...] the maxims and the example of the great figures of human history. [...] whose words and thoughts are the crowbars to open the rusty doors of your armouries which have fallen shut.’ (Douwes Dekker 1911a:165, 168, 1911b:242.) True to the revolutionary spirit that so attracted Douwes Dekker, in an effort to explain Jesus to the Javanese readers of Het Tijdschrift, he drew a parallel between ‘a Roman province and a Dutch colony’, and introduced Jesus as ‘the bold apostle of freedom, the audacious preacher of independence, the glorious anarchist’ (Douwes Dekker 1912b:437, 439). These were words which had not yet often sullied the ears of the colonial authorities.

Indonesians also contributed to Het Tijdschrift right from its inception. To the amazement of some Dutch people they did so in excellent Dutch. The Dutch even wondered whether ‘some contributions to Het Tijdschrift, especially from Native contributors, had actually not mainly originated from the

\textsuperscript{11} Editorial in Het Tijdschrift, 15-2-1913, cited in Vervolg 1913.
\textsuperscript{12} Het Tijdschrift, 1-3-1913, cited in Vervolg 1913.
\textsuperscript{13} De Expres, 1-3-1913, quoted in Vervolg 1913.
publisher’. Among the doubters was Rinkes. He did not rule out the possibility some contributors were completely fictitious.

In November 1911, in ‘a confession of faith’ in Het Tijdschrift Douwes Dekker announced that he intended to found a party which ‘embraces Dutchman and Native, and all political variations in between’ (Douwes Dekker 1911:139??). About a year later, in mid-September 1912 after it had been announced that a Indische Partij (Indies Party) had been founded a week earlier, a campaign was launched to publicize the new party. A ‘propaganda deputation’ headed by Douwes Dekker toured Java. From Bandung, Douwes Dekker’s place of residence, they travelled to Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Malang, Madiun, Semarang, Pekalongan, Tegal, and Batavia. The trip was planned to pave the way for a merger of as many organizations as possible. When the realization dawned that the regulations of the associations Douwes Dekker had in mind – Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam – did not allow for such a step, the goal was changed to close cooperation. At the Yogyakarta railway station, and this must have worried the colonial authorities, the deputation was welcomed by local Boedi Oetomo leaders; and during the interval in a public gathering in the evening of that same day, the deputation conferred with representatives of the Sarekat Islam. At the station they had also been greeted by Prince Notodirodjo, son of Paku Alam V, the ruler of one of the two Yogyakarta principalities, and chairman of Boedi Oetomo. Dutch sources claimed it was just a chance encounter. This may have been so, but at the end of the public gathering, the same Prince Notodirodjo thanked Douwes Dekker and the other speakers and wished them success—in their ‘honest endeavour, as he chose to call it, to ensure the Indiëër […] of the rights to which he had already been entitled for so long’.15

Douwes Dekker had planned meticulously. Meetings during the propaganda tour had been well publicized in advance on handbills, bill-boards, and advertisements, and were reasonably well attended. Special invitations had been sent to persons the members of the deputation specifically wanted to meet. At railway stations brass bands turned out to welcome them. The climax came on 25 December 1912 in Bandung. In the ballroom of Maison Vogelpoel in the Bragaweg the Indische Partij was formally constituted. Deliberately, in violation of existing legislation, no permission had been asked to hold the meeting.16 The establishment of the Indische Partij, the phraseology chosen, and these words stuck in the mind of the authorities, was ‘a declaration of war by the tax-paying slaves to the tax-grabbing state of the home country’.17

14 Nota Douwes Dekker 1913:19; Rinkes to Idenburg, 16-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
15 Het Tijdschrift, 15-10-1912, Nota Douwes Dekker 1913 (II):82.
17 Report of the audience granted to Douwes Dekker, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Van Ham on 13-3-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
was chosen as background-colour of the Indische Partij flag to symbolize the mourning for the bondage of the non-totoks in the colony.\textsuperscript{18}

The gathering in Bandung was one manifestation of Indo-European bravado. The mood was definitely anti-Dutch and anti-totok. At the railway station ‘thoroughbred’ Europeans were ignored. When the trains arrived in the early evening carrying participants from outside the city, this raised a general cheer. The same happened when Douwes Dekker, who had come to the station to greet his friends, was chaired aloft. One and a half years later De Expres recollected that the whole station hall had resounded with loud shouts of joy.\textsuperscript{19} The Dutch civil servant who had to report on the events said that at the station and at Maison Vogelpoel Indo-Europeans behaved as if they were in charge. He himself had fallen victim to this mood. In the Maison Vogelpoel the dinner he had ordered was grabbed from him by an Indo-European, who snapped that he was certainly more hungry.

Around nine o’clock in the evening Douwes Dekker escorted by his comrades in procession came from his house to the meeting hall. In front marched a military band, and torch-bearers lent drama to the parade. J.G. van Ham, a Boer officer who had settled in the Netherlands Indies, had arranged for a guard of honour of Boer soldiers on horseback. ‘Sons of the land’ only, including some Javanese, were admitted to the meeting, which was attended by about eight hundred people. Totoks were refused entry and intimidated. They were given a look of contempt, and some were deliberately run down.

Meant to be a party for all who did not belong to the European white segment of colonial society the Indische Partij called for the creation of what was designated an ‘Indiërs race’. Once this ‘race’ had been formed, and ‘the Javanese no longer calls himself a JAVANESE, the Chinese a CHINESE, the European a EUROPEAN, but all call themselves INDIËR’, it was explained in De Expres in April 1914, ‘then all existing iniquities will automatically disappear’.\textsuperscript{20} Unity was what was required and true to this credo members of the Indische Partij reached out to Islam and to the Chinese. Douwes Dekker stressed that the Chinese were not foreigners.\textsuperscript{21} De Expres called it a mistake by ‘our brothers’ of the Sarekat Islam that they were obsessed by alleged Chinese hostility. Not the Chinese but others were the enemy of the Javanese people.\textsuperscript{22} Christianity was treated with less indulgence. Douwes Dekker maintained that missionary activities were a political instrument devoid of any ethics, and consequently harmful and dangerous.\textsuperscript{23} De Expres proudly wrote in 1914 that

\textsuperscript{18} Rinkes to Idenburg, 16-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
\textsuperscript{19} De Expres, 31-7-1914.
\textsuperscript{20} De Expres, 7-2-1914.
\textsuperscript{21} De Expres, 17-4-1914.
\textsuperscript{22} De Expres, 11-2-1914.
\textsuperscript{23} De Expres, 22-1-1914.
in one year the Indische Partij had succeeded in recruiting more Muslims as members then Christian mission had been able to convert in three centuries of colonial rule.24

True to his principles in establishing the Indische Partij Douwes Dekker, of whom it was assumed that he was inflicted with the Indo-European hatred of rule by Dutch people from Holland, sought out the cooperation of Indonesians. Some of them he had known since the founding days of Boedi Oetomo. By taking this step he tried to enlarge the group from which he could draw support for his revolutionary ideas; a prospect which really frightened the government. Idenburg suffered nightmares imagining what might happen were Douwes Dekker and his political friends to succeed in taking control of the Sarekat Islam and its mass following.25 It was an unlikely prospect, but not completely unfounded. Douwes Dekker had succeeded in involving leaders of the early Indonesian nationalist movement in his plans. A few even became close comrades-in-arms.

At the end of 1912 and in early 1913 stock was taken. Dutch civil servants were asked to indicate how far Douwes Dekker’s influence had penetrated their district. Almost all concluded that neither he nor his movement had been very successful in gaining support among the non-European population. It was observed that most Javanese who might be favourably disposed towards the Indische Partij had adopted a wait-and-see attitude. They flinched from Douwes Dekker’s radicalism, and could not completely rid themselves of their suspicion of Indo-Europeans, many of whom were not prepared to treat them in a genuinely friendly fashion. An additional reason for distrust was the fact that the Indische Partij was in favour of granting Indo-Europeans the right of landownership; a point which was referred to with some frequency in newspapers affiliated with Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam.26 While all this may have been true, some civil servants pointed to some groups which were susceptible to his propaganda. In January 1913 the Resident of Bantam reported that Douwes Dekker exercised a ‘fatal influence’ on many native civil servants, who ‘swallow all he says’, while his articles, copied by the Malay newspapers, were not ‘without their influence on Foreign Orientals and the more educated members of the Native population’.27 This assessment seems to be corroborated by the other reports. Occasionally it was mentioned that Indonesian intellectuals and members of the Javanese bureaucracy had become members; motivated in some cases by the arrogance of the Chinese.

24 De Expres, 15-1-1914.
26 Rinkes to Idenburg, 16-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
27 Van Rinsum to Idenburg, 14-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
Of the Indonesians who joined the Indische Partij two stood out in particular. One was Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo a native doctor. At the meeting at which the Indische Partij was constituted he was elected its Deputy Chairman. He also became editor of De Expres. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo had been born in 1886 in the village of Pacangakan in Jepara, on the north coast of Central Java. In 1911 he had distinguished himself during the outbreak of plague in East Java; a disease which in those days was still relatively new to the Netherlands Indies, where there had only been a few isolated cases up to that time. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was the first to volunteer for service in the plague-stricken areas, where others physicians, also European ones, were hesitant to venture. For his services he was awarded a knighthood in the Order of Orange-Nassau, something he did not fail to mention in later years when he had become embroiled in conflicts with the colonial government. At moments when his relations with the authorities were at a low ebb, he threatened to return the decoration. He was, in the words of Koch (1960:146), somebody ‘of great intelligence, with a lively mind and a strong sense of right and justice’.

Rinkes described Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo as ‘Mr. Douwes Dekker’s big trump card’. Others also singled him out when they ventured to comment on the influence of the Indische Partij among the indigenous population. The Assistent-Resident of Tangerang was sure that Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, not Douwes Dekker, was the reason why quite a large number of Indonesians who could understand Dutch read Het Tijdschrift and De Expres. Initially Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was well regarded in colonial government circles and his contributions to Het Tijdschrift were praised for their moderation. Within a short span of time this attitude changed. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo’s style was described as having been transformed into ‘biting sarcasm’. This contributed to making him notorious, as he himself described it, ‘as the greatest revolutionary, who stalks the Indies’ (Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo 1915:).

The other was a member of the higher, but impoverished, Javanese nobility: Raden Mas Soewardi Soerjaningrat. His father was a son of Paku Alam III. Soewardi had entered the STOVIA but had dropped out when he had to repeat a year and his study grant was stopped. Nevertheless, as a distinctive token of praise he had received a special certificate testifying to his excellent mastery of Dutch (Soeratman 1981-8:19). He had found employment in a chemist’s shop in Yogyakarta, but was dismissed because he spent too much time writing for De Expres and other newspapers (Soebagijo 1981:63). Thereupon he became a proof reader for De Expres and chaired the local Sarekat Islam branch in Bandung.

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28 Rinkes to Idenburg, 16-1-1913 (Bescheiden ‘Indische Partij’ 1913).
29 Vernet to Resident of Batavia, 7-1-1913 (Nota Douwes Dekker 1913, II:118).
30 Darna Koesoema in Weekblad voor Indië, cited in De Indische Gids 1918, I:248.
As early as February 1913, the Governor General and his advisers began to think about whether action should be taken against Douwes Dekker. The utilization of extraordinary legal powers might also be appropriate to prevent what had been written in Het Tijdschrift and De Expres to appear in the Malay press. Soon hesitation was thrown to the winds and action was taken against Douwes Dekker and his closest associates. It started innocently. At the end of

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31 De Graeff to the Council of the Indies, 20-2-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 7-3-1913 35.
November 1913, it would be one hundred years since the Netherlands had been liberated from the Napoleonic occupation. This called for celebrations, likewise in the colony. It was not too long before it became known that in some places Indonesians had been persuaded (*perintah haloes*, a gentle order, was the term used to describe this method of suggestion) to contribute money for the celebrations. Alerted by this Batavia urged its civil servants to exercise the greatest circumspection in involving the population in the commemoration. Requests that they contribute financially could easily slip over in improper pressure, even abuse. Caution was essential ‘because urging Natives to give contributions on a somewhat larger scale, would be calling on circles in which the meaning of the festivities might not be understood or at least not recognized as a cause for rejoicing’. They should not be presented with subscription lists and gifts should only be accepted from those persons who in the past had clearly testified that they desired ‘to identify as much as possible with the Dutch Nation and who therefore will participate in a Dutch national festivity completely out of their own free will’.32

The exercise of celebrating the Netherlands regaining its independence from the French was a little bit awkward in a colony and might not exactly be a reason for rejoicing for the non-Dutch residents. The colonial administrators realized this and were not alone in doing so, not even in the European community. As might have been expected strong opposition was voiced by the leaders of the Indische Partij. Douwes Dekker announced that he would oppose the plans to celebrate the anniversary with ‘vigilance and ridicule’.33 Tjipto Mangoenkeesoemo chose another course. In July 1913 he founded a Native Committee for the Commemoration of the Netherlands Centenary of Freedom; generally known as the Native Committee or, in Malay the Comité Boemi Poetra (in a brochure by Douwes Dekker and friends correctly translated not as ‘natives’ but as ‘sons of the soil’). The main objective was to plead for a change in the composition of the Koloniale Raad, the Colonial Council, a quasi-representative advisory body that The Hague had announced the previous year to be established in the Netherlands Indies. It should have more Indonesians among its members than initially envisaged, and the majority of these Indonesians should not, as the government intended, be recruited from the ‘notables’. Tjipto Mangoenkeesoemo explained later that another motive behind the formation of the committee had been the collection of money among Javanese in Malang by the *patih*, the Deputy Regent.34

Tjipto Mangoenkeesoemo and Soewardi wanted to use the centenary to

33 *De Expres*, 26-2-1913, cited in *Vervolg* 1913.
34 Memorie van verdediging van Tjipto Mangoenkeesoemo, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56; Douwes Dekker et al. 1913b:11.
SOERAT EDERAN No. 1.

DJIKA SAJA NEDERLANDER,...

OLEH

R. M. SOEWARDI SOERIANINGRAT.

DI KELOEARKAN OLEH

Comité Boemipoetra goena merajakan Pesta Seratoes Tahoen Keradjaän Belanda.

DI BANDOENG.

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VLAGSCHRIFT No. 1.

ALS IK EENS NEDERLANDER WAS,...

DOOR

R. M. SOEWARDI SOERJANINGRAT.

UITGAVE VAN HET

Inlandsch Comité tot Herdenking van Neerlands Honderdjarige Vrijheid.

GEVESTIGD TE BANDOENG.

van de Eerste-Bandoengse Publicaties Maatschappij.

The Malay and Dutch version of If I were a Dutchman'...
draw public attention to the undemocratic nature of the colonial system and to press for political reform. They intended to send a telegram of congratulations to Queen Wilhelmina. It should contain more than just platitudes. The senders would ask for the removal of the restriction on the right of free assembly and intended to emphasize that the colonial council should be constituted as soon as possible and be a truly representative and democratic forum. Before they could send the telegram the authorities had already intervened. The reason for Batavia to act was a brochure published by the Committee, ridiculing the celebrations, *Als ik eens Nederlander was...* (If I were a Dutchman...).

The pamphlet sent shockwaves through Dutch circles. In Holland C.Th. van Deventer, the founding father of the Ethical Policy, considered it an affront. He said in parliament that the pamphlet totally disregarded the civilization with which the Netherlands was imbuing its colony.\(^{35}\) In the Netherlands Indies the pamphlet became the excuse for the colonial authorities to act against the top of the Indische Partij. The problem was not the pamphlet as such, Idenburg was to reveal in 1919 speaking of Soewardi, it was ‘his whole mentality’, which had prompted him to decide to act.\(^{36}\)

In Java copies were confiscated by the police. This, of course, whetted everyone’s appetite to read the pamphlet. Two weeks after its publication, the chairman and secretary of the committee, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi, were arrested. No risks were taken. Paranoia had taken root. The *Resident* of the Preanger, T.J. Janssen, under whose authority Bandung fell, was convinced that Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo could count upon considerable support among the followers of the Indische Partij. Hence, he feared a ‘mad coup’ by the Indische Partij. Between thirty and forty soldiers were sent to the houses of Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi. Other troops and policemen patrolled the city. Government offices and houses of civil servants were guarded. The two other members of the committee were also apprehended. One was the novelist Abdoel Moeis, editor of the newspaper *Kaoem Moeda* (The Young Ones) and publisher and editor of the paper *Hindia Serikat* (The United Indies). The other was the editor-in-chief of *Kaoem Moeda* Wignjadisastra. After twenty-four hours detention both were set free again. On his release Wignjadisastra promised to refrain from seditious writings in future, and to report only on abuses, after first investigating whether they had indeed taken place or not. Abdoel Moeis decided to halt the publication of *Hindia Serikat* for the time being.

The arrests were made even before Idenburg had ordered them. Janssen had acted of his own accord to prevent the movement, which he believed was still confined to a few ‘hot-headed persons’, from spreading. There had been

\(^{35}\) *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1913-14:119.

\(^{36}\) *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1918-19:2082.
no legal basis to justify Janssen’s decision, but Idenburg, stressing the necessity to take into custody persons who formed a threat to the maintenance of law and order, condoned it. He also took up a suggestion by Janssen to apprehend Douwes Dekker. When Douwes Dekker praised Soewardi and Tjipto Mangoenkeesoemo as heroes and victims of the good cause in *De Expres* Idenburg set in motion the procedure to have Douwes Dekker banned from Java. It was a course of action some had already been suggesting for months. His advisers, Rinkes and Hazeu, had been against it. They feared opposition in Holland and were sure that banishment could well afford Douwes Dekker a ‘martyr’s crown’.  

What made the situation all the more serious in the eyes of the colonial government was that the pamphlet had also been published in Malay. They would never have been arrested the public prosecutor told Soewardi in jail, had there not been a Malay version (*Douwes Dekker et al. 1913a:??*). Idenburg deemed the whole affair so urgent that he called an emergency meeting of his advisers, the council of the Indies, on 31 August 1913. At this meeting Idenburg asked the council for its support in ‘crippling the movement’. He also took the opportunity to point out an important change that had taken place during the previous six months. All kinds of seditious opinions were now being aired in Malay. Idenburg stressed that the import of this should not be underrated. In August, in a fifteen-page-long letter in which he explained his steps to the Minister of the Colonies in The Hague, he once again touched upon this matter. To underline the seriousness of the affair, he pointed to the plans of the Indische Partij to start a Malay edition of *De Expres*, which would therefore be written ‘in the language in which the Native middle class throughout the whole of the Netherlands Indies can be reached’.  

The prospect of *De Expres* in Malay made Idenburg and other colonial administrators even more doubtful about whether the legislation provided the government with sufficient clout to prevent and curb the dangers that might arise from what was called a ‘tendentiously edited periodical press, publishing its products in Eastern languages’. The impotence of Batavia was put forward as one of the arguments for tightening the press regulations and returning the colonial administration some of the powers it had ceded less than a decade before. Idenburg explained to the Minister of the Colonies that he had refrained from bringing the leaders of the Indische Partij to court

because criminal law was riddled with loopholes, and judges on the whole tended to act in contradistinction to the interests of the colonial administration, instead of cooperating with it.\footnote{Idenburg to De Waal Malefijt, 25-8-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56.} His legal advisers had also pointed out to him that the sentences a judge might pass on Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi would probably be trifling and would not deter them from continuing their activities. The Council of the Indies shared this view.

The fact that shortly before their arrests Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi, indignant at the way in which Dutch-language newspapers had reported the activities of their Committee, had published letters to the editor in De Expres entitled respectively ‘Power and terror’ and ‘All for one and one for all’ was seen as additional proof that they were determined to proceed with their campaign. Neither had eschewed bold words. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo had written about the thrill of provoking the government, forcing it to strain every nerve. Soewardi’s article had ended with the words, Rawé-rawé rantas malang malang poetoeng; ‘it will be slashed to shreds, obstacles will be broken down’, a phrase which would be developed into a popular slogan in the nationalist movement.\footnote{Minutes extraordinary meeting of the Council of the Indies, 31-7-1913, Memorie van verdediging van Soewardi Soerjaningrat, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56.}

In a sense the Committee had accomplished what it set out to do. In their explanatory memorandum issued in their defence, which they had written while in jail, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi both explained that the intention of the committee had been to stir up as much outrage as possible in the European community: the more, the merrier. This was the only way to elicit a reaction from the Dutch public and parliament. Both claimed that it had never been their intention to mobilize the masses. Had any news ever reached the colonial authorities about disturbances caused by their activities? To prevent disorder, the pamphlet had deliberately not been written in Javanese or common Malay, but in literary Malay which limited its readership to educated people.\footnote{Memorie van verdediging van Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Memorie van verdediging van Soewardi Soerjaningrat, Proces-verbaal interrogation Abdoel Moeis, 13-8-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56.}

Whatever Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Soewardi, and Douwes Dekker might write or state in their defence, all was to no avail. Idenburg had made up his mind and was intent on safeguarding the Indonesian population against any further incursions by the three. He used the extraordinary powers vested in him to ban Residents of the Netherlands Indies to another part of the Archipelago. All three were interrogated as was required, but only as a formality to comply with the law. On 18 August 1913 Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo
was assigned the island of Banda as his place of residence; Soewardi that of Bangka. Douwes Dekker was banned to Kupang in Timor. Douwes Dekker’s efforts to ‘reach the native population in particular young native intellectuals’ carried great weight in the justification of this decision. All three decided, as was the right of people sentenced in this way, to ask to be allowed to go and live in Europe. Idenburg granted the request. His purpose had been to render the three harmless, and was not set on a punitive expedition or revenge.

The affair left a bitter aftertaste. In Batavia and The Hague there was a conviction that Idenburg could have intervened earlier and that he would not have been forced to take such draconian measures had the colonial government held wider powers. Realization also dawned that existing regulations only covered printed matter. Other forms of incitement by ‘embittered extremists who had come to see the creation of discontent in their environment as a sacred vocation’ had to be taken into account as well. This included public speeches, theatrical performances, and hand-written documents; also mentioned in the official correspondence about the issue was ‘a loud conversation in a full club house’ and even a chance remark ejaculated in anger or frustration.

Another question discussed by the authorities was how to tighten up control of associations. Organizations could be refused formal legal recognition by the Governor General, but that was all. This did not automatically spell dissolution. Members could ignore the decision and continue to pursue their activities. Action against them had to be left to the courts, with all the reservations the colonial administration had about such a course of action. Copying British legislation in the Straits Settlements was considered, but rejected. European public opinion would not accept it. In contrast to legislation in the Straits Settlements, government control of organizations should remain the exception, not the rule. Unlike the Straits Settlements, there were many European associations in the Netherlands Indies, including labour associations, which because of their aims had a militant character. All these – the council of the Indies also mentioned reading circles and evenings for cards – would be covered by a Singapore-like legislation. Any legislation should also allow for supervision over Chinese organizations, nationalist associations like the Sarekat Islam, and occasionally even some European ones; but hundreds of European associations should remain untouched by it.

A similar dilemma was posed by the action the colonial administration took against the Indische Partij. The Indische Partij was transformed into a banned
organization. In the eyes of Idenburg and his advisers, it had taken on the
guise of a political party. This was against the law in the Netherlands Indies.
Members of the Indische Partij had made themselves liable to punishment.
Meetings and torchlight processions or other parades had to be prevented, if
necessary by employing force.\(^\text{47}\) Strictly speaking acting against the Indische
Partij meant the authorities also had to act against the Boedi Oetomo and the
Sarekat Islam if political issues were raised at their meetings, and also, as the
council of the Indies had pointed out, against the Association for Women's
Suffrage.\(^\text{48}\) The solution found was to explain that what been the deciding fac-
tor in the case of the Indische Partij was the threat it posed to public order.

Having acquired the stigma of a subversive organization, the Indische
Partij dissolved itself in April 1913. Memories were more difficult to erase. In
1914 calling cards, writing paper and the like in the colours of the Indische
Partij were still advertised in De Expres. Its activities were continued by
Insulinde, which had its headquarters in Semarang. Van Ham, the Boer leader
and up to the secretary of the Indische Partij, became its chairman. He and
other Insulinde leaders were put under police surveillance. 6 September, the
day the Indische Partij had been founded, and by chance also the day the three
exiles had sailed for Holland, was proclaimed I.P. Day by Insulinde.

The resolute action of the colonial authorities bore fruit. It had frightened
off many members of the Indische Partij from joining Insulinde. This did not
discourage De Expres. Heartening its readers it reminded them that the SDAP,
by now well-represented in Dutch parliament, had been founded by twelve
people. The newspaper itself experienced a drop in subscriptions and conse-
quently faced severe financial difficulties. It was – for the time being – only
rescued by money from the Tado Fund (Tot aan de Onafhankelijkheid, Till
Independence) established by the Indische Partij. Yet, the paper stressed, the
core remained as determined as ever.

To the hard-core members the three exiles assumed a saint-like aura. In
April 1914, when Insulinde held its Patriots Days, three chairs behind the
committee table remained unoccupied. ‘The respective spirits will be invited
to occupy the empty seats’, De Expres wrote in advance.\(^\text{49}\) The meeting itself
was an enjoyable event with a pasar malam held in the garden. A telegram sent
by the exiles ‘Hold high the banner’ created a furore. People testified to their
devotion to them.\(^\text{50}\) Dédiéism, named after DD, defined in De Expres as this
‘entirely independent building of thought, this political sociological system’
became the ideology of Insulinde.

\(^{47}\) 1st Government Secretary to Director of Justice, 1-4-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 14-6-1915
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\(^{48}\) Advice Council of the Indies, 3-3-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 7-3-1913 35.
\(^{49}\) De Expres, 28-2-1914.
\(^{50}\) De Expres, 16-4-1914.
The controversial festivities to commemorate independence from the French were organized with a somewhat tempered zeal all over the colony. There were countless early morning parades by military bands, not always appreciated by people who wanted to sleep in on these public holidays; prayer meetings in churches; and musical performances, dawn concerts and singing by schoolchildren and orphans. *Matinées musicales*, and film showings; *kermesses d’été*, and *pasar malam* fairs also featured prominently in the celebrations.

In spite of the misgivings expressed about the active involvement of non-Europeans in the festivities, ordinary people flocked *en masse* to enjoy the spectacles and assiduously attended the entertainment especially arranged for them: popular games; gamelan and *wajang wong* performances and other traditional dance parties. Occasionally, it was even observed that Chinese and Javanese had gone to even greater lengths to decorate their houses or hang out flags than had the Europeans. Natives and Chinese, and on a rare occasion also Arabs, participated in parades, which were often organized separately for the different population groups. Of these, too, it was sometimes remarked that much more effort was put into them than into the European parades.

In Kupang in Timor one of the main feasts was an *electrische dubbeltjes visserij*, electric dime fishery, in which people had to try to recover a coin from an electrically wired aquarium. It was reported that at first the natives thought it an easy game to get some extra money. This was a miscalculation: ‘*Kaja ajer-blanda* [strong sparkling water] said one who quickly withdrew his hand from the water. *Tadjam* [sharp] said his neighbour. And both went to throw hoop-la rings at a packet of tobacco, a knife, or a skein of coloured wool’.\(^{51}\)

Near Medan one of the programme items was ‘cycling for Easterners’. In Semarang a ‘surprising combination’, a mixed public of ‘Thomas Atkins and Kromo together with fathers and sisters and orphans from the Christian institutions, schoolchildren and high school pupils, as well as the barracks flowers’ filled the theatre to watch what was mainly a demonstration of gymnastics and military skill.\(^{52}\)

The grand finale was impressive: the enactment of an attack on a column of marching soldiers by Acehnese. After the assault had been beaten off, children in orange, white, and blue suits formed a pyramid, with the Maid of Holland on top; all with Bengali illuminations providing a background, their smoke bothering the choir of Protestant orphan girls who adorned the scene with patriotic songs.

Javanese civil servants had their own special festivities, usually in the house of the Regent. In Semarang they were regaled with a *tajuban*, a traditional dance party with paid female dancers. Local leaders of nationalist organizations did not sit by passively. In Medan a deputation of the Sarekat Islam marched along in an historico-allegorical procession that paraded through the

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\(^{51}\) *De Locomotief*, 9-12-1913.

\(^{52}\) *De Locomotief*, 19-11-1913.
town alongside floats of the wealthy estate companies. In Rembang a crowd of Sarekat Islam members – *De Locomotief* estimated that at least a few thousand took part, carrying Dutch flags and Orange pennants – visited the Resident. At the Residency statements were read praising educational policy, freedom of religion, and legal security. The Resident reported that in view of these accomplishments, Sarekat Islam members could not but join in the cheering: ‘They had not failed to notice how many millions are spent to elevate the native’. This finished the procession went on to the Dutch social club where a fancy dress ball had just started. After performing a number of dances and shouting ‘Long live the Netherlands – long live the SI – hurray! – hurray!’ they left again. In Semarang the Sarekat Islam held a special prayer session in the main mosque asking for God’s blessings for the welfare of the Netherlands and its royal house. It was followed by a *selamatan*, a communal religious meal, ‘for members and other natives.’ Similar prayer sessions were held in Purworejo and Surabaya. In the latter city the Sarekat Islam newspaper *Oetoesan Hindia* had even called upon its readers to come to the mosque to pray to celebrate Dutch independence.

Some performances were a perfect enactment of how life in a tranquil, contented colonial society should be. In Cirebon, after parading through town in sarong and a white coat, with an orange or red, white, and blue sash, their heads bedecked with a straw hat, schoolchildren paid their respects to the portrait of Queen Wilhelmina by kneeling down and making a *sembah*. Thereupon they sang a ‘native song’. The correspondent of *De Locomotief* called it ‘truly a gripping demonstration of homage’. In Tegal the festivities were opened by the controleur. His three cheers for the House of Orange and the Netherlands was met with such a passionate response from the Europeans present that the ‘subsequent glass of champagne brought a welcome refreshment to the dry throat’. This over and done with, a deputation of the Sarekat Islam appeared ‘on fiery horses, dressed in splendid uniforms, with black moustaches glued on, and bedecked with medals’. After the Deputy Chairman had been offered a glass of lemonade, homage was paid to Dutch rule.

In Ambarawa festivities started with a *selamatan* in the *kewedanaan*, the house of the Javanese district chief, where ‘the priyayi ate and the many Europeans drank’. Next day the controleur delivered a speech in the city square. Natives and Chinese had assembled in front of the podium, Europeans had taken refuge in the cool of the lieutenant-colonel’s house. All cheered

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56 *De Locomotief*, 25-11-1913.
the controleur’s exposition, speaking first in Dutch and then in Javanese, about what the Netherlands had done in the past one hundred years for its colony. In the evening people again went to the kewedanaan. There, a Dutchmen wrote to De Locomotief’ a beauty treated us to her rhythmic tandak movements, and the host to whisky and soda’. The Europeans left before midnight. The Javanese continued to watch the dances; the civil servants inside the kewedanaan, the commoners outside it.

The person who reported to De Locomotief on the celebrations in Ambarawa could not hide his pleasure at the demonstration of native devotion to the Dutch crown. It formed a good opportunity for him to lash out against those who had expressed doubts regarding the loyalty of the Indonesian population: ‘Let them talk, those who dare to claim that the native would not share our sentiment about our independence because in the past few days in Ambarawa it became apparent that he harbours sentiments for the House of Orange, although of course less than we do’. It must have been a great relief – and letters by Dutch civil servants reporting to Idenburg on the festivities testified to this – after the spectre of a St Bartholomew’s Night in August, barely three months before to observe that Indonesians – and the equally troublesome Chinese and Arabs – had joined in the festivities in great numbers.

Opposition by Indonesians and Indo-Europeans had been drowned in the manifestations of their fellow-countrymen who had joined in the parades and other festivities. From Surabaya it was reported that an Indonesian ‘troublemaker’ had tried to persuade the local population to boycott the festivities. A girl from Semarang, she was only fourteen, wrote to Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo that she and many of her fellow-girl pupils at the Middelbaar Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (MULO, Dutch lower secondary school) considered the anniversary a totok celebration in which they should not take part. She had also observed how members of the Indische Partij drove around in a car, with two orange flags and two flags of the Indische Partij, the latter boldly raised higher than the former, deliberately driving through Bojong, the quarter where many totoks lived. Elsewhere it appears to have been mostly Indonesian students at Western type educational institutions who had declined to participate. In Batavia students of the STOVIA, greatly to the annoyance of their director, had refused to attend in the feast organized by their school. The same had happened at the Opleidingsschool voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren (OSVIA, Training College for Native Civil Servants) in Bandung, Magelang, and Madiun. One of the reasons for the refusal of the OSVIA students in Madiun was that they considered the popular games too childish and below the dignity of people who belonged, as many of them did, to the nobility.

57 De Locomotief, 27-11-1913.
58 De Locomotief, 27-11-1913.
59 De Indiër Vol. 1, no. 7, 12, 14, 15.
Such outbursts of protest remained an exception. At the end of November Idenburg could wire Queen Wilhelmina that all population groups ‘by and large had celebrated the centennial feasts with great cheerfulness and with gratitude had commemorated what the Netherlands Indies owes to the Orange Dynasty’. The reply was equally high-spirited. Communicating her gratitude, the Queen expressed her hope that ‘God would ever seek to strengthen the bond between the mother country and the Indies; that the one may benefit the other’. Nevertheless, in August 1915 when Idenburg suggested celebrating in August the following year the centennial of the transfer of Java by the British to the Dutch on an at least equal scale, the response was far from positive. The council of the Indies pointed out that celebrations in 1913 had not been characterized by sincere enthusiasm, and feared renewed Indo-European protests.

The ‘three exiles’, as they were known, had witnessed nothing of this. They had arrived in Holland on 2 October. With the financial support of the Tado Fund they and their families began a new life. All three took up residence in The Hague. On their arrival their they were welcomed at the railway station by a small crowd of about fifty people, who greeted them singing the march of the Indische Partij; the Indies national anthem, as it was sometimes known. In the Netherlands they attended meetings, gave lectures to a variety of organizations and political parties, including the socialist ones. Occasionally, when he addressed such meetings Soewardi bedecked his head with a fez. On one such occasion a former colonial civil servant at one such occasions complemented the ‘native speakers’ on their excellent Dutch. From the public gallery, where special seats were reserved for them, they followed the discussions in parliament about their banishment in November.

Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo enrolled as a medical student at the University of Amsterdam. ‘Higher education for a barbarian. My friend!’, he wrote to De Expres, ‘it felt so strange to take a seat in the lecture-room among the students, the flower of the Dutch youth’. Observing Indonesian students attending lectures filled him with pride. It was proof that ‘the Indiër is not as stupid as he is commonly depicted’. Besides resuming his medical studies, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo intended to carry on as a journalist. He explained that he refused to let down those who had contributed to the Tado Fund. He and Douwes Dekker were both mentioned as ‘editors in the Netherlands’ in the colophon of De Expres.

Shortly after his arrival Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo also became editor of De Indiër, a ‘weekly devoted to spiritual and material life in the Indies and East

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60 De Locomotief, 24-11-1913.
62 De Locomotief, 19-11-1913.
63 De Expres, 2-3-1914.
Asia’, published in The Hague. He shared the editorship with Frans Berding, a friend of Douwes Dekker. De Indiër strove after an international network resembling that of Het Tijdschrift. In De Expres it was said that its editors were amongst other activities in close contact with the Committee Pro India in Zurich, (its members included Douwes Dekker’s old friends Walter Strickland and Shiyamaji Krishnavarma), with Egyptian nationalists, who have their circle in Geneva, with patriots from British India, with the Islamic brotherhoods in Europe, and it seeks constantly to widen its contacts with all who express the general resurgence of all Eastern peoples.64

64 De Expres, 11-5-1914.
Occasionally *De Indiëër* did indeed contain the veiled references of *Het Tijdschrift* to a revolution – always explaining to the readers that the editors had a revolution of ideas in mind and not physical violence. Among its contributors was Mathilde Deromps, now testifying to her admiration for Madan Lal Dhingra, the ‘killer of tyrants’. On the eve of World War I *De Indiëër* refused to condemn Gavrilo Princip and his assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

Soewardi entered a training college for teachers. So did his wife, whom he had married the day before he left for Holland. *De Expres* informed its readers that after her return to Java she wanted to ‘be useful to the education of our girls’. Soewardi also continued to be active as journalist, contributing to newspapers and periodicals in Holland and the Netherlands Indies. Later on he became the Director of the Indonesisch Persbureau (annex Brochurehandel), the Indonesian Press Agency (annex publisher of brochures), of which either on purpose or by chance the abbreviation was IP. In setting up this press agency, Soewardi did not just want to serve the aims of the Indische Partij. He believed that by providing the Dutch public with more information about the Netherlands Indies Dutch politicians would gradually come around and become more sympathetic to the nationalist cause and would take the interest of the colony and its inhabitants closer to their hearts. Hence, the Indonesisch Persbureau was not only intended to become a link between the Dutch press in Holland and the native press in the Netherlands Indies. It wanted to use whatever channel available to inform the Dutch about the Netherlands Indies. Organizing meetings and lectures was a priority, and cheap brochures, ‘Indonesische brochures’, were to be published. Planned was also a series of ‘Indische monografieën’ dealing with current topics, written by ‘an Indiëër or a Chinese’. When the subject dealt with required this the opinions of a ‘competent Dutchman’ would also be given, ‘in the form of either an ordinary essay or an interview’. Among the first brochures were publications about the Indische Partij and the banishment of its three leaders.

Douwes Dekker set out to write a ‘political handbook’, a ‘scholarly work about the historical evolution of the Netherlands Indies’. *De Expres* revealed that a rich friend had rented a study for him, ‘an empty room, 3rd floor in a suburb’. It was furnished with ‘two night tables, a chair, a gas heater and a lamp’. *De Expres* kept the address a secret, explaining that Douwes Dekker did not want to be disturbed while working on his book. The newspaper concluded somewhat sadly that ‘our hermit therefore will also not have much time to correspond’. Douwes Dekker’s wife followed a course in German and English commercial correspondence. It was hoped that this would later enable

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65 *De Expres*, 2-2-1914.
66 *Statutes Indonesisch Persbureau*.
67 *De Expres*, 23-2-1914.
her to support the family, which would then no longer be completely dependent on the Tado Fund. Cogently Douwes Dekker used his time in Holland to expand his relations with foreign socialists and agitators. At the end of 1913 he travelled to Germany where among the persons he met were Karl Kautsky and Heinrich Cunow. Around the same time he was invited to France to discuss plans to call together an annual Asian congress with Krishnavarma and others. Lack of money prevented him from accepting the invitation.

None of the three was happy in Holland. After he had tried in vain to turn public opinion in Holland in his favour, Douwes Dekker, as he was to confess later, was to move to Switzerland to join in June 1914. He took up residence first in Versoix near Geneva and then in Zurich, where he was to study political economy. In 1950 in a book published in his praise it was said that he had done so ‘to train in the fermenting of rebellion’ (Setiabuddhi 1950:100). Soewardi, one his Dutch political friends confessed, experienced all ‘the miseries of an Easterner with limited means in a strange, cold, indifferent country’ (Fromberg 1918:16-7). He himself wrote in January 1917 that his exile and caring for his family had tired him mentally.

Soewardi even had been among the few persons who had the courage to abuse a high civil servant at the Colonial Office. Th.B. Pleyte described Soewardi’s behaviour as a ‘deviant outburst’. It occurred in February 1917 when forced by his straightened financial circumstances, he had decided to send his pregnant wife and child back to Java. The person in question had refused him access to Pleyte when Soewardi paid a surprise visit to the Ministry of the Colonies. He had brought his wife and child along so that they could bid Pleyte farewell. He also wanted to know whether he himself would be allowed to leave Holland on the next mail boat. The civil servant in question had pointed out that an appointment had to be made to see the minister. As Soewardi wrote to him the following day, he had treated him as ‘a mischievous boy’, giving him a lesson ‘in polite manners with some unchristian curses’. Soewardi had responded in kind.

The person who suffered most from his stay in Holland was Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo. Early in July 1914, Soewardi sent Pleyte a letter. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was critically ill and might not have long to live. Pleyte was asked to show compassion and allow Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo to return to Java. Nobody, except a few colonial die-hards, had felt comfortable with the banishments. Even Idenburg felt some remorse. In his letter to The Hague of August 1913 explaining his decisions to ban the three, he had expressed the hope that in the not too distant future he could revoke his decision to ban

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68 Soewardi to Abendanon, 16-1-1917, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 6-6-1917 A8.
69 Pleyte to Van Limburg Stirum, 6-6-1917, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 6-6-1917 A8.
70 Soewardi to Bakhuis, 21-2-1917, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 6-6-1917 A8.
Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi from Java.\textsuperscript{71} Of the three banishments that of Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo had probably been taken with the greatest reluctance, that of Douwes Dekker with the most pleasure. In spite of what he did and was to do, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo could still count on the sympathy of senior colonial officials. Being one of the Javanese who caused the Dutch authorities the most headaches, and not renowned for his sedate behaviour, he still remained a person who was viewed sympathetically. As late as August 1916 the Acting Adviser for Native Affairs, Hazeu, wrote that Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo had a far higher character than most of the leaders of the nationalist movement. He was almost universally admired by Indonesians for his honesty, unselfishness, and the sacrifices he made to help others.\textsuperscript{72}

Pleyte, who had become the new Minister of the Colonies less than two weeks before Idenburg had signed the order to banish the three Indische Partij leaders, was also not unfavourably disposed. He was less in favour of repressive measures to curb somewhat excessive expressions of nationalism than his predecessor, De Waal Malefijt. Yet, loss of face had to be avoided. The image of the colonial administration had to be preserved. The feeling was that to reverse a decision of the Governor General within weeks ‘would seriously weaken the respect for the decisions of that Government’.\textsuperscript{73}

During the debate on the colonial budget in parliament Pleyte had already hinted that where a possibility to offer itself to show clemency he would seize the opportunity. Soewardi’s letter seemed to present an elegant solution. Pleyte received more detailed information from the Amsterdam physician, Professor C. Winkler. What he learned was alarming. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was partially paralysed and Winkler did not rule out that if his illness progressed Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo days were numbered. Chances of recovery were slight. The only hope was to allow Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo to return to Java, where, Winkler stressed, he would pose no threat at all to law and order. His energy was exhausted. Were Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo to die in exile in the Netherlands, Winkler ended his letter, the political significance would be much greater ‘though I do not understand how such a poor soul – because such name he now deserves – has [ever] been dangerous’. Immediately Pleyte sent a wire to Idenburg, suggesting the decision to banish Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo to be revoked. In view of the urgency of the matter he asked for a reply by telegram.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{71} Idenburg to Pleyte, 25-8-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 25-9-1913 56.
\textsuperscript{72} Hazeu to Idenburg, 21-8-1916, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 22-11-1916 6.
\textsuperscript{73} Handelingen 1913-14:37.
\textsuperscript{74} Soewardi to Pleyte, 3-7-1914, Winkler to Pleyte, 11-7-1914, Pleyte to Idenburg, 13-7-1914, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 14-7-1914 B13.
After consulting the council of the Indies, Idenburg wired back within a few days that he consented, providing that Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo submitted a formal request to him. Pleyte summoned Soewardi to his office, and explained that he as Minister of the Colonies would support such an appeal to Idenburg. The two also discussed who was to pay for the passage. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was too poor to do so. Pleyte's solution was to treat Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo as an 'indigent' and have the state bear the cost of the cheapest fare. He also pointed out, but this could hardly have been a serious alternative in view of Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo's health, that the latter could always earn a free passage on a freighter by signing on as the ship's doctor.75

When Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo heard about this conversation he reacted indignantly. In an angry letter he told Pleyte what he could do with his suggestion. Correspondence with Java would take months. He was not sure that his health allowed such a delay. Calling Pleyte's attention to the fact that a Dutch physician travelling to Java to combat the plague had been offered a first class passage Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo wrote that ruined and ill as he was – for both of which he blamed the Dutch government and the decision to exile him – he probably had no other alternative than to accept the offer. On arrival in Batavia he was prepared to be sent to Banda – the place of exile assigned to him in August – ‘if the vengefulness of His Excellency the Governor General has not yet been stilled after all the sorrow and misery experienced by me’. Piqued he announced his intention to return his knighthood in the Order of Orange Nassau. The offer of a third class fare had ashamed him. It seemed he had become unworthy of the distinction. Revealing that he was to make his letter and Pleyte's reply public, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo ended his letter by asking Pleyte to mention a date on which he could personally hand back his knighthood.76

In spite of the letter’s ‘highly unseemly tone [...] only partly to be excused by his overstrained situation’, Pleyte once more summoned Soewardi to his office.77 Soewardi had to convey to Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo that the colonial office would mediate and that correspondence with Java was to be conducted by wire. Returning home – they both lived in the same house in The Hague – Soewardi succeeded in calming Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo down. The same day Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo wrote two letters. One to Idenburg in which he asked to be allowed to return to Java as soon as possible; and one to Pleyte in which he offered his apologies for his earlier letter, blaming his ‘overstrained situation’ for its wording.78 On 27 July Idenburg revoked the banishment.

75 Note Pleyte, 20-7-1914, Pleyte to Idenburg, 28-7-1914, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 24-7-1914-X13; Vb. 28-7-1914 E14.
77 Pleyte to Idenburg, 28-7-1914, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 28-7-1914 E14.
78 Tjipto to Idenburg, 23-7-1914, Tjipto to Pleyte, 23-7-1914, NA, Kol. Geheim, Vb. 24-7-1914 X13.
On 22 August 1914 Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo left for Java. ‘Forgotten are all those dark days spent here in these low countries, days of misery and want’, he wrote in his farewell to the readers of De Indiër, announcing that in Java he would again take part in the ‘renaissance’ of his fellow-countryman.\textsuperscript{79}