Part I
Colonialism
Introduction

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to gain a foothold in the Indonesian Archipelago. Fired by a mixture of religious zeal, hatred of Islam, zest for adventure, and strong desire for wealth, they succeeded at the beginning of the sixteenth century in establishing a number of fortified trading posts, the most important of which were at Malacca and in the Moluccas (the Spice Islands). Although causing some important chain reactions in the commercial and political life of the Archipelago, the Portuguese impact was decidedly less significant than some of the earlier colonial historians have tried to convey.

The Dutch East India Company, which ousted the Portuguese during the early decades of the seventeenth century, was solely concerned with making the largest possible profits, and showed very little interest in either missionary activity or territorial aggrandizement. On the Portuguese model, the Dutch established a chain of fortified trading posts in strategically important areas, from which they tried to impose a monopoly on the Archipelago’s trade and commerce. Usually contracts were signed with local princes or chiefs, who were forced to accept the Dutch as overlord and to deliver certain categories and quantities of produce to the exclusion of all other competitors. The control of internal affairs was left as much as possible in the hands of the traditional indigenous authorities. Exceptions were the Moluccas and later parts of Java, where the Company established its own rule, although it still made use of traditional leaders such as the bupati or regents (the former viceroys of the Javanese kings) for the execution of its policies. In the Moluccas closer supervision was needed to safeguard the all-important spice monopoly, while in Java the Dutch gradually brought the island under their control in order to stop the chronic internecine warfare that affected Dutch profits. In their own territories the Dutch also interfered in production: in the Moluccas growers were forced to burn down trees whenever the price of spices was falling on the world market, while for similar reasons in the Priangan regencies (West Java), where the Company had introduced a system of forced cultivation of coffee, growers were compelled to regulate their crops.
The Dutch East India Company showed little interest in converting the native population to Christianity. Fearing socio-political disturbances, it actively discouraged missionary activity in predominantly Muslim areas such as Java and Sumatra. Only in some parts of Eastern Indonesia, where Islam had not yet fully penetrated or where the Portuguese had made converts to the Catholic faith, were Dutch Reformed Ministers given a freer hand. The Company provided elementary education with a strong Dutch Reformed bias to the children of its own officials and of Indonesian Christians only. In 1795 about five thousand Indonesian children were attending Company schools, mainly in the Moluccas.

For about a century and a half the Dutch East India Company proved to be a highly successful venture. But from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, suffering from old age and increasing internal corruption, it started to decline. The Company finally expired in 1799 when its vast debts were taken over by the Netherlands Government.
During the first three decades of the nineteenth century successive colonial governments, influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution and free-trade theories, attempted to break with the policies of the Dutch East India Company and introduce a more liberal system of colonial administration. Free trade, free labour, and free production, together with a more enlightened governmental system, were considered to be the most effective means of restoring the finances of the Indies and of making the colony profitable again to the mother country.

Governor-General Daendels, a Dutch army general in the pay of Napoleon, was the first to try to implement some of these principles. As a first step he reduced the feudal power of the indigenous nobility and chiefs and tried to transform them into a salaried corps of civil servants. Daendels, however, was mainly concerned with bringing Java into a state of defence against an expected British attack. Holland at the time was being forced more and more into the orbit of France and finally lost the last vestige of its independent status in 1808 when it became an inseparable part of France.

In 1811 the British occupied Java and the Moluccas and Sir Stamford Raffles was appointed lieutenant-governor of Java. Raffles was extremely critical of previous Dutch colonial rule, which he described as harsh and unfeeling, and introduced a more liberal and what he termed a more humane system of colonial administration. One of his best-known measures was the land-rent system of taxation under which indigenous farmers were left free to decide how to use their labour and what crops they wanted to plant. However, they were to hand over to the government, preferably in cash, from one-half to two-fifths of their crops, depending on the fertility of the land.

Raffles's policies turned out to be financially disastrous, and his plans for the establishment of a British East Indies empire were ruined by the decision of the British Government, in 1814, to return to Holland some of its former colonial empire, including the East Indies.
The Commissioners-General appointed by the Dutch King to take over the Indies from the British arrived in Java in 1816. Together with Governor-General van der Capellen (1818-24), they continued the policies started by Daendels and Raffles. But the financial results were again disastrous. Free trade had to be abandoned because Dutch shipping and commerce were in no position to compete successfully with the British. Export production lagged behind because most Javanese farmers were not interested in producing for export. Moreover the Dutch were plagued by low prices for tropical produce on the world market and they had to cope with many costly rebellions and wars in various parts of the Archipelago.

By 1824 the colony was on the verge of bankruptcy and Governor-General van der Capellen in desperation offered the Indies as collateral to the British firm of Palmer and Co. of Calcutta for a substantial loan. When news of this reached the Netherlands it stung the Dutch Government into action, and large loans were advanced to the Indies in 1826 and again in 1828. At the same time a controversy raged in The Hague about what system would be most efficient in bringing the colonies back to a durable prosperity. The strongly liberal-minded entourage around the King advocated the granting of large parcels of land to Europeans and the establishment of a European-owned and European-run plantation economy in which Indonesians could find employment on a voluntary basis. A more conservative and pragmatic party advocated a return to the Company system of forced cultivation and labour.

Gradually coming to the fore in this dispute was General J. van den Bosch, whose ideas about colonial administration had been shaped during a sojourn in the Indies (1798-1810) as a young officer in the Engineers Corps. He had become impressed by the policies of the Company, which he felt should be continued after the checking of abuses that had crept in. He was on bad terms with Daendels, who in 1808 granted him an honourable discharge from the army with the rank of colonel and in 1810 ordered him to leave the colony. In 1813 van den Bosch was back in the Netherlands, where he took an active part in the liberation of the country from the French. In 1815 he was promoted to major-general and put in charge of the logistics of the colonial army. He had retained his strong interest in colonial affairs and in 1815 published a pamphlet criticizing Daendels's policies; in 1818 he put out a two-volume work on the Dutch colonies, in which he took Raffles and his system severely to task.

Van den Bosch was a hard-headed businessman, a patriot, and an excellent organizer, but he was also a humanitarian of note. With characteristic singlemindedness and enthusiasm he had thrown himself heart and soul into the business of the Maatschappij of Weldadigheid (the Society for Charitable Works) and with some
considerable success conducted the vast experiment of resettling on
reclaimed lands in the eastern provinces thousands of paupers who
were cluttering up the Dutch city slums.

His obvious organizing talents as well as his writings on colonial
policy attracted the attention of the King, who in 1827 appointed van
den Bosch Commissary-General for the West Indies, with the task of
putting the sagging financial affairs of these colonies into order
again. In the West Indies van den Bosch dismissed liberal ideas of
free labour and free cultivation as chimerical and instead introduced
a system of government-controlled negro labour on the plantations.

On his return from the West Indies van den Bosch was able
gradually to wean the King away from the liberal colonial faction,
and finally convinced him that his system of forced cultivation and
consignment would produce immediate results, while the measures
suggested by the liberals would at best only produce a very slow
economic recovery. In October 1828 van den Bosch was promoted to
lieutenant-general and appointed governor-general of the
Netherlands Indies, with the task of making the colony profitable
again to the mother country as quickly as possible. Van den Bosch
departed for the Indies in July 1829 with two million guilders in cash
and another two million in credit.

Immediately on his arrival in Batavia, van den Bosch set out with
his usual energy and singlemindedness to introduce his so-called
Culture System, which in many ways signalled a return to the
policies and practices of the Dutch East India Company. In the more
fertile areas of Java and later also in parts of West Sumatra and
North Sulawesi (Minahasa), farmers were forced to set aside one-
fifth of their land for the production of export crops such as sugar,
coffee, indigo, and spices, which were to be delivered to the
Netherlands Trading Company for low prices. This company, in
which the King invested heavily, had been set up in 1824 in order to
further Dutch commerce and trade. It was now given the monopoly
of the buying, transporting, and selling of government produce on
the European market and also acted as a banker to the Dutch
Government, granting loans on the security of future crops in Java.

Van den Bosch ran Java as a business venture (see documents 1
and 3) and accordingly kept overheads as low as possible, only
allowing government expenditure on projects that would increase
profitability, such as improvements in communications. Soon the
chronic budget deficits of the previous half-century were turned into
batige sloten (surpluses). And between 1831 and 1877, 832.4 million
guilders in budget surpluses were remitted from the Indies to the
Home Treasury, greatly to the benefit of the Netherlands economy
as a whole.

Document 1 contains a justification by van den Bosch of his
system. It should be noted that some of the points he stresses, such as the paternalistic concern with indigenous civilization and the need for indirect rule, remained important features of Dutch colonial rule until the end. Document 2 is taken from a despatch by J.C. Baud, Secretary-General of Colonial Affairs in The Hague and a strong supporter of the Culture System; it shows the widespread opposition to van den Bosch and his policies by liberal-minded politicians and colonial officials. The fear, however, that the Culture System would turn the indigenous population into a mass of paupers and drive them into rebellion appears to have been unfounded, at least during the early years of the system. And in spite of the considerable sabotaging efforts in some areas by both European and native officials (see first part of document 4), the claim of van den Bosch that his system would also benefit the Javanese people appears to have some foundation. Judging from a marked rise in the consumption of imported goods, particularly textiles, there was a rise in native prosperity until the mid-1830s. However, as is shown in document 4, which is taken from a pamphlet by Vitalis, Inspector of Forced Cultivation from 1833 to 1838 in Cheribon, it was after 1836 that a number of excesses crept into the system. And the instructions of van den Bosch designed to safeguard the basic interests of the Javanese, such as leaving the peasants sufficient time to grow rice and for other means of livelihood, were often ignored by European as well as native officials. The excessive drive by these officials to increase production for export resulted in some areas in serious famines and large-scale emigration of peasants to areas where the Culture System was not in force.

1 J. van den Bosch: Report on his activities in the Indies, 1830-33

It was in particular the political situation in Java that influenced my actions and achievements. The term “political situation” in this context means first of all the relationship between the native population and the European government, and secondly the ways and means used to make this relationship beneficial to us.

The Netherlands holds these regions as tribute. And whatever the size of the territory ceded contractually [by the native people] to [the Dutch], the people remain separate from us and they are subjected to European rule. Thus the relationship between the government and the people is determined by the power the former exercises and the physical and intellectual means it has at its disposal to assert and reinforce this authority. The princes are no different in this respect,
because they are mere vassals of the government. In the year 1825 began the Java War, which has only recently ended. [The Java War, 1825-30, was a fierce and bloody struggle led by the Javanese prince Dipanegara. See document 37.]

This war has clearly shown that the people in these former principalities were strongly opposed to the rule of our government. This is obvious from the great following the rebellious prince Dipanegara was able to gain so quickly. It also explains the fact that the people continued to give their support in spite of the many disasters they had to suffer and the many sacrifices they had to make ...

This ill-feeling could not have resulted from maltreatment by us because, in the regions where the rebellion broke out and where it spread most widely and was continued most stubbornly, there had hardly been any contact with the European administration.

So there must be other reasons for this hate. It probably resulted partly from the aversion which normally every people holds for foreign rule and partly from the religious hate fostered by the Muslim sect against all people who are considered to be unbelievers. This feeling of hate was incited particularly by fanatical priests [van den Bosch uses this word although Islam does not have priests]. And in the Jogjakarta area it became much greater than anywhere else in Java because the old sultan, Sepoe, who has ruled this principality for so long, has always treated Europeans with the greatest disdain ...

Our policies have done nothing to overcome this popular hate towards us. On the contrary it has increased whenever we have come into closer contact with the people. Further proof of this is to be found in the peaceful conditions reigning in Java between 1755 and 1806, when the native chiefs were left in control of internal affairs. During that fifty-year period not a trace of rebellion or riot could be found in the areas under government control, because at that time the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the people was consistently adhered to. Since this principle has been abandoned we have had to fight and suppress nine rebellions in Java over the last twenty-five years ...

During the regime of the Company the native chiefs retained all the privileges they enjoyed earlier under their own kings. We treated them honourably and the position of regent was made hereditary in their families. This situation is preferred by them in every way to the time when they were under their own kings. As a result these chiefs remained faithful to the government even under the most difficult circumstances.

Later, after the introduction of a more European type of government ... the privileges of the native chiefs were gradually curtailed, and often they were treated with far less reverence than of old. This
went even further, and in the belief that it was in the best interest of the people, the native chiefs were made government officials who could be ordered around indiscriminately—they were even transferred from one regency to another.

Surely it should be easy to prove that we can govern the Javanese only through the medium of their own chiefs ... It is dangerous to weaken their power and authority, even if this were done with the loftiest ideals in mind.

Looking at it superficially, it would appear that the government could obtain the support of the people by protecting them against the suppression and arbitrariness of the native chiefs. In fact this idea is entirely unrealistic, as experience has shown. The weakening of this prestige and authority, which is supposed to be in the government’s interests, must be condemned as politically insane, because it cannot be done without offending the feelings of the Javanese and without deeply insulting something that they revere highly ... [Van den Bosch then attempts to show the policies and achievements of the Dutch East India Company in a much more favourable light than liberal opponents would have cared to. He condemns the policies of Daendels and makes a vicious attack on Raffles, whom he considers a hypocritical upstart.]

I feel confident that I have shown the real facts about the so highly praised reforms of Raffles and also to have clearly shown that there is no justification in maintaining that his system was better than the one followed by the Company ... Finally his [Raffles’s] three years of administration resulted in a deficit of ten million guilders. In the light of this it should be easy to judge the usefulness of his activities, which seem to have been considered more satisfactory by the credulous general public than by his own government. This is evident from his dismissal before the colony was surrendered to the Netherlands Government and his appointment as Resident of Bengkoel, a very small and unimportant post on the west coast of Sumatra, which is now part of this colony ...

The Commissioners-General desired to maintain the system of land rent and internal administration that they found on their arrival. They were motivated in this by something they felt to be of great importance, i.e. the attractive, though false, prospect raised by Daendels and Raffles. Other reasons were the unfavourable regard in which the old colonial system was held, although only the financial side of the matter seems to have been considered, and the spirit of the times that demanded the introduction of so-called liberal institutions (it had not yet been determined what was liberal and what was not in the Javanese context). [The Commissioners] further argued that even if they had wanted to it would have been impossible to turn the clock back. The earlier ties between the native chiefs and
the people had been broken, a new set of interests had developed, and to change the system of native administration would probably cause a dangerous situation. In any case it was considered very uncertain whether another system would be more profitable financially...

The Commissioners-General were clearly working towards achieving the following objectives: the Javanese were to be ensured the freedom of their person and freedom to dispose of their land and labour; industry was to be encouraged; and trade was to be liberalized as much as possible, allowing even foreigners a chance to compete fairly.

In all fairness it must be admitted that the Commissioners-General have shown great diligence, perseverance, and unselfish consideration, in trying to realize the objectives outlined above for the benefit of the Javanese.

However, it does not matter how much everyone wants to agree in the abstract with these principles; the fact remains that such principles cannot be unconditionally applied in all societies...

Only after a sound knowledge of the economic system of a country has been gained is it possible to apply a certain principle, while at the same time allowing exceptions necessary to safeguard the particular interests of that country.

The situation is different when dealing with a people whose social institutions and language are not understood, and where no two districts can be found with the same socio-economic system. In such cases it is obvious that even with the best intentions mistakes can be made when applying general principles, and that often things are damaged or sacrificed which in the public interest should not have been touched.

Another difficulty that will be encountered is the creation of a sound legal system. How is it possible to devise a just legal code for such a nation? Mutual rights in a society are usually based mainly on convention and it would be completely impracticable to subject the Javanese to and familiarize them with laws and regulations which, while acceptable to us, are squarely opposed to their sense of law and justice. The law in this country must whenever possible be administered in line with local and age-old customs. These laws differ widely from area to area and Europeans who are called upon to dispense justice are usually not very familiar with them. So it often happens that matters are decided in an arbitrary manner... In many ways it is the more hateful to the Javanese because for centuries they have been accustomed to subject themselves in such cases to the decisions of their chiefs. They therefore object to foreigners taking it upon themselves to obstruct and sell them short of what they consider is justice.
Theoretically, of course, it is possible to introduce a legal system that ostensibly fulfils all requirements. In its practical application, however, many clashes would occur owing to the peculiar and often different values held by the Javanese. Sensitivities and other special interests would often be hurt. Surely one cannot demand that a whole nation abandon its ancestral legal concepts and values and be forced by foreigners to accept a new social system that is not understood and cannot even be disseminated among the masses. Is it not natural for people to feel injured when they see that what they consider to be justice is no longer recognized as such? Furthermore it should be realized that the difference in religion, and the hate of the priests, whose privileged interests in this matter would be curtailed, would result in an even more unfavourable reception. And it should not be too difficult to see how dangerous would be the position of a handful of Europeans wanting to superimpose their wisdom and concepts on a people who cannot even understand them ...

A system of free trade, while most suitable in European societies for effective industrial development, does not have the same application in societies that are structured on different principles. For example, Java under the strict monopoly system of the Company developed industrially much more than the surrounding countries where the people were not subject to these restrictions ...

In establishing a system of free trade in this country, considerations other than the traffic in goods must be kept in mind. These have been overlooked. One should have taken account of the fact that the mother country sacrificed considerable sums of money in order to reoccupy and maintain control of these lands. Therefore free trade, which tended to cut off trade with the mother country or caused it to be unprofitable, negated the reasons for having possessions and turned this colony into a useless financial burden. In these circumstances it would have been better to abandon the colony ...

Soon after taking office, the Commissioners-General realized that the free disposal of land and labour did not lead by any means to an increase in production, particularly of coffee. It was therefore decided to use gentle persuasion to turn the Javanese in the desired direction. This is certainly a rather euphemistic way of describing a breach of an accepted principle ... In fact this gentle persuasion ... meant in practice nothing less than a definite command to the Javanese to plant coffee ...

The intellectual development of the average Javanese does not reach beyond that of our children of twelve to fourteen years, while in general knowledge he is left far behind by them. His chiefs are a little more advanced, but in comparison with the European middle classes they have as yet not progressed very far intellectually.

To give to such people institutions suitable for a fully grown
society is just as absurd as to give children the rights of adults and to expect that they will put them to good use. It was mainly mistakes of this kind that were responsible for the many calamities suffered by the Javanese during the last twenty-five years.

One desired to be liberal and one wanted the impossible ... Only a patriarchal government suits the Javanese. The government must take care of them and must not allow them to do things for themselves, because of their limited capabilities. This, of course, must be done with fatherly consideration. In so far as this is possible, the function of the government is to bring [the Javanese] to the kind of happiness they are striving for within their own restricted view of the world.

The interests of the government should always be made identical with those of the Javanese. The restricted ideas of the Javanese should always be respected and, as far as possible, measures intended for the benefit of the government should be taken only when the people are agreeable.

The application of this rule is not difficult. The Javanese are attached to their ancestral customs, feeling duty-bound to whatever is prescribed by them. And whatever burdens are attached, they will bear them willingly. One should make careful use of this cooperative spirit, for their own good and to improve their conditions ...

In particular one should not try to speed up by artificial means the intellectual development of the Javanese. The germ of civilization that is inherent in every society often develops through circumstances independent of human control. In the same way as we cannot accelerate the process of germination in plants, we cannot within a short period of time cause whole societies to make spectacular progress in civilization.

One should not attempt to subject the happiness and contentment of a people to schemes that too often have proved to be chimerical and therefore can be considered only with mistrust. I myself therefore have not indulged in experimental measures of this kind and have left the intellectual development of the Javanese to the course of time and the natural evolution of things ...

The only successful productive system in Java is the one that does not interfere with the people's existing mode of economic life ...

In addition to the attachment to their own institutions, there is nothing more pleasing to the Javanese than to be in a position where they will have to work less. This is the result of climatic conditions. Moreover, in common with most other human beings, they want to gain as much profit as possible from the labour they are compelled to perform. These two attitudes had to be taken account of in introducing the new system. In addition to basing it on age-old
custom, it was necessary to provide landholders in particular with the opportunity either to work less or to obtain a greater return with the same labour input.

Accordingly, the following principles have been adopted. A desa [village] is to be exempted from paying land rent if it sets aside one-fifth of its rice fields for the production of crops suitable for the European market, the cultivation of which may not require more work than the cultivation of rice. Furthermore, where the price obtained for the product is higher than the amount of land rent to be paid, the difference is to be paid to the desa. Crop failures, providing they are not caused by laziness or a lack of diligence on the part of the Javanese, are to be borne financially by the government. Clearly this policy was instituted solely for the benefit of the Javanese so that they could gain more profit from their land ...

In order to obtain products that were marketable in Europe, crops first had to be prepared in factories. This required considerable capital, knowledge, and other things that could not be expected from the Javanese. In order to ensure that the crops were properly treated, European and Chinese capital had to be brought into the business.

In some cases, such as sugar cultivation, it was found necessary to introduce division of labour in order not to overburden the people. Some were required to grow the crop, others to harvest it, and others again to transport it to the factories in case no day labour was available.

The Javanese do not like to work under the supervision of Europeans and prefer to be directed by their own chiefs. This was taken into consideration and supervision by European officials was restricted as much as possible to such matters as ensuring that the fields were properly cultivated and that crops were harvested and transported at the right time ...

[Van den Bosch summarized his administration as follows:]

1. During my administration peace and order have been re-established in Java. The rebels and their leader Diponegara and others have surrendered unconditionally to the government.
2. The continuation of peaceful conditions has been ensured by exiling Dipanegara and other rebellious and dangerous princes and chiefs. Furthermore, the debts incurred by kings and princes at both courts [i.e. Yogyakarta and Surakarta] have been taken care of. They are now paid a generous monthly allowance, which should provide for their needs very well.
3. The area under direct government rule in Java has been increased by 25 per cent in terms of territory as well as population. The following former princely territories have been added: Banjoemas, Bagelen, Madioen, and Kediri. This is of great financial importance to the government because in these areas the cultivation of
crops suitable for the European market can be considerably expanded.

4. The budget deficit, which for the last half-century has made the colony a financial burden to the mother country, has been transformed into a considerable surplus. In 1832 more than five million and in 1833 more than ten million guilders have been remitted [to Holland] ... and by the end of 1834 it can be safely assumed that a total of twenty-eight to thirty million guilders will have been transferred. This considerable surplus has been obtained without introducing new taxes and without increasing existing ones. On the contrary some of the more oppressive taxes have been removed and others have been reduced.

5. The production of coffee, sugar, and indigo has been expanded greatly because of the introduction of the new cultivation system.

6. The object of this system is to lighten the heavy burden of the land rent on the Javanese and to ensure that they will earn a larger or at least the same income without having to work harder. The system has also made it possible that, within a few years, other important products can be sent to the home market—products such as tea, cinnamon, tobacco, silk, and cochineal. Furthermore, the Javanese are paid a higher price for coffee than previously. And finally, the system has provided the government with the means for remitting large sums [to Holland] ... while the Netherlands has also gained supremacy in the colonial produce trade.

7. Trade in this island has risen considerably because of the expansion of production. Owing to the rise in price of certain products as well as the increase in production, exports today are almost double what they were in the years immediately prior to my arrival ... Profitable employment has been provided for Dutch shipping, which has more than doubled ... 


2 J.C. Baud: Criticisms of van den Bosch and the Culture System in the Netherlands and the Indies, 1832

In the month of June [1832] all sorts of alarming rumours became current in the mother country about the probable results. Your Excellency's measures would have with respect to peace and order in the island of Java. There was talk about people leaving their lands in
the Priangan regencies and Cheribon, and about a rebellious spirit in Bantam, and this was used to put your policies in a very unfavourable light. This was the first time that the government in the Netherlands began to fear that the new measures [i.e. the Culture System] would not last long, particularly as they would soon be bereft of Your Excellency’s support in person [van den Bosch had requested permission to return home]. These particular letters from Java and the spirit in which the returning officials and officers spoke made this anxiety grow stronger and stronger; and when the letters of Your Excellency, particularly the one of 14 March 1831, no. 289/7 (Cabinet), not only spoke of the desire to be replaced speedily but also frankly recognized that there was fairly generally a spirit of discontent and opposition in the colony, the feeling of anxiety rose even higher ... In the month of September 1831 it also appeared fairly obvious that General de Kock [who was to succeed van den Bosch as governor-general] greatly doubted the expediency of the system introduced by Your Excellency ...

Your excellency has expressed the conviction that the party that is so hostile towards the new system will not let any opportunity pass by to overthrow or undermine it. I completely share this apprehension; I fear that every change of personnel in the administration will be the sign for a new struggle, and I expect during my short presence in Java many open and secret attacks. But if Lieutenant-General de Kock had taken over the government now, then without any doubt these attempts would have been made with even greater force, and the faction in question would undoubtedly have chosen the slogan “Now or never” in their machinations. The reason is that in the Indies also the General is considered to be hostile to the new system and a supporter of the so-called liberal ideas. Is it not better under these circumstances that his appointment be postponed until the new system has been consolidated more, and the tree known by its fruits?

It is true that this tree has already borne fruit, but this was not yet sufficiently known in July 1832 in Europe to reassure anyone with preconceived doubts, who can only judge the situation from a distance and on the authority of others. Private reports now sent from Java recognize that production has increased compared with former days, but they add that this production is bought at the cost of disproportionate sacrifices that cannot be sustained and by measures that sooner or later will disturb the peace of the island ...

On the other hand, it is true that the party in question is now remaining quiet, which seemingly indicates an improvement in the political situation. However, in my opinion this should only be ascribed to the experience they have gained that Your Excellency does not tolerate any opposition. It does not mean at all an improvement in public opinion. Sufficient proof for this can be found in the
hereby-enclosed extracts from some private letters, which without breaking good faith I can only present to Your Excellency without mentioning names, although the writers are among the most important officials and citizens ...

Extracts from some letters from Java:

19 February 1831

Our Governor-General will soon realize that the forced cultivation of sugar and indigo, for which the poor Javanese labourer hardly receives anything, will cause rebellions in various parts of the island. This is already the case in Bantam from where the resident Smulders has sent the most alarming reports to the government, with the result that now in all haste an expedition has to be sent there on the ships Rupel and Pollux.

The emigration from the Cheribon region and the Priangan has been on such a large scale, solely because of the forced labour, that all the residents have now received a circular ordering them to drive back to Cheribon all people who have recently arrived in their residencies. It is easy to guess what the consequences of this will be after some time.

16 September 1831

The Governor-General never attends the meetings of the government any more. It is as if he has met the devil in Batavia. His Excellency is completely absorbed in sugar and indigo, which will never enable him to extricate himself from his difficulties. In Europe one seems to expect a great deal of profit from these great enterprises, which alas will probably go the same way as other speculations of this kind. If in some areas the indigo and sugar cultivation still brings some profit, this is snatched up by the sugar mills and the Handelsmaatschappij [Netherlands Trading Company, which monopolized colonial trade], while the people are being exploited and the government will have to bear losses in other areas. The cultivation is especially oppressive in the Residencies of Cheribon, Tegal, and the Priangan. In the latter the regents and the people are loudly complaining. Holmberg [the Resident], a weak man, is now bending as much under the yoke of the Governor as he formerly did under the yoke of his wife. The threat of being replaced if he does not strictly comply with the orders and desires of the Governor-General makes him keep his mouth shut and he refrains from warning about the consequences he must fear for the future.

Never before has there ruled in Java such a despot as the self-opinionated and stubborn J. van den Bosch. A ... who a few days ago returned from a trip, could relate many instances of his stubbornness and despotism and his system of cultivation. In the Oosthoek [eastern corner] of Java the people are leaving their villages because of the forced delivery of sugar cane, so that its cultivation will disappear again. The planters in the areas surrounding Batavia are about to be ruined because the Governor-General no longer allows budjangs [seasonal labour] to come from the Cheribon region because he needs them himself there.
I fear very much for the contractors, Loudon, Dennison and Sturler, because their sugar cane will everywhere be ripe and rotting before their European machinery will have arrived. But as none of them have much to lose and because of that have made such hazardous contracts, although hoping for great profits, it will probably be the poor natives again who will suffer most—they will be discouraged from ever planting sugar cane again. Only in Bantam and Japara can the cultivation of sugar succeed, because there the natives plant and mill the sugar cane themselves, and so can count with certainty on being recompensed for their labours, providing that this cultivation is profitable. However, in this residency one should not expect the progress promised.

The indigo crop has also been unsuccessful, because it was already ripe and too old before the factories were completed. The indigo planted on cleared virgin lands in the Priangan has now been abandoned and the natives are forced to plant indigo on the rice fields. Many rice-growers will be harmed because rice-planting does not begin everywhere at the same time, and the cultivation of coffee will be completely neglected, yes ruined. These measures, which have caused discontent among the chiefs as well as the common people, will completely dissipate the support given to us by the people of the Priangan regencies during the war in the principalities [i.e. the Dipanegara War, see document 37].

May God save us from a new rebellion.

6 November 1831

Our Governor-General may be clever and good, but His Excellency keeps these qualities very much hidden from us, because we never see him. And he only has contact with a number of old gentlemen, who in respect of their ability do not seem to be a happy choice. He can count his friends on his fingers. The army and all of the civil service, with the exception of van Sevenhoven [Director of Cultivation] and a few others whom I do not want to name, are completely averse to him ... He therefore stands completely alone and those who could be useful to him let him go his own way, and follow up his orders strictly, leaving him to account for the consequences. In short they have shelved all their ambitions. How matters will develop this way nobody understands, and perhaps least of all His Excellency. He just keeps consulting an uninformed person such as van Sevenhoven, a middle-head such as van Lawick, and suchlike who give him lip service ... 

17 May 1832

Ostensibly the situation is quiet in the Cheribon region, but it simmers a great deal. Forced cultivation does not suit this country. The time of the old Company has passed and the Javanese have become so enlightened that they will not take things lying down for long ...

J. van den Bosch: Despatch to de Eerens, 30 April 1836

[After a brilliant military career, Major-General D.J. de Eerens was appointed governor-general of the Netherlands Indies, a position he held from 1834 to 1840.]

For the future it will be important to ensure that only known supporters of the present system of government in the Indies will be promoted to important positions. The existence of the State [the Netherlands] is so closely tied to its [the Culture System’s] success that it could be thrown into the balance by private considerations. Preventive measures are even more necessary because there is a faction in the Indies, connected with a similar group here, that opposes the expressed directives of the King—also in matters not concerning the colonies—often using reports sent from the Indies. For example at the moment again there is one in circulation by Vitalis, a colonial official, about the indigo cultivation [document 4]. I only have it on hearsay, but if its contents are as claimed, it is shameful, and the activities of this official must in the future be watched ...

The opposition in the Indies and here is not planning to stop until it has succeeded in having a governor-general of its own choice appointed, that is, someone who will remit as little as possible [i.e. budget surpluses], who will give preferential treatment to local trade, who will ruin the Handelsmaatschappij, and who will make the mother country serviceable to the Indies, and not the Indies to the State. This objective, however, will not be easily achieved, as long as I may be honoured with the King’s trust.

I must ask the special attention of Your Excellency for officials who are invested with the important position of resident. When these are suitable for their position and work diligently, the [forced] cultivation will succeed; but if they are unwilling or unsuited, everything will be inefficient. The only way to prevent this is to transfer or dismiss on compensating pay officials who do not live up to expectations. The Residents of Bantam, Tegal, Pekalongan, and Rembang seem to me to be bad appointments ...

Changing from persons to business, it is in the first place the coffee cultivation that must be emphasized and which in the interest of the government deserves Your Excellency’s greatest attention. I venture to trust that when the trees which have now been planted bear fruit, the average production could amount to 100 million pounds. However, diligent care must be taken that this cultivation does not decline again and that every year one-twelfth of the trees must be replaced with great care.

The cultivation of sugar must be extended on government lands and by private interests to a limit of half a million piculs [1
picul = 61.7613 kilograms]. The present high prices cannot be ex-
pected to last. They have always been subject to heavy fluctuations.
And the average price paid on delivery should not be higher than ten
guilders—or at the highest twelve guilders.

Indigo is a precious product and deserves all the encouragement it
can get. Production must be increased to one million pounds.

The cultivation of tea can become as important for Java as coffee
production. However, it will still require a number of years before all
difficulties are overcome. In the meantime it is advisable that tea
should be planted in all suitable residencies. Very fertile lands must
be selected for this purpose and up to one million bushes should be
planted yearly. I repeat that good, fertile lands must be selected. I
believe that these can be found particularly in Banjoemas and other
new residencies.

The cultivation of cinnamon should also be encouraged as much
as possible and should be increased similarly in all residencies. Both
cinnamon and tea could become major products for our trade.

Cochineal, silk, and tobacco could become of minor importance—
although I fear that they will never be major products.

I should be pleased if Your Excellency would request the Director
of Cultivation to prepare a report showing the state of cultivation, its
possible extension, and the most suitable means to be used. In addition
to the projected quantities of coffee, sugar, and indigo, we
should count on a production of two to three million pounds of tea,
four to five hundred thousand pounds of cinnamon, and in propor-
tion, twenty thousand pounds of cochineal, silk, and tobacco. Ex-
erience will teach us the appropriate increase in production that is
needed. Such a report, accompanied by the submissions of Your Ex-
cellency and the government, would certainly be pleasing to the
King.

The cultivation of rice especially deserves the care of the govern-
ment, because it is of importance to the Javanese. Of particular im-
portance is the construction of proper irrigation works. I am sure
that this will always be a subject of the special attention of Your Ex-
cellency.

The financial situation of the colony is of no less importance to the
[Netherlands] Government. It is certain that without the generous
contributions of the Indies, the State would have been ruined and we
would long ago have been forced to submit ourselves to the mercy of
the opposition. But now we have been saved from our predicament
and we can patiently wait until the time when we will be able on the
basis of reasonable conditions to reach a final settlement. It is a mat-
ter of great anxiety that the financial situation of the Indies is of such
importance, with so many important interests depending on it.
Everything that may have a harmful effect on it causes serious fears
here for the future, while every sign pointing to increasing prosperity brings great pleasure. Everything has now been arranged, and deviations from the accepted principles could only cause unpleasant impressions: *le mieux est l'ennemi du bien* [change is not always for the better]. Your Excellency then should stick exactly to the existing regulations ...

So far as trade is concerned, it is the intention of the King that as little as possible of local production will be sold in Java, but that instead as much as possible will be consigned to the *Handelsmaatschappij*. I must tell Your Excellency that, so far as I am concerned, I would like to leave some more leeway to private traders, but the *Handelsmaatschappij* strongly objects to this, arguing that imports by private traders would depress the market here, while it also considers that in the interests of our budding secondary industry it must be made difficult for foreigners to obtain return freights. It is known to Your Excellency how much we are opposed in this by foreigners and that we have been forced in their interest to levy duties on our own goods [this refers to pressure by the British Government]. That this causes a very unpleasant feeling, Your Excellency can certainly imagine. As a result the King feels strongly that no produce, unless it is absolutely necessary, should be sold. This is even more important since our own merchants often lower themselves to bring out English industrial goods and so act to the detriment of the common good. It is truly lamentable to see that for so many the quest for gain is of such preponderant importance, although they usually thereby rob themselves of the profits they could otherwise make.

I am having copper coins made here and I shall again send silver specie in order to diminish the necessity to sell produce. I realize very well that the position of Your Excellency will be made more difficult because of this and that the pressure of commercial houses in Java to sell produce by public auction will be very strong. Still the common good and the strong determination of the King in this matter do not allow for any deviations from the established rule. Only as much produce may be sold as is necessary to keep the funds in the Government Treasury to the agreed level, and absolutely no more. Also the tin from Bangka can from now on be remitted, because it is doing very well here.

So far as the governing of the natives is concerned, I have already given my views in the memorandum I left behind [see document 1], and I only wish to add this: I have always found it to be dangerous to take the lower classes of the people away from the influence of their chiefs, or to superimpose on these people a happiness that they do not understand. If it depended on us to make the Javanese happy, then no sacrifice would appear to me to be too large, but all our
philanthropic dreams have only led them into popular uprisings and wars. Hundreds of thousands of people in Java have been slaughtered because we wanted to make them happy in accordance with our views. A sound knowledge of the Javanese character, economic life, and views is required before any good can be done in this respect, and I feel that I should advise Your Excellency to change as little as possible in the existing situation. They [the Javanese] cannot be protected enough against the Europeans and Chinese. It is not their chiefs, who are so often given a bad name but to whom the Javanese nevertheless remain faithful with unbreakable loyalty, who suppress them—at least not in their opinion—but the bloodsuckers I have just named, who, if not checked, torture them. Their activities should be carefully watched ...


4 L. Vitalis: The system of forced cultivation in Java, 1851

The introduction of the new system of forced cultivation was announced in a circular explaining the principles, procedures, and purpose of the system. Immediately its opponents began to raise their objections. And it is very peculiar that all these opponents were paid government officials. Some complained: "We will no longer be Residents but farmers". And others said that anybody who sacrificed himself for the government deserved to be hanged ... These gentlemen did not hide their feelings from the regents. This caused a great deal of harm to the people because the regents, who preferred very much to be left alone and only carried out inspections when they had to accompany the Resident on tour, were very happy to see that their superiors harboured the same feelings. This is the reason why in some residencies where the Resident was opposed to the system, the poor peasants were forced for six years to carry out a great deal of useless work without receiving any payment. In some areas the people were pestered to plant sugar cane in soil that was unprepared. Elsewhere peasants were compelled to deliver to the Chinese mill-owner double the amount they were paid for ... In one residency ... the people were obliged to plant millions of coffee trees in soil that consisted of limestone and was completely infertile. When in 1837 I inspected this residency, I had to suggest stopping this cultivation, because after two thousand peasants had been forced to work for five years, some of whom had to walk twenty-
eight miles to the plantations, the total harvest was only 3 picnicls. So only thirty-six guilders were to be divided among all these labourers for five years of toil. In other places coffee trees had been planted on exhausted lands that had been abandoned by the population. In short, from Rembang to Pekalongan everything possible had been done to make the people discouraged and discontented.

In Cheribon, Tegal, and Pekalongan, the European authorities were up against the machinations of the regents, who saw with great reluctance that the powers they had been able to maintain secretly, to the detriment of the people, were diminishing daily as a result of the extension of the new system. They therefore constantly intrigued to make the people discontented, which in their view was the only way to make the government stop the cultivation of the new crops. So they selected for the cultivation of indigo all the rice fields that were close to the factories. The result was that the people of these villages moved away because they had no fields in which to plant rice for their own upkeep; and soon the only people left in the region were the chiefs.

As the regents supplied the residents with lists of the villages charged with producing the various crops, they took care to include all villages so that they checked out with the lists of the controleurs. But they excepted the richest villages from forced cultivation on the condition that these villages—which were divided among the regents, district heads and lesser chiefs, and relatives of the regents—would deliver people and horses for their own use. Those arrangements obviously put the other villages at a distinct disadvantage, because their task was now doubled. Also the regents took recourse to torture to compel the heads of these villages to supply more people for the plantations than was indicated on the lists. In this way, of course, the crops were not in good condition.

I was sent there to inspect the situation. I never warned the heads beforehand when I decided to go on tour. Once I unexpectedly arrived at a factory and the first thing I saw was ten old men—all heads and members of the village councils—whose thumbs had been fastened to a rope thrown over a tree branch so that these unfortunate men could hardly touch the ground with their toes. A few moments later the district head appeared and seeing himself caught in the act, excused himself by saying that he had acted on the orders of the Regent. These men were punished because they had not supplied enough from their respective villages for the forced cultivation. I investigated the matter and compared the number of labourers who were working in the plantations with those on the lists. To my astonishment I found that the villages whose heads were being punished supplied more people than they were obliged to, while many of the larger villages did not supply anybody at all ... In
another district I found village heads lying completely naked on the ground with their arms bound and exposed to the sun. This was also done on the orders of the Regent ... 

The system has worked very badly in the Priangan regencies. Nowhere else have the people been more vexed and suppressed. The government wanted to pay less for indigo in the Priangan because the people there do not pay tax. But I know of no other residency in Java where the burdens on the population are heavier than in the Priangan. It is true that they pay tax to their own heads instead of to the government. But this does not mean that they are better off. They have to pay one-fifth in kind of all [produce], ... of which one-tenth is for the regents and one-tenth for the priests. Furthermore, the people supply everything that the chiefs need for their *sedeka* [feasts] without any payment, and all services have to be performed without payment. Moreover they only receive 7 guilders for a *picul* of highland coffee of 225 pounds, while coffee-planters elsewhere receive 21.60 guilders for the same weight ... 

The forced cultivation of indigo was introduced in the Priangan in 1830. And in 1835 I was charged with the inspection of the factories in this residency in order to determine whether the sorry state of affairs pictured by the Resident Holmberg de Beckfelt was not exaggerated ... The following extract from my report of 29 January 1835 is indicative of the situation of these poor peasants:

Truly their situation is lamentable and really miserable. What else can one expect? On the roads as well as in the plantations one does not meet people but only walking skeletons, which drag themselves with great difficulty from one place to another, often dying in the process. The Regent of Sukapura told me that some of the labourers who work in the plantations are in such a state of exhaustion that they die almost immediately after they have eaten from the food which is given to them as an advance payment for the produce to be delivered later. If I had not witnessed this myself I would have been hesitant in reporting this ... These victims can even be found on the roads leading from Tasikmalaja, Garoet, Ardjawinangon, and Galo. One even passes them unnoticed! What then must be the fate of those who collapse on the desolate roads and paths? The Regent, when asked why he did not have the bodies buried, replied: "Every night these bodies are dragged away by the tigers." ... 

The decrease in the production of indigo and rice has now become a question of great importance ... The suppression of the people began as early as 1836 because it was from that time onwards that the cultivation of export crops for the European market was pushed excessively ... Poverty has increased yearly and the number of people leaving their districts for other areas has constantly been growing ... In the regulation of 28 March 1834, no. 1, ... the government has set out how much labour was to be used for forced cultivation, i.e.:
“Four families are to be exclusively concerned with the cultivation of 1 bouw [1 bouw = 7096.5 square metres] of land. Two and one-tenth families per bouw are to be used for the harvesting of the crop, the delivery of firewood, the treatment and the transportation of the crops.” These regulations were strictly adhered to... until May 1836 when the Director of Plantations, Mr Elias, departed for Europe. From then until the appointment to this post of Mr Baud in 1842, the production of export crops, in particular indigo, was increased excessively... The pitiful results [in the residencies of Cheribon, Pekalongan, and Bagelen] were as follows:

The people are overburdened with work, with the result that they are unable to take care of their own affairs and have no time to work the land and grow the crops needed for their own upkeep.

The people have been forced to cede a larger share of their sawahs [wet rice cultivation] than is required by the government. The result is that they have to go without four-fifths of their rice land, which is absolutely necessary for their upkeep.

The need to rest the land to maintain fertility has been neglected and at present the land is so exhausted that there are villages where the people are growing indigo, which yields no more than two guilders for a whole year’s labour.

[Furthermore] the inhabitants of each district are bound to buy and take care of the upkeep of six draught horses as well as their harnesses, which are to be used by the residents, regents, and other officials on their tours of inspection. The funds necessary for the upkeep of these horses etc. are deducted from the amount due for produce delivered, as if the advantage these officials draw from the system of forced cultivation were not sufficient to buy the necessary horses. The government, blinded by the vast amount of produce delivered by these three residencies during the four years when production was pushed excessively, felt that it should reward these residents, who in fact had caused the greatest possible harm to the interests of the state...

Immediately after the introduction of the new system large areas of land that previously were covered with forests or were not irrigated were made into sawahs. This was made possible by the river dams built to supply the sugar factories with water. During the western monsoon this water was not needed by the factories, and while the sugar cane was harvested, the water was used to irrigate the rice land through which the canals had been dug... Previously various low-lying and marshy regions had not been suitable for agriculture. But after the surplus water from floods during the rainy season had been channelled there, a great deal of mud and other sediment was deposited so that large parts of these regions were recreated into fertile lands.
In many districts there was no river water to irrigate the sawahs, so the people could only grow padi gendjang [i.e. rice which ripens early—three and a half to four months after planting—but which yields considerably less than padi dalem, slow-growing rice which ripens five to six months after planting] ... The people therefore were entirely dependent on rainwater ... and every time the rains stopped early there were large losses in rice production. But since the setting-up of sugar factories in these areas the canals dug have supplied the necessary water for the lands and the people have been able to concentrate on the growing of padi dalem, at the same time being protected against losses caused ... by the early arrival of the dry season ... 

The largest part of the sawahs on which sugar cane and indigo are now grown and which received an ample water supply was until 1836 planted with padi dalem. Only that part of the land—at the highest, one-quarter of the total sawah area of a village—on which sugar and indigo was to be grown was planted with padi gendjang. This was because an early harvest was necessary to get the land ready for the cultivation of crops destined for the European market.

These then are the causes of the great increase in rice lands and the abundant supply of rice that was brought onto the market until 1837 ... Even if the new system of cultivation had not been successful, it is evident ... that its immediate impact would have been beneficial to Java because of the great improvements and considerable increase in rice cultivation.

What then are the fateful circumstances that ... during a period of ten years have changed this state of prosperity into one of suppression and misery for the poor inhabitants of Java? One of the reasons is the desire of officials to increase the profits of the system and to gather a fortune within a few years. Another reason is the desire to gain the approbation of the government for the delivery of large quantities of produce and to be decorated for their good services ... From the moment that the Javanese were forced to grow sugar cane or indigo on one-third or even half of their sawahs, it was no longer possible for them to grow padi dalem. And it was from that time that the decline in the production of rice commenced. The situation became worse when in 1840 the less fertile lands—which since 1836 had only been rested every alternate year instead of four out of every five years—were completely exhausted ... and it is since then that the farmers have suffered double losses—because of the decline in both the yields of sugar and indigo and in rice production ... The exhaustion of the soil causes the farmers to lose more than half the produce they earlier obtained from the same area of land. They also lose, at least for a large part, the benefits of the second crops after the rice harvest, such as ubis [sweet potatoes], kumbilis [herb-like
tubers], corn, peas, white beans, *palma christi* [castor-oil plants], water melons, and various kinds of vegetables, because they lack the time to take proper care of these plants.

It is terrible to think that the poor farmers do not only have to pay taxation on the land, which hardly yields any rice, but also on that part of the land on which they are forced to grow sugar and indigo and for which, in spite of all the work, they hardly get any payment; that the money to pay taxes must be taken from the sale of the little rice they have rather than being paid out of the proceeds from the produce delivered for the European market, as the government promised; that the taxes must be paid during the last six months of the year during which the rice costs only four to six guilders per *picul*, while in the next few months the farmers are forced to buy rice for their own upkeep for which they have to pay twice or three times as much; ... and that since the harvests of 1840 and 1841, rice prices in the countryside have risen to ten and fourteen guilders per *picul*! This is the price paid by Europeans who are living there. How much then must the needy Javanese pay, who live from day to day and at the highest buy a whole *kati* [1 *kati* = 625 grams] at once? It is terrible to see the bitter poverty in which farmers live during the western monsoon since the wages paid for forced cultivation are not sufficient to pay taxation. This is the reason why people are constantly on the move from one place to another and why the people are restless. This will not change until the government takes measures to eradicate the existing abuses and thus show the Javanese, who because of their good character fully deserve to be protected in their interests by a fatherly government, that the promise "the improvement of his future living conditions" has not been false ...

It is painful to admit that the situation of the Javanese is indeed so shocking that it is difficult to present a completely realistic picture. Fortunately, this disastrous situation does not exist generally: in many residencies of East Java, a few regions excepted, where the influence of the native heads is still too strong, the people are benefiting from the new system of cultivation. But for the indigo farmers of the Residencies of Cheribon and Bagelen and the sugar and indigo farmers of the Residency of Pekalongan this system has been until now a *source of suppression* that has already lasted for sixteen years.

In addition, the people have to obey the various demands of the regents, who are charged with executive power and who attempt to perpetuate the abuses of Asiatic rule. This would not have been possible if a European system of taxation had been introduced, one based on the principles of individual freedom and free disposal of the fruits of one's labour.

In addition the European administration compels the people to
deliver materials under the pretext of the beautification of the cities, the improvement or construction of *pasanggrahans* [guest houses for officials], police posts on the major roads, postal stations (in one of the Javanese residencies there are buildings of that kind that have cost the people eight thousand guilders each!), and many other works ...

In addition account should be taken of all that is demanded from the Javanese in terms of "seignorial services", which are not officially limited ... [These services] are either paid for by reductions on wages ... or in money, or by their own labour, or by the delivery of building materials for which they do not get paid.

And finally there should be added to this the countless number of Chinese who have leased government road tolls and subject native farmers at almost every step at the road leading to the market-place to new extortions, so that often they lose half of their produce in this way. It should therefore be no surprise that the poor Javanese have no time to take care of their own households and farms. And one must agree that the fate of the Javanese, who are suppressed from all sides, is extremely miserable and that it is cruel that a government that gives itself the distinction of being a *fatherly administration* lets such abuses continue ...

It must come as a great surprise that in spite of the decline in rice production the land tax is increasing yearly! I have heard from a good source that in a certain district where in 1845 the tax amounted to about 42,000 guilders, this sum was increased in November 1846 by 17,000 guilders, or about 50 per cent ... What are the results of *over-taxation*? In the villages where there are enough people to cultivate all the *sawahs* ... the land tax is paid regularly, because the greatest desire of the Javanese is to possess *sawahs*, which provide him and his family with the necessities of life. The farmer therefore always takes care to pay his taxes in time, so that the village chief has no cause to refuse him his share in the coming harvest. But if the Resident makes up the assessment in November and not in July, as is laid down in the regulations, ... various compulsive measures are taken to force the taxpayers to pay the increased amount before the end of December. But as the taxpayers at that time have no money at their disposal and hardly have enough rice left for planting in the next year, it will be very difficult to get the necessary money together. Moreover the village chiefs, who are daily reminded by the district chiefs and the *controleur* about the arrears in taxation, immediately seize buffaloes, agricultural implements, or other goods belonging to the defaulters ...

A time is determined within which the money must be paid. The farmer asks to borrow the necessary money from his relatives. If he does not succeed then he pawns his best clothes to the Chinese, who
only give him a third of the value and on top charge 3 to 4 per cent per month. It should be obvious that a Javanese can very seldom redeem the goods he has pawned during the rainy season, because he must then spend money for the cultivation of his land and he has to pay a very high price for the rice needed to feed himself and his family. In addition he may have to take on the upkeep of his parents. And the interest he has to pay during these four or five months might be as much as the value of the goods he has pawned. If the person who owes the tax only possesses buffaloes, they are sold for half their value or even less. On this point no grace is given, because if the village chief does not pay the due taxes, his legs will be clamped in a wooden block until everything that is owed by the whole village is paid. So everything is sold for whatever price it fetches. If, however, the assessment is made in July, the poor tax debtor will have the opportunity to find work in one factory or another and can in this way pay off one-sixth every month of the amount due. But otherwise he has to give up his only buffalo, which is so very necessary for the cultivation of his land and which he has only been able to buy after five or six years of work. If on the other hand he is able to sell his buffalo during the sugar cane harvest, a factory owner will pay twice as much for it. If the tax debtor has no property at all, his wife and children are treated as slaves until everything is paid. It is often the case that three-quarters of the villagers have no rice left in November. If then the tax assessment is made in November and is increased by two guilders per bouw, which is excessive but nevertheless happens, these compulsive measures are taken.

A certain village, which possesses thirty-one sawahs of the second class, paid in 1845 tax to the amount of 310 guilders, which is already very high for sawahs of that kind, but in 1846 the tax was increased by 125 guilders, or 4 guilders per bouw. How is it possible for the people to pay these taxes when they have not any rice left for their upkeep? This suppressive way of governing is also the reason why so many thieves are found in the rainy season ...

Irregular rains during the monsoon of 1844-45 caused the rice harvest to fail in a region ... known as the granary of the Residency [Cherbon]. Unfortunately, for the same reason, harvests were also bad in the other regions, so that help from other districts could not be expected. This is how the great famine came about in which a large number of people perished ... Many inhabitants of these districts had moved in time to somewhere else, particularly in Indramajoe ... Others had gone to the Priangan Regencies, where in the Regency of Bandoeng there is a large area of rice land. Others, however, who were either more attached to the land on which they were born, or who were less intelligent, sought their food in the forests and tried to satisfy their hunger with roots and wild fruits,
from which hundreds died. All roads and paths were covered with bodies. These bodies, with their hands bound together, were dragged to the river by the inhabitants of the villages in which they fell and were thrown to the crocodiles. Large hordes of children, whose parents had died from hunger, wandered throughout the land to beg food from the various owners of sugar factories ... I know one of these factory-owners who for a considerable time daily fed about sixty of these unfortunate little ones. Often there were more. Their number increased daily. The new arrivals were wild-eyed and as thin as a skeleton. They were treated with particular care by this factory-owner. First they were given little food, but a few times a day, in order to restore the stomach, which was weakened by exhaustion. Twice a day they were given rice with some vegetables by the factory-owner himself. Mothers with children at their dried-out breasts threw themselves at his feet, beseeching him to take their children, whom they could not feed any longer. Another factory-owner ... spent a sum of five thousand guilders to help these unfortunate ones. Every morning he sent some trusted persons ... to take care of those unfortunate people who because of their weakness had not been able to find their way home. Every day these people found bodies of men, women, and children. Once they found two skeletons of children, who probably had been torn apart by jackals. The first of the factory-owners I mentioned was Mr van Toll and the other was Mr Leysius.

These dramas took place in Java, a land where Providence has given its most beautiful gifts to the plant kingdom. It is true that the government did send help to the people of these regions, but as always, after the people had already been severely hit by famine ... It is sad to have to admit that poor, hungry people who came in droves to beseech private people in the Residency of Cheribon for food did not dare to turn to the government officials. When they were asked why they did not go to the officials for help, the answer was: "We fear them"!

L. Vitalis, De invoering, werking en gebreken van het stelsel van Kultures op Java (Zaltbommel: Noman, 1851), pp. 1-5, 14-16, 21-22, 28-34, 40-42, 57-61, 82-86.
Criticism of abuses and malpractices had reached Holland only sporadically during the heyday of the Culture System. It was only after the mid-1840s that pamphlets and newspaper reports began to appear in the Netherlands decrying the miserable lot of the Javanese. This criticism intensified during the 1850s when humanitarian colonial reformers were joined in their attack on the Culture System by doctrinaire Liberals in the Dutch Parliament as well as by a group of more pragmatic private bankers, industrialists, and traders, who had greatly profited by the system of van den Bosch, but who now wanted to invest their accumulated capital in private plantations and mining enterprises in the Indies. Although humanitarian interests played a role, most of the Dutch Liberals were just as interested as their conservative opponents in extracting the largest possible profits from the Indies, and argued that private enterprise unfettered by government interference was bound to create the best of all possible worlds for the Dutch and Indonesians alike.

One of the most prominent colonial reformers during the 1850s was Baron van Hoevell, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and an ardent Liberal and humanitarian. In 1848 he had been involved in a demonstration in Batavia by disgruntled Europeans—mainly Eurasians—who had petitioned the King for freedom of the press, the establishment of secondary schools in the colony, and representation of the Indies in the Dutch Parliament. After strong pressure by the colonial authorities van Hoevell resigned from his church post and returned to the Netherlands, where soon afterwards he was elected to parliament. Van Hoevell in his parliamentary speeches stressed that both the rulers and the subjects in the colony would profit most if the colonial government abandoned outright exploitation and instead made its first duty the raising of economic and educational standards among the indigenous people (see document 5).

Even more incisive and damaging was the criticism of Eduard Douwes Dekker (see document 6), a former colonial official who,
using the pseudonym "Multatuli" ("I have suffered a great deal"), published a novel in 1860 called *Max Havelaar*, in which the inhumanity and immorality of colonial rule in the Indies were vividly portrayed. *Max Havelaar* caused a public outcry in the Netherlands that greatly aided the final onslaught on the Culture System by the Liberals, who by the early 1860s had gained sufficient strength in the Dutch Parliament to push through their colonial programme. The pressure of private planters in Java for a secure supply of land and labour was also growing, and when in 1863 Fransen van de Putte, a former planter from Java, became Minister of Colonies, the fate of the Culture System was sealed. Document 7 illustrates some of the arguments put forward by Liberal-inspired colonial officials, businessmen, and planters.

The forced cultivation of some crops was quickly abolished (pepper in 1862; cloves and nutmeg in 1863; indigo, tea, cinnamon, and cochineal in 1865; and tobacco in 1866). In 1870 it was decided to abolish the forced cultivation of sugar over a period of twelve years, but coffee, which was considered a necessary mainstay of government revenue, remained an exception and its forced cultivation was allowed to linger on in some areas as late as 1916.

The *Agrarische Wet* (Land Laws) of 1870 attempted to provide planters with security of land tenure, and at the same time to protect the interests and rights of the indigenous people. Virgin land could be rented from the government for a period of up to seventy-five years, but land owned by native villages or individuals could be rented only for shorter periods. No native-owned land could be sold to Europeans or other non-Indonesians. Indonesians could also obtain—if they so desired—European legal rights on their land as distinct from the provisions of the *adat* law (indigenous customary law). The supply of plantation labour was regulated by the *Koelie Ordonnantie* (Coolie Ordinance) of 1880, which laid down that contracts specifying the duration and conditions of employment were to be signed before a magistrate. By law the employer had to provide the workers with proper housing and medical care. In return the coolies were bound to the plantation for the duration of their contracts, unless they could show due cause in a court of law.

The earlier attempts by Daendels, Raffles, and the Commissioners-General at defeudalization, which had been abandoned during the Culture System, were now taken up again. And by the beginning of the twentieth century the Javanese regents and their subordinate officials—priyai—had lost most of their feudal privileges and local independence and had been reduced to a corps of civil servants under the direct control of the Batavian Government.

Liberal colonial governments also established a rudimentary modern indigenous education system. Motivated by Liberal ideals as
well as the growing demand for local—and therefore cheaper—Western-trained personnel by the rapidly expanding civil service and private enterprise, they enabled a wider section of Indonesians to receive some Western education. As a first step a number of native teachers' training colleges were set up in the 1850s, followed in 1867 by the establishment of a department of education. A government decree of 1863 opened all positions in the civil service to all citizens in the colony, irrespective of race or creed. Not to make this decree a dead letter, European primary schools were opened in the same year to Indonesians, although soon high school fees were levied to restrict entry as much as possible to upper-class Indonesian children. While the European Primary School Certificate gave automatic entry into the lower civil service positions, the European high schools, a number of which were also now established in Java, prepared students for the medium and higher echelon positions. In addition some special training institutions for Indonesians were set up. One such was the *Dokter-Djawa* School, originally a school for indigenous vaccinators, which by the 1870s had grown into a medical school; another was the *Hoofden Scholen*, to train the sons of native chiefs. From the early 1870s three-year elementary schools to cater for the education needs of the general indigenous population were established. In the period 1873-99 the teachers colleges were attended by 2356 students, of whom 907 graduated, while the *Dokter-Djawa* School was attended by 729 students, of whom 152 graduated in the period 1875-1904. In the period 1871-98 the number of elementary schools increased from 263 to 516, the number of boy students from 12,186 to 48,156, and the number of girls from 4420 to 8238.

The earlier years of the Liberal period showed a marked improvement in the native economic situation, but native prosperity diminished again after 1880 when planters were hit severely by a steep decline in prices for their produce on the world market and by an outbreak of disease in coffee and sugar. Native wages and the income received from land rented to plantations were sharply reduced. The spectacular rise in the native population during the second half of the nineteenth century was not matched by a proportional increase in the total income of the native sector of the economy, and in Java a situation of "shared poverty" arose, where the same product had to be shared by an ever-increasing number of people. To make matters worse, the indigenous people were forced to bear a disproportionately heavy tax burden.

Private European enterprise had forced the colonial government to spend vast sums of money to build railways and tramways, and to improve and expand roads, harbours, and irrigation works. And while the European plantation and mining concerns were the major beneficiaries of this, they refused to pay a proper share of the
colonies's tax bill, of which more than 80 per cent was passed on to the indigenous people. Similarly, the vast expenditure incurred at this time by the colonial government in effectively occupying the Outer Islands had to be paid for mainly by the Javanese, although most of the benefit went again to the European companies that had been pressing for the proper protection of their investments in the outlying areas.

The budget study by Heyting in the 1880s (republished by Boeke—see document 8), although incomplete, presents a sample of the economic plight of Javanese farmers. It also shows that the money economy had by no means replaced the traditional subsistence economy as yet.

By the end of the nineteenth century the colonial economy had severely stagnated (see document 9), and the colonial government itself was on the verge of bankruptcy because it had not the means to pay for the vast expenditure it had been forced to make. The considerable loss in government revenue caused by the abolition of the Culture System had not been balanced by the introduction of another efficient system of taxation. The Javanese were taxed to the hilt and carried a heavy debt burden, but the Europeans refused to pay more.

5 W. R. van Hoevell: Parliamentary speech, 8 December 1851

It has been said that we [the Liberals] want to change everything in Java, that we want to destroy the system of forced cultivation, and that we want to construct another system in its place. Gentlemen, I consider it my duty ... to repeat again straight out and as concisely and clearly as possible what I, and many others with me, desire with regard to the system of forced cultivation. I will therefore answer the following three questions:

1. What value has the forced system of cultivation?
2. Has this system served its purpose?
3. What changes have to be made immediately?

What value has the system of forced cultivation? I do not hesitate to say that in 1830—and before that—the system of forced cultivation, in the way it was conceived by General van den Bosch and not in the way it was executed, was perhaps the only possible and feasible means to make Java produce in a very short time for the European market ... It was found from experience that Java was lacking in something that was absolutely necessary to produce crops for the European market on the basis of free labour ... Why did the system of free labour produce only little coffee, sugar, and other crops for
the European market? Because the necessary capital and knowledge were lacking. The Commissioner-General du Bus [1828] wanted to solve this problem by means of European colonization; he wanted private [Europeans] to bring capital and know-how to Java. But General van den Bosch was in a great hurry and suggested something else, which at that time perhaps was correct. He understood that because of the lack of enterprise and the prejudices existing in the fatherland at the time against investments in the Indies, the necessary capital and technicians would not be brought to Java. He tried to reach his goal by putting the government and its servants in the place of private capital and private entrepreneurs. What otherwise would have been achieved through free will, because of the stimulus of capital, was now achieved through orders and compulsion … But how has the system of General van den Bosch worked in Java? All the descriptions given in this Chamber of the miserable situation of the Javanese population caused by the Culture System—all these pictures of famine, misery, pauperization, epidemics, depopulation—all this is true and not overdone. This, however, was not a necessary result of the system, but the blame should be put on the way it was executed … But I also admit that there are reasons to declare that the system has at the same time rendered good service. I do not only want to point to the millions that have flowed into the Treasury and the large growth of our merchant navy; but I also want to stress that the interest of the mother country in the colony and the willingness to invest capital and know-how in the Indies have gradually but surely increased. I also want to point to the fact that in areas where the system has worked well, such as in Pasoeroean, Probolinggo, and some other districts, the people are indeed prosperous …

Now I come to the question, has the Culture System, which was so excellent in its conception and in its intentions, but so disastrous in the way it was executed—has this system now served its purpose? Should it be demolished and destroyed immediately? My answer is: definitely no. But my reasons are different from those of the Member from Rotterdam (Mr Baud) [the major colonial expert of the Conservative faction]. Although wishing to return to the old system of freedom [of trade and labour], which would involve the introduction of liberal institutions, he argues against the abolition of the Culture System because it would lead to the destruction of trade and shipping, and to national bankruptcy … I do not desire the continuation of the system on these grounds. I have other reasons. So far in this discussion the Culture System has been looked at mainly with regard to its effect on the Javanese and Javanese society. But there is still another consideration: the influence of the system and of the whole colonial monopoly position on the Treasury. I do not have
to remind you ... [that it] has been calculated that it is just this
monopoly system that causes great harm to the Treasury. That is to
say, if this system did not exist and the government just restricted
itself to its duties as sovereign and did not take part in production
and trade—the Indies would bring yearly millions more into the
Treasury. I do not want to say at all that I consider this argument to
be correct. But it seems very probable to me, although I wish to
leave the question undecided. I only wish to say that it would be
worth while to investigate this question carefully. If [this argument
were] right then the Member from Rotterdam would have no longer
any cause to oppose the immediate abolition of the system. This is
clear from what he said openly yesterday. Only the concern for the
Treasury, and for our shipping and trade holds him back. But even if
this argument is true, then I say no, we should not abandon the
Culture System. This is so, gentlemen, because I have other reasons
for wanting the Culture System to continue ...

Firstly, the Culture System, although it has brought more Euro-
pean industry and capital to Java, has still not realized by any means
what it was meant to do in this respect ... Secondly, I do not want
shocks; I do not want to cut down the tree, but I want to prune the
dead branches and I want to give the tree a different shape. I do not
want to ignore the fact that the system has existed in Java for more
than twenty years. We are no longer in 1830. Those who would have
voted against the system of General van den Bosch at that time
should realize that in this last quarter of a century it has taken root,
that it has effected a complete change in Java, a complete
reformation—yes, I dare to say, a revolution of Javanese society. I
do not want to experiment with the Javanese people, but I want to
develop the people and their institutions gradually. That is why I
desire that the system shall not be demolished and that is why I say
that the system has still not achieved what it set out to do.

I am now coming to the question: what changes should be made
immediately? First I will give a general answer. We must work
towards a system of free labour and free production. But we must
reach this goal not by demolishing the existing system of production,
but through this system. This system must be developed in such a
way, it must be given such a direction, that it finally brings us to a
situation of complete general freedom of production and labour in
Java.

Mr Baud has pressed the government for an investigation. What
kind of investigation? An investigation to determine the authenticity
of the misery that has been reported here and the role played by the
Culture System in this? Gentlemen, I want more than such a general
investigation. I believe that the time has come, or rather that it is
long overdue, to take action. I want action. What kind of action? ...
Firstly, the Culture System must be freed from the excesses and abuses that have caused and are still causing so much misery . . . Secondly, the Culture System must be used as a means to achieve a system of free production and labour . . . I shall give a few examples of measures . . . which it appears to me must be taken immediately

In the first place, gentlemen, the percentages paid to officials on the amount of produce delivered must be abolished. The resulting auri sacra fames [sacred lust for gold] has been the cause of the deplorable excesses in many places. This evil, or rather the cause of so much evil, must be taken away immediately. If the salaries of officials are not sufficient, then they should be increased. But to recompense them for every picul of sugar or coffee, for every pound of indigo that they deliver through the Javanese to the government— and to give greater rewards in proportion to the increase in these piculs and pounds—that is an immoral stimulus, a temptation to which the government may not expose its officials . . .

A second measure I suggest should be taken is to appoint more European officials in the Binnenlands Bestuur [Local Government Service], so that it will be easier and more effective to control the native officials.

A third measure I would like to suggest is to improve the salaries of native officials. Gentlemen, there are native officials who have to carry out important duties and who are charged with the administration of districts in which fifty to sixty thousand people are living and who are paid forty, fifty, or sixty guilders per month. It is impossible for them to live on this, and so you force them to abuse their authority and enrich themselves at the cost of the people. Also they share at present in the percentages awarded on produce delivered. In this case, I say take these percentages away from them and instead give them an ample salary that does not bring them into temptation, yes, even forces them, to take from the Javanese what you withhold from them.

A fourth measure that should be taken is to treat benevolently people who report the existence of corruptive practices. So far, those who brought abuses to light . . . were regarded as enemies of the Culture System, as opponents, as dangerous people . . .

And finally I want publicity. I desire that everything that happens in Java should no longer be kept quiet but made public. I want this large factory of a few million souls who have been made to work by force to be brought into the limelight. If five, six, or seven years ago publicity had been given to the false reports made here about Java— about the actions of officials high and low, and the failures and mistakes—then I am sure that because of public knowledge many of the misfortunes that we now deplore could have been prevented . . .
The second objective is that the Culture System should no longer be considered as a normal situation that is to remain, but as a means to achieve a system of freedom of production and labour in Java. I shall restrict myself to suggesting three measures to reach this objective.

The first measure is to help and encourage the development of private initiative in Java in the interest of land reclamation, agriculture, and plantation industry. Last year I directed the attention of the Minister of Colonies to the large tracts of virgin land in Java that only wait to be cultivated. Among other things I also pointed out to him a large area in the Priangan regencies. Soon after this happened a few persons contacted the Minister of Colonies for permission to have this land either on a rental basis or by straight-out sale to develop by their own industry and capital ...

A second measure I would like to see is that within the workings of the Culture System the government should delegate as much as possible to private initiative ... As an example, ... when the new sugar contracts are awarded, I want the needs of the factories to be no longer met by the government but by private entrepreneurs. There will not be any difficulties as long as the people are not overburdened by seignorial services. If you want some evidence for this, then you should read the work of Mr Bosch. At least I was struck by the following passage from this writer:

A few years ago I was visiting a sugar contractor who, with the exception of the cane, had to provide everything himself without any help from the government administration. This is evidence that the Indies Government considers that such an enterprise is quite feasible. This man was very discontented and incensed about the local officials who refused to help him with anything and left him to fend for himself. He had difficulties with everything: he could not get lime, bricks, timber, or people, at least not as many or as easily as he wanted. Recently, when the factory was working and flourishing, I asked him how the business was going and if all the difficulties had been overcome and forgotten. As soon as the surrounding population was aware of an ensured market for its produce, everything—timber, lime, bricks, etc.—was delivered in abundance and there was no shortage of labour ...

The owners of sugar factories should be given the free disposal of their produce, and in this way the government will be able to gradually withdraw from the trading sector ... When the sugar-millers have the free disposal of their product, and no longer receive advance payments, they will learn to be more dependent on their own powers. And it will be easier for them to make the transition to another system where without the interference of the government they will make contracts with the people regarding the planting of the crops ...
The third measure I have in mind, which I should have mentioned first, perhaps, because in many ways it is the most important one, concerns the education of the Javanese. There is a close connection between the Culture System, that is the Culture System as a transition measure to free labour and production, and the education of the Javanese. It is said, and perhaps in some ways not unjustly: "You cannot give the Javanese the free disposal of the fruits of their labour because they let themselves be fooled; they fall into the hands of the Chinese; they are children and they cannot be in charge of their own goods." If this is true, and if this is one of the reasons why the Culture System is to remain for the time being, then educate the Javanese; give them a sound primary education, develop the people to a higher civilization, and the evil that now still necessitates the Culture System will gradually disappear...


6 Multatuli: Max Havelaar, 1860

[In the following selection Multatuli describes the perniciousness of the system of indirect colonial rule under which the Regents and their subordinate officials were allowed to exploit the people.]

It is not unusual at all for Regents with an income of two or three hundred thousand guilders a year to be in financial difficulties. The main reason for this is the truly princely carelessness with which they squander their income, their negligence in supervising their subordinates, their mania for buying things, and especially the advantage often taken of these weaknesses by Europeans.

The revenue of the Javanese chiefs are four fold. Firstly, a fixed monthly salary. Secondly, a specific sum as compensation for rights transferred to the Dutch Government. Thirdly, a bonus as a percentage of the quantity yielded by his Regency of products such as coffee, sugar, indigo, cinnamon, etc. And finally, the arbitrary use of the labour and property of his subjects.

The last two sources of revenue require some explanation. The Javanese is naturally a farmer. The land on which he is born, promises much for little work, and lures him to this, and, above all, he is devoted heart and soul to the cultivation of his rice fields, in which he accordingly shows particular skill. He ... goes with his father to the field at a very early age, to assist him with ploughing
and digging of dams and channels for the irrigation of his land. He counts his years by harvests, he determines time and season by the colour of his standing crop, he feels at home among the comrades who cut the paddy with him, he selects his wife from the girls of the desa who at eve, to the sound of merry singing, pound the rice to remove the husk ... Possession of a team of buffaloes to draw his plough is his ideal ... In short, rice is to the Javanese what the grape is to the wine-growers along the Rhine and in the south of France.

But foreigners came from the West, who made themselves lords of his land. They wanted to benefit from the fertility of the soil, and ordered him to devote part of his labour and time to growing other products which would yield greater profit in the markets of Europe. To make the common man comply, only a very simple device sufficed. He obeys his chiefs; so it was only necessary to win over those chiefs by promising them a proportion of the proceeds ... And the scheme succeeded completely.

Considering the immense quantity of Javanese products marketed in the Netherlands, the effectiveness of this policy is obvious, even though one cannot consider it noble. For if anyone were to ask whether the grower receives a reward proportionate to the yields, the answer must be in the negative. The government compels him to produce on his land what pleases it; it punishes him when he sells this crop to anyone else but it; and it fixes the price it pays him. The cost of transport to Europe, through a privileged trading company, is high. The money given to the chiefs to encourage them increases the purchase price even further, and ... as, after all, the entire business must yield a profit, it can be made in no other way than by paying the Javanese just enough to keep him from starving otherwise the productive capacity of the nation would decline. The European officials are also paid a bonus in proportion to the production.

So the poor Javanese is driven forward by the whip of a dual authority; he is often taken away from his rice fields to work elsewhere; and famine often occurs as a result. But ... happily flutter the flags at Batavia, Semarang, Soerabaya, Pasaroean, Besoeki, Probolinggo, Pachitan, Chilachap, of the ships which are being loaded with the crops that make Holland rich!

Famine? In rich, fertile, blessed Java—famine? Yes, reader. Only a few years ago, whole districts died of starvation. Mothers offered their children for sale to obtain food. Mothers ate their children ...

But then the Motherland stepped in. In the council-chambers of the parliament in Holland there was dissatisfaction, and the Governor-General of that day was forced to issue instructions that in future the output of the so-called European-market products was not to be driven to the point of causing famine.

I realise I have been bitter. But what would you think of me, if I
could write about such things without bitterness?

It now remains for me to discuss the last and major source of revenue of the native chiefs: their arbitrary disposal of the persons and property of their subjects.

Accordingly to the idea generally held in almost all of Asia the subject, with all he possesses, belongs to the prince. The descendants or relatives of the former princes gladly make use of the ignorance of the people, who do not clearly understand that their Tommmongong or Adhipatti or Pangerang [noble titles] is now a paid official who has sold his own rights and theirs for a fixed income, and that therefore the poorly paid labour in coffee plantation or sugar cane field has taken the place of the taxes which were formerly exacted from the peasants by their lords. So, it is quite normal for hundreds of families to be summoned from a great distance to work, without payment, on fields that belong to the Regent. Nothing is more normal than to supply, unpaid for, food for the Regent’s court. And if the horse, the buffalo, the daughter, the wife of the common man find favour in the Regent’s sight, it would be unheard-of for the possessor to refuse to give up the desired object unconditionally.

There are regents who make only moderate use of such arbitrary powers, and only exact from the humble what is absolutely necessary to support their rank. Others go a little further. But nowhere is this illegal abuse altogether absent. And undoubtedly it is difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate such an abuse entirely, because it is deeply rooted in the very nature of the people who suffer by it. The Javanese is generous, particularly if it is a question of proving his attachment to his chief, to the descendant of those his forefathers obeyed. He would even consider to be lacking in the respect due to his hereditary lord if he entered the kraton [palace] without bringing gifts. These presents are admittedly often of such small value that to refuse them would be tantamount to humiliating the giver; and so, often this custom amounts to no more than the homage of a child, who seeks to express his love for his father by offering a small present, than be conceived as a tribute to tyrannical despotism.

But ... in this way the existence of a charming custom makes it difficult to abolish an abuse.

This is realised by the government; and when you read the official laws and instructions and advice for the officials one would applaud the humanity they appear to be motivated by. Everywhere the European who holds authority in the interior is told that one of his most sacred duties is to protect the population against their own docility and the rapacity of their chiefs. And, as though it were not sufficient to prescribe this obligation in general, the Assistant Residents, when assuming administration of a Division, are bound to take a separate oath to the effect that they will consider this paternal care of the population as a primary responsibility.
This is surely a noble vocation. To stand for justice, to protect the lowly against the high, to defend the weak against the strong, to demand the return of the poor man’s goods from the grasp of the noble robber ... is it not enough to make a man’s heart glow with joy, the thought of being called to so glorious a task? And if at times the officials in Java should be dissatisfied with his position or his reward, let him turn his gaze to the sublime duty resting upon him—to the supreme enjoyment which the fulfilment of such a duty brings with it; and he will desire no other reward.

But ... that duty is not easy. First of all, he has to decide precisely where Custom has grown into abuse. And ... where abuse does exist, where robbery or tyranny has been indeed practised, the victims themselves are only too often accomplices, either from excessive submissiveness, or from fear, or from lack of confidence in the will or power of the person appointed to protect them. It is common knowledge that the European official may be transferred at any moment to another post, while the Regent, the powerful Regent, remains. Moreover, there are so many ways of appropriating the possessions of a poor, ignorant man. If a mantri [lower native official] tells him that the Regent would like his horse, the animal is soon after to be found in the Regent’s stables; but this does not necessarily prove that the Regent does not intend to pay a high price for it ... some time. If hundreds of people are working in a chief’s fields without payment, it by no means follows that this is being done for his benefit. May it not have been his object to make the harvest over to them, from the purely philanthropic calculation that his land was better situated and more fertile than theirs, and so would reward their labour more liberally?

And again, where is the European official to find witnesses with the courage to make a statement against their ruler, the dreaded Regent? And, were the official to risk a charge without being able to prove it, what would become of the relationship of an older brother who would then have impugned his younger brother’s honour without good cause? What would become of the good opinion of the government, which gives the official bread for his service but would deny him that bread, dismiss him as incapable, if he should lightly suspect or accuse of wrongdoing one so highly placed as a Tom-mongong, Adhipatti, or Pangerang?

No, no, the official’s duty is not an easy one! This is already evident from the fact that everyone knows that every native chief oversteps the limit of permissible use of the labour and property of his subjects, ... that all Assistant Residents take the oath to combat this ... and that nevertheless it is only very rarely that a Regent is charged with tyranny or misuse of power ...
Deliberations by the learned society Indisch Genootschap about the Culture System, 1866

Mr Feist: When it is said that people are compelled to work in Java, then this is true with respect to some regions, but by no means to all. I have travelled throughout the whole of the island and therefore have been in the position to familiarize myself with local conditions everywhere. But I must declare that in various regions I found that people were not compelled to labour, and that the people were planting crops of their own free will and because of that were enjoying great prosperity. Undoubtedly the Javanese have acquired this willingness to work from the Culture System, which has taught them to work and which has now brought them to a stage where they fit into another system.

However, the system of free labour does not show favourable results everywhere, because the fact that the seigniorial services have not been abolished prevents the Javanese from controlling their property and time. Without the abolition of the seigniorial services a system of free cultivation will not be possible. However, I have experienced myself that even at this uncertain stage, much can be achieved with the help of the Javanese, providing they are paid a decent wage. When I took over the factory, which I now own, it produced 30 piculs. Within a few years I had doubled this production and increased it even to 70 piculs, while I believe that a target of 80 piculs is by no means impossible. The people are quite willing to work for a decent wage. But this is not the case everywhere and it is therefore necessary that the Javanese be given security of their property and the free disposal of their time. The Javanese will only work voluntarily if they are free men ... Finally, I wish to say, that in so far as I have understood Mr Millard [a previous speaker], he has only highlighted the bad aspects of the Culture System, but has ignored its good effects. He says that it has not taught the Javanese to work. I disagree. And I am of the opinion that the Culture System, during its thirty years of operation, has shown the Javanese the advantages of work, or at least has made them used to the idea of regular work ...

Mr van Swieten: How can one say that the Culture System has created a willingness to work among the population? The supporters of this system maintain that compulsion is still necessary to make the Javanese work. After a period of thirty years the Culture System should have been either able to inculcate a willingness to work and, if so, compulsion is now no longer necessary, or it has not done so and it is clear that the Culture System has not achieved this objective. Mr Feist says: the people are now working of their own free will,
compulsion no longer exists. If that is so, the maintenance of the Culture System is no longer necessary. However, the *Indische Weekblad van het Recht* [the Indies Legal Weekly] reports that in 1864 the police records show that still about half a million *rotan* [bamboo stick] strokes were meted out. And there are eyewitness reports about the practice of binding unwilling workers and smearing their faces with dung. Surely such measures can hardly be expected to increase the willingness to work.

*Mr de Serriere*: Two years after the introduction of the Culture System Mr Tobias [Director of Cultivation] told Count van den Bosch: “On the way from Soemedang to Cheribon I saw twenty-five natives lying in stocks in the gruelling sun. Probably this was done to invite them to work”.

*Mr Feist*: It is very well possible that these things did happen, but it is just because of them that the population was taught to work. When an obstreperous boy does not carry out what he is told to do, he should be punished and forced to obey.

*Mr de Serriere*: Why is it then that for the construction of the Indies railways more people offered themselves than were needed, and many had to be sent away?

*Mr Feist*: Perhaps the influence of the residents could have helped somewhat ...

*Mr Schill*: ... I want to say a few words about an article by Mr F. J. Kock of Enschede, entitled “The crisis of the cotton industry in Twente”, which appears in the latest issue of the periodical the *Economist*. This article traces how the cotton industry has developed in Twente [eastern part of the Netherlands] since 1861 and how this industry is trying with great energy to compete successfully with foreigners, particularly the British, and to establish itself solidly. But not unjustifiably the question is posed: what are we going to do with the increasing production? Will this not become too large? Will sufficient outlets be found? ... However, I want to direct your attention more specifically to the following sentences:

Our markets in Java are restricted! But would they be or remain so restricted if this market was opened up more to private enterprise, and the government no longer remained the exclusive plantation entrepreneur and its agent, the *Nederlandsche Handelsmaatschappij*, the supreme merchant? It is well known that whoever is in control of exports also controls imports, but in Java exports are almost totally controlled by a single body. A free, brisk, and strong private trade cannot develop, therefore,
with the fatal result that our cotton industry can hardly find an exporter for its produce and is forced to take care of this matter itself to a large extent.

This outcry from our industry against the existing system in Java pleases me somewhat. After all, when an industry which developed, if not totally, but at least to a large extent, because of protective measures that were an outflow from the system of management in Java and its concomitant trading monopoly, agitates against this system on the grounds that it obstructs its progress, then surely we have come very close to recognizing that this system is harmful and untenable ... the plans for reform which van den Bosch brought with him to Java had no other purpose than to exploit the people of Java, to attract large sums of money to the state by means of their land and labour.

The real intentions of this plan were initially disguised by nice-sounding declarations that the only objective one had in mind was the interests of the Javanese; the truth of the matter was hidden under a beautiful official style of writing ...

Mr Sandenberg Matthiessen: Gentlemen! It is only a few months since I left Java. It is sometimes said that a person who has been back for some time in the mother country forgets much, yes, often too much about what he has seen, heard, experienced, suffered and, particularly, enjoyed in the far-away East ...

However, in this struggle about colonial affairs, there is one fact, one point of departure, which is agreed to by everybody, whatever his political colour, and that is that the present situation in the Netherlands Indies is in many aspects distressing and is getting more wretched from day to day. Officials, industrialists, merchants, all agree with this. Even the government has said unashamedly in 1865 that it has taken into consideration that there is a need to establish principles on the basis of which agricultural and industrial enterprises can be founded in the Netherlands Indies. This confession is deplorable after a rule of centuries in [the Indies], from which particularly during the last thirty-five years millions have been gained. This is not only a deplorable confession but also at the same time a condemnation of all previous [colonial] administrations, because this uncertainty is neither caused by the condition of the soil nor the lack of labour. There are no natural barriers present in the Indies that can obstruct its growth, prosperity, and happiness. In fact the government points out the cause itself: until now a principled policy for agricultural and industrial development has been lacking. So until now there has been misgovernment, and despite many official decisions there has been a complete indecisiveness, which also elucidates other matters that otherwise would be difficult to explain.
Java is a producer of rice, which is the most important staple food for the Javanese. But why have there been shortages from time to time? Why has there been famine from time to time? The reason is that Java is still only partly brought into cultivation, because of a lack of a proper [development] policy.

Java produces coffee, which is the most important source of income for the batig slot. But why then are there indeed grounds for fearing that the yearly coffee harvests will decline. Again the reason is the lack of a proper policy.

Java produces sugar. Has the contract [government contract with private entrepreneurs] system been bad? If so, why was it not abandoned after the expiration of the contracts? If it was successful, why has it not been expanded during the last fifteen years? Again, the reason is a lack of a proper policy.

The stationary production of all sorts of agricultural crops, abuses, corruption, extortion, contradictory official circulars—all these things are the result of the lack of guiding principles.

But in addition to this first [indisputable] fact, we have, God be praised, a second one; that is, that the Indies is capable of a tremendous development providing it is governed logically and consequently. The Conservatives say: give us power, and there will not be enough ships available to transport the crops we shall produce through the extension of the compulsory system after we have cleansed it of abuses. The Liberals say: give us full power and the indirect advantages that will result from private cultivation, and industry will make the earlier budget surpluses look rather insignificant. So there is general agreement about the feasibility of development, but there is controversy as to the method.

It is certainly difficult from a constitutional point of view to answer the question as to how colonies and conquered territories should be governed. However, in the case of colonial policy there surely must be in the first place an objective, which is to be achieved by reasonable and fair means. If the latter is not complied with, either the objective is not achieved or it is achieved only temporarily. You all know that England from time to time gives self-government to some of its colonies, which means that the retention of the colonies is not the most important principle of British colonial policy. You also know that England has wanted to keep British India under its complete control. And it has achieved this objective, although an enormous use of power has been necessary to suppress a very threatening rebellion and in order to achieve this objective it has had to expand its army and navy to a hitherto unknown extent. You also know that England sets great store by the advantages flowing from the relationship between the mother country and the colony, but that it does not demand budget surpluses created by systems of compulsory cultivation.
It is thus obvious that our colonial policy, which rejects the idea of self-government of the colonies and which is not only concerned to retain them for their own sake but also wants to use them for the benefit of the Treasury and to balance the home budgets, must be based on very different principles from the British colonial policy.

On the other hand, one surely realizes immediately that our colonial objectives are abnormal, and cannot be sustained for long. It is an abnormal state of affairs when such a small and weak State as the Netherlands should eventually rule over large parts of the East; and it would be equally abnormal that any conquered territory anywhere in this world should let itself be used continuously to send millions to the mother country while it had to go without the necessary things that could be produced by these millions.

In my view, then, the best colonial policy for the Netherlands would be one that dares to look the future squarely in the face, and tries as much as possible to replace abnormal conditions by natural ones, and which tries to take all rightful causes for rebellion away as much as possible. In the meantime the sources of income for trade and shipping should have been made permanent by the time our possessions are partly or totally lost.

The first time I went back to Europe after a ten-year stay in the Netherlands Indies was in 1859. At that time there was still general enthusiasm in Java. Sugar factories were being sold for fabulous sums, tobacco plantations shot like mushrooms out of the ground, and new commercial houses established themselves in the provincial capitals, concluding contracts with great abandon. There was an appearance of prosperity! Soon after I returned in 1860 there was a rapid turnover in bankruptcies; and finally plantations, after having swallowed up tons of gold, were either abandoned or sold for ludicrously cheap prices; the commercial firms had to write off capital sums from their books; the sugar-planters were plagued by the government, which introduced all sorts of foolish legal requirements or refused payments it was legally due to make. In one word, when a few months ago I left again, there was a general depression—a crisis among the officials, because they really did not know any more how to act; a depression in trade, because one could not offer collateral any more for money already borrowed or still to be borrowed; depression among the industrialists, because anybody who already headed a business looked with anxiety at the future, while anybody who wanted to start up something would walk from one office to another without being able to borrow money ... There was no money.

And now what are the causes of all this?

The prosperity of Java is solely dependent on agriculture. The farmer needs a de facto right to his land, and freedom of labour and
investment. None of these conditions is at present in existence in Java. Present day Java is similar to Europe in the Middle Ages, although there are a few trimmings of Western civilization. There are French chefs and dressmakers, but a European cannot buy or rent even a small piece of land; there are modern carriages, but the price of rice fluctuates heavily because there are insufficient means of transport and no interior roads; there are telegraph poles ... but it has been admitted that the ownership of the land in which these poles are placed is unsure; there are steam-driven printing presses, but there is also the possibility of being exiled; there are missionaries and the beginnings of education, but the opium monopoly is maintained.

I have said that in the first place the farmer needs a de facto right to his land. It is unnecessary to argue here that property rights are the only stimulus for the cultivation and improvement of the soil, and to engage in useful experiments. Landowners are gradually beginning to form the class in society that has the greatest interest in the maintenance of peace and order. Moreover cultivated properties will soon form one of the most fertile sources of income for the State, because of land tax, death duties, and transfer duties. But what the government has completely lost sight of is the fact that it would be of great importance, in the event of foreign occupation, for a part of Java to be the private property of Dutch capitalists.

I will not concern myself with the question whether land rights in Java are based on Mohammedan law or on a mixture of Islamic and Hindu laws; or whether the sovereign owns the land, as Raffles declared in his land-rent regulations; or whether Mohammedan law should have been taken as the basis for the Culture System. All I want to point out is the fact that the government has always considered itself as the owner of the land, and on this ground has levied land rent and has introduced the Culture System. The government should be consistent. It should not on the basis of its property rights dispose arbitrarily of the land of the Javanese. On the other hand it should not act like a coy young girl and begin to doubt the validity of this right as soon as European industrialists want to develop this land.

The second requirement is free labour, which at the moment is entirely absent in Java. Just to illustrate this problem, let us for a moment make an imaginary trip through Java.

On our arrival by steamship in Soerabaja, hundreds of prows rush out towards us as soon as the smoke is visible, competing to bring us ashore. On shore we see carriages for hire and there is a great deal of loading and unloading of goods and every business is able to attract a sufficient number of workmen. Then we arrive on our front verandah, where all necessities of life are held up to us for sale. You will ask: but surely this is free labour? And I will reply: there are no
seignorial services in the capital cities, where the natives are not dependent on the native chiefs and have few obligations, so they can dispose freely of their labour without any obstructions.

The next day we travel into the country. The morning is cool and the shadow of the tamarind trees is pleasant. We travel fast and on the river we see people strenuously pushing their prows upstream; we pass market-places where people are teeming like an ants-nest, buying and selling products. Thus we must also admit that to some extent also in the countryside there is freedom of labour.

Then our carriage is halted because the road is under repair. We are surprised how slowly and lazily the work is being carried out. And we are told: it is because of the seignorial services—that man who is working there does not receive any payment. Whether he works hard or slowly does not matter because he goes home at the same hour. If he is diligent, the lazy ones get upset.

We continue our journey and arrive at a sugar factory. We are received with great hospitality. The rooms are made ready and the table is set. And after having made a visit to the factory, we ask the owner: "How is it going at present?" He replies: "Fairly well, except for the trouble with cart drivers and coolies. Imagine, sir, months before the milling season I gave cash credit to a hundred cart-drivers, of 80, 100 to 120 guilders, but what do they do? Only some of them come back. Some say that their animals have died. Others had no animals or carts when I made a contract with them. Others again have received cash advances from two or three factory owners. In the early days, when there was a strong and just government we could get as many coolies as we wanted."

The next day I will bring you to a tobacco plantation where the natives have been planting more and better every year. The crop has increased from 48 to 70, from 70 to 180, from 180 to 37,000 pounds. I will bring you to various plantations and enterprises and daily you will see great differences and you will continually change your mind. The cause of this is taxation in terms of labour, the seignorial services. Wherever there is forced labour the same inadequacies occur. The slavery of the West Indies, the seignorial services of Egypt, the serfdom of Russia, and the corvée of the Middle Ages, teach us that the labourers become lazy and uninterested because there is no stimulation to work hard, while furthermore effective supervision is impossible. Everybody in the desa [indigenous village] who has some influence, who delivers chickens, eggs, and women to the chief, is exempted from seignorial services, which makes the task even harder for those who are not exempted. Moreover, the desa is not asked how much manpower it can supply to carry out a certain task, but the chief is just ordered to have the work performed with whatever manpower he can muster, and if he does not comply he will be fired
These seignorial services have had the following threefold result, which at first glance would appear to support the contention of the old-time colonials that the Javanese are still unsuited for free labour:
1. The soil of Java is still to a large extent uncultivated, while in some areas the villages are overpopulated.
2. The Javanese are too lazy or too indifferent to cultivate their own village lands.
3. The sugar factory-owners cannot depend on a continuous supply of labour, irrespective of what wages they offer.

When the two requirements, de facto control over land and freedom of labour, are lacking, there is no capital available. And even if it was available it could not be used. At the moment there is no capital in Java for the simple reason that there is no economic stability. Let us hope then that soon the legislator will take away the obstructions that stand in the way of free enterprise ... and that soon the time will come that the Netherlands capitalists will prefer the ownership of fertile lands in Java to Turkish and Austrian shares ...


8 J. H. Boeke: Budget studies in Koetoardjo, 1886 and 1888

1. Tjowikromo of Bendo (Koetoardjo) in 1886

Tjowikromo is a farmer living in the desa Bendo, district of Kemiri of the county of Koetoardjo. His landholdings consist of 200 r² of sawah, 20 r² of tegalan [non-irrigated fields], and a yard of 147 r² [r = roede = 3.767 metres]. He has to pay 6.62 guilders in land rent and 1 guilders in head tax. Moreover, 77 times during the year he was required to perform seignorial services for the government and 110 times he had to perform community services for the village.

The family of Tjowikromo consists of his wife, his mother-in-law, and three small children. There is no opportunity in the desa of Bendo to earn extra income on [Western] enterprises. As an additional business Tjowikromo sells djawet, a refreshing drink, which provides him with extra income for six months of the year. For a few months of the year his wife weaves coverlets. But it is not possible to determine exactly how much monthly profit is made by [these extra activities], because in the case of the weaving it is not known how much yarn was left at the end of the period of investigation, while the
djawet business was already in operation before the investigation, and the ingredients were apparently not paid for immediately—at least expenditure on these ingredients is still mentioned some months after sales have stopped ...

If running costs and sales receipts are balanced, the weaving made a profit of 1.18 guilders and the djawet business 7.41 guilders; in order to obtain the latter Tjowikromo had to put in 429 hours.

The budget gives the impression that Tjowikromo is still rather clumsy in dealing with the demands of the money economy. The attempts to balance money expenditure and income are rather haphazard and ad hoc and depend solely on sometimes burdensome loans. These loans are the highest entry for net income and they are necessary as soon as something unexpected occurs. The smaller income gained from the sale of crops produced on the tegalan and the yard is usually immediately spent—at least in part—on day-to-day living ... money expenditure for this purpose is not shown in detail but is grouped under the heading expenditure of extraordinary income. In other words money income is still considered as a windfall and it is insufficiently realized that this brings with it in terms of expenditure a rather pressing demand for money. During no less than 196 days of the year there was no money income nor expenditure, but during this period apparently no money is kept for unexpected expenditure and when this occurs credit has to be obtained. The study does not yet present a complete picture of Tjowikromo's credit needs. In August he still had to buy 3 piculs of rice by means of renting out 100 r2 of sawah during the western monsoon, while for a loan in October of 120 duiten [brass coin] he had to surrender 20 r2 of tegalan in the wet season. The sale of 1 picul of rice in May, the cheap season, for 288 duiten, was caused by extreme necessity, similar to the sale of crops produced in the yard ...

It is clear how heavy the impact of taxation in money is on this household. Each payment necessitated one or other ad hoc rescue measure, with the result that, at the end of the year investigated, the Tjowikromo family had to face the future with an increased debt of 733 duiten and an encumbrance on 120 r2 of its land.

"Arminius" [pseudonym for H. G. Heyting] states that Tjowikromo is representative of the average villager in the low lands ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>cents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and furniture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2962</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running expenditure of farm, etc.</td>
<td>2784</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayment of debt</td>
<td>541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6287</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure in more detail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessory dishes</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salt</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meat and fish</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea, sugar, and sweets</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tobacco and sirih [betal nut]</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>991</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fire and light:** Under this heading both kerosene and peanut oil are included. The latter, of course, could also be used as food.

**Taxes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land rent</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head tax</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Running expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of yarn</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of djawet ingredients</td>
<td>2087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2784</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number and kind of transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 sale of rice</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 sale of other crops</td>
<td>1258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 sale of woven goods</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 sale of djawet</td>
<td>2828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 wages</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 gift</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>1274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Sodrono of Kalimenagwetan (Koetoardjo) in 1886

The Sodrono family consists of husband, wife, and five children of unknown age. Sodrono is a farmer and has the use of 100 r$^2$ of sawah and 50 r$^2$ of tegalan as "communal" property; and he individually owns 120 r$^2$ of orchard and a yard of 100 r$^2$. He has to pay 5.36 guilders in land rent (the yard, which is smaller than ¼ bouw, is free of land rent) and 1 guilder as head tax. In order to pay these taxes of 6.36 guilders Sodrono put aside 6 guilders (720 duiten), which he had made in 1885 from the sale of a calf; the remainder (144 duiten) was saved bit by bit.

Sodrono is a cautious person and is careful with his money. He did not suffer from any unexpected adversities and was able to live through the year without having to take up a loan.

But in this instance also, money is still considered as something superimposed from the outside, which although it causes him some anxiety "still does not form an integral part of his daily life. During no less than 242 days of the year under investigation not a single monetary transaction took place. For the remaining days there appear 123 entries for expenditure and 108 entries for income, which were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>No. of entries</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>No. of entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wages</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and materials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Crops from the yard</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>Chickens</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying of crops</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tegalan produce</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sawah produce</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>123</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the similarity in the number of entries and the total income and expenditure, which—with the subtraction of the 720 duiten saved for taxation—amounted to 2223 duiten and 2188 duiten respectively, one gains the impression that every time money comes in it is immediately matched by a similar amount of expenditure. This is expressly confirmed by the monthly statistics. So the Sodrono family considers money income exclusively as a means to buy extras, which if the money was not there would simply not be bought. This does not mean in the least that these needs, which can only be satisfied occasionally, are far above the immediate necessities of life. This should be clear from the unfortunately incomplete list of "purchases of groceries" supplied by Arminius:
Kerosene 215
Salt 192
Sirih 108
Smoking needs 89
Trais [prawn paste] 81
Tempe [soya bean cake] 70
Buffalo meat 28
Coconut oil 10
Fish 4

3. Wongsowikromo of Kalioerip (Koetoardjo) in 1888

The Wongsowikromo family consists of the husband, wife, mother-in-law, and three small children. Kalioerip is a small mountain desa and the land is only of medium quality. Wongsowikromo has individual heritable property rights to 30 r2 of sawah, 20 r2 of orchard, 50 r2 of tegalan, and a yard of 60 r2, for which he has to pay 0.88 guilders in land tax and 1 guilder in head tax. Moreover he was required seventy-eight times (at an average of five hours) to cultivate coffee for the government and had to perform village services seventy-two times (at an average of eleven hours). Because of sickness and feast days he was unable to work during eighty-four days. Following an agreement with the government forester, Wongsowikromo—like others in his village—has planted djati [mahogany-like] trees and therefore has obtained the right to plant dry crops such as chili and peanuts between those trees.

The same remarks that were made about the management of money by Sodrono apply to Wongsowikromo.

On 265 days of the year no monetary transactions took place, although Wongsowikromo is partly dependent for his rice needs on the market. Income and expenditure of money usually coincide on the same day. This, however, does not mean in the least that in the meantime Wongsowikromo has no money in hand. Heyting noted what amount of money Wongsowikromo had in hand at the end of each day. The findings were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>days</th>
<th>duiten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>10—20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>20—40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>40—60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>60—100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>100—200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>200 and more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It appears from this that Wongsowikromo has in general protected himself against unforeseen expenses, although perhaps rather lightly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>2465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3844</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure in more detail

*Food*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>1647</td>
<td>66.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassava</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and <em>sirih</em></td>
<td>156</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2465</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Clothing*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hat</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarong</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handkerchief</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White cotton</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pants</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s jacket</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyeing black of man’s jacket</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Running costs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of seedlings and tools</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of yarn</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages helper</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the tegalan
Ketela [cassava]  160
Bananas         116
Kapok           23
Indigo          5

From the orchard
Various fruits  374

From the yard
Coconuts        203
Bamboo          24
Cucumber        26

From the djati forest
Chilis          85
Egg plant       7
Peanuts         291
Timber          270
Alang-alang [long grass]  721
Other grass     18
Coffee          222
Sheep           203
Woven goods     105
Total           2853
Taxation refund 81
Total           2934


9 J. Homan van der Heide: Economic studies and criticisms, 1901

The statistics point ... to a negligible increase in arable land, an insignificant rise in rice production, and a considerable increase in rice imports. The logical conclusion must be that, with a rapid increase in population, Java is suffering from an ever-increasing shortage of rice. The only important improvement has occurred in the planting of crops other than rice. But this has had no significant impact on the buying power of the people. This is obvious from the exports of copra, wet indigo, kapok, cotton, cassava flour, oils, and native tobacco (the only agricultural produce exported by the indigenous population), the average value of which amounted to 4.3 million guilders in 1884-88, 5.3 million guilders in 1884-98, and 4.7 million guilders in 1894-98 ...
Cattle stocks have not risen in proportion to the population. The number of cattle per thousand inhabitants has decreased from 238 in 1885 to 225 in 1895 (later figures are not available), while ... in 1889-93 on the average 540,000 hides were exported as compared with 442,000 in 1894-98 ... The statistics do not only show an ever-growing shortage of rice in Java, but also that in general the prosperity of the native population has seriously declined in the period 1885-96 ... [It is then argued that rice production has not kept up with the population increase.]

The difference is not small, but very large, because in the period 1885-96 there was a 25 per cent increase in population, while the amount of arable land increased only by 6.2 per cent and the plantings of rice only by 3.43 per cent ... The population has increased four times more than the area of arable land and seven times more than the plantings of rice. There was no increase at all in rice production. [The reason for this is that] the newly reclaimed areas are generally inferior, while ever-larger areas of the best soil are being used for the cultivation of sugar. So it is not surprising that a small increase in rice-planting is not followed by an increase in production ... The progress made by the sugar industry was compensated for by the fall in wages and the increase in population. The progress of private coffee, tea, and quinine production did not equal the fall in the production of government coffee, not the speak of the fall in wages and the population increase. Tobacco production increased by 8.5 per cent, the population by 25 per cent. The available quantity of rice per capita of population fell from 1.9 piculs per annum to 1.58 piculs. The average export surplus for the whole of the Netherlands Indies declined from 56.7 million guilders in 1885-90 to 43.4 million guilders in 1891-96, while the overseas debt increased.

Imports of cotton goods, which are considered a particularly suitable gauge of the buying power of the indigenous population, increased by 14 per cent and that of yarns by 9.5 per cent ... As, almost exclusively, imported clothing materials are used in Java, it is evident from the import statistics of textiles, yarns, and clothing that the whole of the population spends per capita 1.25 guilders per annum and that this already small amount is still decreasing.

The total revenue of the land rent has declined. The same is the case with the slaughtering tax, trade tax, and the opium monopoly. The average per capita assessment of the trade tax declined from 2.51 guilders in 1885 to 1.73 guilders in 1896. The salt monopoly yielded 18 per cent more as against a population increase of 25 per cent. It appears from the amount of salt consumed that the consumption of salt per capita decreased in that proportion. Only the revenue from the rent on pawn shops surpassed the population in-
crease considerably. This special tax on poverty and decline realized 40 per cent more ... The total taxation revenue, ... most of which is paid by the native population of Java, ... decreased by almost 2 million gilders in 1885-96 ...

The years 1885-90 must because of the general depression and the decline in prices ... be viewed as particularly unfavourable, with the result that the imports by private persons into Java declined on the average from 104 million gilders in 1883-84 to 78.8 million gilders in 1885-87.

The years 1891-96, however, have shown strong progress almost everywhere in Europe, America, Asia, and Australia ... [But in Java] there was not only a deterioration in the economic situation of the people in the period 1885-96, but also in the years 1897-98 there was no progress to be noticed, although there were many favourable factors present ...

The rice crop in these years [i.e. 1897-98] was successful: in 1897 it was 2.5 million piculs and in 1898 4 million piculs more than the average ... The output of sugar also rose markedly, but this gain was more than compensated for by a fall in coffee production. While sugar production rose between 1896 and 1898 by approximately 3 million piculs at a value of 20 million gilders, the export of coffee fell by one-half or upwards of 20 million gilders. In 1896 the people earned 5 million gilders from the forced cultivation of coffee for the government and in 1898, owing to a fall in production, they only earned 2.1 million gilders. Also the people's income from private coffee cultivation has diminished markedly as a result of a fall in production ...

During the years 1896-98 the government as well as private companies have constructed a large number of public works, such as railways and tramways (in 1897 and 1898 15.8 million gilders were spent on the building of railways and 16.2 million gilders on the construction of tramways), river and other water works (e.g. 8 million gilders were spent on the irrigation works in the Solo Valley), and gas and electrical installations, which provided an extra source of income for the people. In spite of all this it must be concluded from a comparison of imports during 1897-98 and 1891-96 that there was no increase in economic prosperity, as can be seen from the following table of imports of the various articles, which are mainly for the consumption of the native population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imports into Java and Madoera</th>
<th>Average 1891—96</th>
<th>Average 1897—98</th>
<th>% increase 1897—98</th>
<th>% decrease 1897—98</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton (gilders)</td>
<td>29,447,000</td>
<td>29,092,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollens (gilders)</td>
<td>1,869,000</td>
<td>1,348,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>28.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fish (1893—96: kg) 29,682,000 30,528,000 2.80 —
Net imports of rice (piculs) 1,040,000 1,307,000 25.50 —
Earthenware 1,447,000 1,262,000 — 12.75
Ironware 4,244,000 4,526,000 6.60 —
Total imports by private persons 106,573,000 108,261,000 1.60 —

The conclusion that must be drawn from the imports situation must also be drawn from that of the revenue from taxation, which is almost totally borne by the indigenous population. This should be clear from the following table:

**Revenue from some taxes in Java and Madoera**

(million guilders)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1896</th>
<th>1897</th>
<th>1898</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slaughtering tax</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling tax</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade tax</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land rent</td>
<td>17.13</td>
<td>16.96</td>
<td>17.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents on opium</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>12.16</td>
<td>11.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium monopoly</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on carriages</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt monopoly</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on pawnshops</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head tax</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.99</td>
<td>46.90</td>
<td>47.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase in revenue in 1898 from land rent and the salt monopoly must be the result of the favourable rice harvest, while the increase in head tax and the tax on pawnshops is the result respectively of the population increase and the pauperization of the people. The opium monopoly shows a considerable decrease in revenue. The increase in the total revenue from these taxes during the years 1896-98 amounted to only 2,750,000 guilders or 0.6 per cent, while the population during these two years increased by about 4 per cent. The average per capita assessment of the trade tax decreased again from 1.73 guilders in 1896 to 1.64 guilders in 1898. It should further be mentioned that the total export of goods on account of the private sector has on the average fallen from 135 million guilders in 1891-96 to 129.5 million guilders in 1897-98. The export surplus has therefore declined from 28.4 million guilders in 1891-96 to 21.2 mil-
lion guilders in 1897-98. At the same time the overseas debt of Java has considerably increased because of the capital invested in new railways and tramways ... and new agricultural and other enterprises.

During the last few years a great deal has been written about a decline in the prosperity of the indigenous population ... The Verslag van de Kamer van Koophandel [Report of the Chamber of Commerce] of Semarang of 1898 mentions ... "a decrease in the buying power of the people". The Verslag van de Kamer van Koophandel of Batavia for the year 1899 reads: "In general the market remained depressed during the whole of the year because of an oversupply. Total sales were less than in 1897" ... The Assistant Resident H. E. B. Schmalhausen ... wrote in 1899 ... "To put it mildly, in many regions of Java the economic situation does not improve. Wages have fallen to the lowest minimum and the reclamation of land cannot keep pace with the population increase. The livestock is declining qualitatively and quantitatively because of a lack of grazing grounds. And although these facts are not mentioned in the Colonial Reports, they are nevertheless true ... " The Assistant Resident P. J. F. van Heutz wrote ... in 1900:

During the past century the Netherlands has succeeded in reducing to complete poverty a very diligent and cultured people, which is endowed with a great capacity for development, in a land that may be called an ideal example of tropical fertility. The poverty of the Javanese is so abject that it deserves to become proverbial. It does not matter how much one tries to imagine the greatest possible poverty, that of the Javanese will always be greater. While formerly ornaments and other luxury articles could be found among the people, today they only exist in their imagination. Gold and silver have become unknown metals, except for the silver which has to be sacrificed to the fiscus [taxation] and they have been replaced by tin, and galvanized iron. The pawn shops, with their usurious interest charges, where everything that can be spared and also much that cannot is piled up, yield so little that this source of income is also threatening to dry up ...

Even the Amsterdams Handelsblad, [Amsterdam Trading Post], which is usually so unperturbed and optimistic and which is such a great admirer of the Netherlands Liberal colonial policy, concludes its discussion about the economic situation of Java thus: "Our total impression is the following: the situation on the whole has remained practically stationary. In some areas small gains are noticeable and in others regression ... And although one cannot agree with the pessimists that prosperity is declining, the last word on this subject has not yet been spoken. One can rightly expect from the Netherlands Government in Java that it will do everything possible to increase this prosperity"

J. Homan van der Heide, Economische Studien en Critieken met betrekking tot Java (Batavia: Kolff, 1901), pp. 128-29, 111, 130-36.
The Ethical Policy, 1901-42

The Liberal colonial policy was strongly criticized from the early 1880s onwards by a growing number of Dutch politicians and journalists, foremost among whom were the leaders of the Neo-Calvinist and Catholic parties, who condemned Dutch colonial policy as unjust and unchristian. They were supported by the Dutch Socialists, still comparatively few in number at this time, and by a small group of Radical Liberals who had broken with the rigid beliefs of doctrinaire Liberalism. One of the most prominent spokesmen of the last group was P. Brooschoof, a journalist who had lived in the Indies for a considerable time and who through his vivid writings, brought the plight of the Javanese to the attention of a wide section of the Dutch public (see document 10).

In 1901 a Calvinist-Catholic coalition came to power in The Hague and announced that a new approach would be taken in colonial management. A new colonial policy was introduced, usually called the “Ethical” Policy, which can be seen as a Dutch version of the “white man’s burden”. The outstanding feature of the new policy was the official abandonment of exploitation and direct state intervention in the economic sphere in order to improve the economic position of the indigenous population. Indigenous education was boosted considerably and a beginning was made with administrative and political decentralization, culminating in 1918 with the opening of the Volksraad (People’s Council), a type of colonial proto-parliament.

ECONOMIC POLICY

The nature of the Ethical native welfare programme is well illustrated by the slogan “irrigation, emigration, and education”, used by the prominent colonial reformer van Deventer, who in 1899 in an article called “Een Eereschuld” (“A Debt of Honour”) had demanded that at least an amount of 187 million guilders, i.e. 151 million guilders remitted as budget surpluses since 1867, and 36 mil-
lion guilders paid in interest and repayments of the colony's debt since 1877, should be restituted to the Indies. Van Deventer also demanded that the Netherlands should take over the whole of the Indies debt, amounting to 100 million guilders, leaving "a debt of honour" to the Indies of 67 million guilders, to be used for economic development projects.

By 1900 the majority of Dutch politicians, including the conservatives representing metropolitan trading and industrial interests, which had become worried about the serious decline in indigenous buying power, had become convinced that laissez-faire colonial policy had run aground and that speedy and effective measures should be taken to improve the colonial economy and finances.

The seriousness of the situation was highlighted in a number of government-sponsored reports that appeared in 1904; and in the same year the Dutch Parliament approved a proposition that the Netherlands take over the responsibility for the repayment and interest charges of the floating debt of the indies, which amounted to forty million guilders. This grant-in-aid, which was a watered-down version of van Deventer's earlier demand, was to be used to finance a programme to raise native agricultural productivity by the expansion of irrigation, the introduction of agricultural extension services, better rural credit facilities, and the emigration of Javanese farmers from overpopulated areas to other Indonesian islands such as Sumatra and Sulawesi, where land was still in plentiful supply.

Another and far more detailed investigation into the economic condition of the Javanese people was carried out in 1904-5, the results of which were summarized by Hasselman in 1914. They show (see document 11) that the decline in native prosperity in Java was perhaps not as widespread as had originally been feared, although it should be kept in mind that owing to the often fairly primitive methods used, the results of the survey cannot always be considered conclusive.

In the period 1900—1940 more than 270 million guilders were spent on irrigation works, resulting in an increase of the total wet rice area from 2.7 million hectares to 3.4 million hectares. And, although a spectacular result in itself, it was immediately absorbed by the continued rapid increase in population. The population of Java, which stood at 29.9 million in 1905, reached 40.9 million in 1930 and 48 million in 1940, while the average size of native landholdings fell from 1.2 hectares in 1922 to 0.9 hectares in 1938.

Far less effective than irrigation were the efforts of agricultural extension officers, who by means of demonstration fields and other types of in-training tried to induce farmers to use fertilizers, better seeds, and more efficient implements. Progress was only very slow owing to the strong cultural resistance and the general indifference
of farmers to these new-fangled foreign measures. The introduction of new food crops and commercial crops, and the construction of fish ponds to improve the villagers’ diet, proved to be somewhat more successful.

A great deal of attention was also given by the colonial government to the problem of rural indebtedness and the evil of usury. Pawn shops, which were the normal source of credit for Indonesians, had been a government monopoly since 1814, but the practice of farming out these shops, mainly to Chinese, had resulted in a great deal of usury and other malpractices highly detrimental to the indigenous people. In order to stop these abuses the colonial government took over the running of pawn shops itself in 1900. In addition other sources of credit were created, such as the desa lumbung (village rice banks), where people could borrow rice until the next harvest at rates of interest ranging from 20 to 25 per cent, while the traditional money-lending rates would often be as high as 50 per cent. From the profits of these rice banks, village banks were set up to take care of the need for cash credit. By 1930 six thousand rice banks and an equal number of village banks had been founded.

The least successful measures were the attempts by the colonial government to induce Javanese farmers to migrate to other islands of the Archipelago. The first organized attempt in this direction was made in 1905 when, as an experiment, an agricultural colony was set up in the Lampungs (South Sumatra), which by 1930 numbered thirty thousand people. Efforts to settle Javanese farmers in southeast Borneo and Celebes (Sulawesi) met with failure. The situation improved somewhat during the 1930s when as a result of more skilful propaganda, better selection methods, and more extensive preparatory work in the areas of settlement, more farmers could be induced to leave. In the years 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, and 1940 respectively, 13,152, 19,152, 32,259, 45,339, and 50,622 Javanese emigrated, followed by another 47,095 in the first three months of 1941.

Obviously the Ethical programme of indigenous economic development, which was almost entirely concerned with raising agricultural productivity, was unable to solve Java’s basic economic problems. The Dutch apparently had no serious intention of introducing drastic changes in the colonial economic structure by such means as large-scale industrialization. Admittedly, the importance of industrialization had been stressed by a number of Ethical reformers from the beginning of the century. But the various investigations that were held and the plans proposed came to nothing simply because they militated against the interests of the imperial economy as a whole. In particular the large-scale plantation and mining combines in the colony, which wielded great power in the
Dutch Parliament, were strongly opposed to industrialization, which would have tended to increase the demand for labour and therefore its price. This would have been damaging to these concerns, which for their profits were largely dependent on cheap land and the lowest possible coolie wages. Moreover industrialists in Holland, as well as Dutch labour, were unwilling to be priced out of the Indonesian market, which was one of the most important outlets for Dutch industrial produce such as textiles and machinery.

From the end of World War I a number of Dutch politicians, mainly Socialists, together with various economists, strongly criticized the Ethical Policy for failing to raise the indigenous standard of living. And although the claims of some politicians that millions of people were starving in Java were certainly overstated, it is clear from various investigations held at this time that the people of Java were by no means better off and perhaps even worse off than they had been in 1900. Document 12, which is taken from an economic survey by Huender, published in 1921, certainly points this way. And a number of budget studies conducted in various parts of Java by the economist Boeke clearly show that the standard of living of the indigenous population was generally still very low and that the money economy had still not very deeply penetrated into the villages (see document 13).

The economic problem in Java was severely aggravated by the economic depression of the 1930s. In particular the Western export sector was hard hit. The acreage under export crops was drastically reduced and, of a total of 250 sugar factories in Java, nearly 200 stopped operating, with the result that thousands of coolies were sacked and were forced to return to the already overcrowded villages. There were, however, some compensating factors: the land vacated by Western plantations could now be used for food production; and it was during the 1930s that the colonial government finally took the industrialization of Java more firmly in hand. One important reason for this change was the growing fear that Japan would price European firms completely out of the colonial market. The colonial government tried to create a more favourable climate for industrial investment by introducing import restrictions and regulations ensuring a balanced industrial growth. Subsequently, a number of foreign companies established factories in Java, producing rubber tyres, textiles, bicycles, paints, beer, soap, and margarine. The number of indigenous small-scale industrial enterprises also increased markedly during the Depression and the number of workers in the industrial sector (excluding cottage industries) rose from 1.5 million in 1929 to 2.8 million in 1939, while in the same period the proportion of the national income produced by industrial enterprises rose from 4.7 per cent to 10.4 per cent.
This rise in industrial output—although significant—was not sufficient to absorb the surplus labour force in rural Java. Most redundant workers had to fall back on the village economy, where they were given a share of the steadily decreasing communal pie. Those workers who had been able to find employment on plantations or in factories were probably not much better off than the unemployed or under-employed peasantry. Wages were very low and, as is shown by the Coolie Budget Investigation of 1939-40 (see document 14), with the exception of those in West Java many Javanese workers were suffering from malnutrition. In judging the efforts of the Dutch to solve Java’s economic plight it is obvious that they gave—as is usual with colonial governments—too little and too late. All that perhaps can be said is that by using stop-gap measures the Dutch colonial government managed to keep an even keel.

10 P. Brooshooff: The Ethical direction in colonial policy, 1901

It is a peculiar phenomenon that during the last 150 years or so, and in particular in our time, ethical sunrays are breaking through the darkest clouds of egoism. By ethical I mean here the opposite of selfish, because almost all attempts at moral improvement must involve the submission of one’s own self. These [ethical] aspirations grow stronger in all fields in line with the increase in unashamed selfishness. There are increases in the means of destruction as well as genuine and half-genuine peace manifestations; there is shameless war as well as loud protest; shameless speculation on the stock exchange as well as genuine disinterestedness; immoral literature as well as books full of beautiful wisdom; exhausting living as well as propaganda for better health; barren religion in the Churches as well as vital humanism; scraping individualism as well as levelling Socialism … where shall I end this summary of all the contrasts between present-day egoism and altruism? …

When I speak about ethical colonial policy, I certainly do not mean the policy of loud political advertisement that exploits the so-called love of the Javanese for entirely different purposes. Repeated government statements that the well-being of the Javanese and their grateful acceptance of our rule are the main guideline can only cause vexation if at the same time nothing tangible is done to increase the real happiness of the Javanese. I even want to warn emphatically against a theatrical policy that makes us fulfil our duties towards the Indies on the cheap; that makes us self-satisfied when we give ten thousand or so of the richest natives … the opportunity to put a few guilders in the savings bank; or that makes us believe that we bring
the poor man better justice when we pay the highest judicial officials 1400 guilders per month instead of 1000. We should also not become sentimental and not play for effect with such catch-phrases as "the beautiful Insulinde", "belts of emeralds", or "warm hearts for a good and honest brown brother", who is certainly not better or more honest than the average human being, and that is putting it mildly.

What should motivate us to carry out our obligations in the Indies is the best of human inclinations: the feeling for justice, the feeling that we should give the best we have got to the Javanese who have been subjugated by us against their will, the noble-minded impulse of the stronger one to treat the weaker one justly. And I find it pleasing to be able to point to growing signs here and there of this sense of justice. This is true of political parties as well as of individuals ... The Anti-Revolutionary Party wrote in Article 18 of its general platform: "that the selfishness of our policy to exploit the colonies for the benefit of the state or the private entrepreneur must be replaced by a policy of moral obligation ... The Radical, Liberal-Democratic, and Socialist parties have subscribed far more strongly to the ethical principle in their colonial programmes. Only the Catholic Party, although wishing to see the Javanese prosperous, still would like the Netherlands to profit from them. In any case it means that also for the brown man the most desirable objective on earth should be the prospect of romping about in a Catholic heaven and so it [the Catholic party] has left its only generous-hearted Indies expert, Des Amorie van der Hoeven, standing alone in his camel hair shirt crying out in the wilderness ..."

Considering the heavy burdens we put on the natives, the question spontaneously arises: what are we doing for them? The answer can be short and clear: we are pushing them into an abyss. We are pushing them into that same quagmire of misery in which millions in Western society are submerged to their necks. Men who have nothing else than their labour to sell are exploited by the capitalists, who hold the power. I want to prove this first of all with regard to the major source of income for the natives: agriculture. Not only in Java but in the whole of the world the soil is the source of all prosperity ... The important question thus in determining the prosperity of a people is: how much do they participate in the profits that are taken out of the soil?

It is extremely shameful for our government that as long as we are ruling in Java, the Javanese have hardly drawn any income worth mentioning from their own fertile soil. The greatest profits regularly ended up in the hands of foreigners. The natives had to yield the largest and best part of their crop to the ruler, first as compulsive deliveries during the time of the Company, and later through forced labour under the Culture System. Until 1870 the State held on un-
scrupulously to this monopoly of easy profits, and the European private entrepreneur was not allowed to compete in the agricultural field. Then a change occurred. But unfortunately it was not the Ethical faction, with its desire to do justice to the Javanese, that turned the scales in the decision to abandon the exploitation by the State, but it was the arrogant demand of Western capital, which sought new employment for the riches it had already gathered [in the colony]. A system should have been set up which, out of a sense of justice towards the Javanese, would have ensured them the largest share of the profits drawn from the Javanese soil, which now were abandoned by the government. But the opposite occurred. In order to favour the Netherlands traders, industrialists and fortune-hunters, the richest plantation industries—sugar, indigo, tobacco, and partly also coffee—were transferred into the hands of Netherlands capitalists. One section of the coffee plantations that still provided a nice profit were retained by the government and the Javanese continued to work under almost the same unfavourable conditions. And with respect to the less fertile lands, one thought that the interests of the Javanese were best served by forcing freedom of action on them for which they were not ripe ... good coffee lands were leased on a long-term basis to private European entrepreneurs and land-lease ordinances were issued in order to lure the lands of the Javanese into the hands of European sugar, indigo, and tobacco planters. Seemingly these ordinances were also intended to prevent abuses ... and some of these regulations were well meant, but everybody understood that through the influence of European capital on the native chiefs they were evaded in all sorts of ways ...

In any case the final result was that the agricultural land of the Indies, with the exception of what was absolutely necessary for the growing of food for the natives, was as legally as possible given into the hands of European and Chinese planters, while the natives could be hired by the foreigners to work on these lands for daily wages. But among these numerous and often-revised government regulations there were none that ensured the Javanese reasonable wages for the work performed. This, it was argued, would have been improper interference in private labour agreements.

But while helping to alienate the agricultural land, [the government] did little if anything at all in the way of introducing measures to improve the ancient Javanese cultivation of rice ... and make it more profitable. So little has been done in extending irrigation that, according to the calculations of the irrigation expert Homan van der Heide, out of the 2,700,000 bouws that are suitable for irrigation, only 300,000 bouws are fully irrigated, while 2,400,000 bouws are still waiting to be irrigated or improved ... And for whatever irrigation works that have been constructed, the Javanese have been made to
pay more than enough because of the seigniorial services demanded during the construction and the increase in land tax during or after completion.

The government has also done nothing to improve rice production in other ways, such as the granting of premiums or loans to introduce better ploughs or hoes (the hand hoe is still the main tool), to improve preparation of the rice (this is still done by hand with a pounder on a block), or to introduce better fertilizers ... Now the government is to experiment with ... "demonstration fields", where the Javanese will be taught to work along more scientific lines. But as long as the government fails to give temporary financial help, the poor Javanese will not be able to pay for the tools and fertilizers needed for more intensive cultivation. It must also be mentioned here ... that in addition to lack of money and the stubborn attachment to tradition, the land tax is an important reason why the Javanese cannot improve their productivity. They know that every increase in production will be followed by an increase in this tax, which is already pressing so heavily on them.

So far as the granting of loans for native agriculture is concerned, the slow wheels of government are finally beginning to turn after various officials have for years pointed to the great need for this in connection with the fatal evil of usury. It has charged the former Assistant Resident of Poerwokerto, Mr de Wolff van Westerrode, who has greatly distinguished himself in this field by setting up a savings bank and agricultural credit bank in his area, with investigating the best ways and means of creating state institutions for agricultural credit. There is no doubt that Mr. Wolff will acquit himself excellently of his task, but whether his proposals will result in anything is another question. To delegate a matter to a commission has too often been in the Indies a pretext ... to abstain from real action.

The government has also done nothing to improve the cattle stocks of the natives, and it has not even got decent statistics ...

In short, there is nothing to be seen of the "benefits" which Minister Cremer [Liberal] ... has said repeatedly will make the Javanese love our rule. [This is so at least] with respect to ... rice cultivation. And one bouw of sawah still produces only 25 to 30 piculs of rice (there are some of 50 or 60 piculs, but also of 10 piculs and less), which—taking the average high price of two guilders—will fetch fifty to sixty guilders. The average land-holding (communal or individual) is 1 to 1½ bouws and this will steadily decrease because of the steep rise in population. The income from second crops per bouw can be put on the average at twenty-five guilders. So one can calculate the income earned from Java's fertile soil by five-eighths of the people who have the most ancient rights to the land and whose profession is agriculture. Not counting bad harvests or other misfor-
tunes, the average yearly income of the Javanese farmer can at the highest be put at one hundred guilders.

[The Javanese] are also unable to earn more from their land by renting it to private European industry or by working on the plantations. Rents paid by the factory-owners for land are based on the productivity of this land when it is cultivated by the Javanese themselves. In the eastern regions, such as Soerabaja, Pasoeocean, Probolinggo, and Besoeki, the highest prices are paid, ranging from 100 to 150 guilders per bouw. But after all, the soil there is the best and is properly irrigated, etc., and everything including rice and other victuals is much more expensive, so that the native himself makes higher profits when he cultivates the land, but at the same time pays more for his upkeep. In Kediri, Madoera, and Central Java the rents paid for land are 20 guilders per bouw and even less. So [land rents] are about the same as the income earned when the land is cultivated by the farmers themselves. But even if this was much higher, it would not be to the advantage of the villager. This is because the private European plantation industry that has developed so strongly since 1870 is especially pernicious in that it takes away the land from the small man and gives him money in its place.

A good rice harvest provides the Javanese with food for almost the whole year. If there is a shortage in the last few months, they can fall back on the second crops, and so these families ... can look after themselves fairly well during the whole year. The rice is carefully stored in a loemboeng [little shed], but money on the other hand slips through the fingers of the Javanese like water and it seduces him because of a primitive and childlike love of pleasure. So if a representative of a sugar mill or indigo factory (who are almost always supported by the village heads) comes and asks to rent his land, the tinkling sound of the guilders is too attractive for him to refuse the offer. This is especially so during the period when the land tax needs paying, because otherwise he might have to seek work a long distance away or pawn or sell something. But the small amount of money is soon dissipated on small feasts such as weddings, births, and deaths, at which he likes to be extravagant; or it is spent on sweets or debauchery (gambling, opium, dancing girls), things he would otherwise not have indulged in. But he has lost his land for sixteen months. And the month of May, during which bushels of ripened rice flood the village and warm the hearts of old and young, brings him neither joy nor food. If there is a little money left, he will be able to buy some rice, but soon food will be lacking ... Instead of calmly working in the sawah with the safe feeling that there is food for him and his family in the loemboeng, he now has to earn a few nickels for his upkeep by working in the cane-fields or in factories where the work is unpleasant, severely regulated and controlled. As
a result he and his family become discontented. If he falls sick, there is no money or food at all. If he has a weak character, he becomes wanton and debauched. The work in the factory only lasts for part of the year and a time of pressing need, of pawning and getting into debt, will arrive in any case. And when the capitalist again knocks on his door in order to lease his land again for two years... if necessary by evading the regulations, pressed as he is from all sides he will snap up the chance. In the meantime he cultivates his sawah again, but he is not the same man anymore. He now has worries, debts, and bad habits. People who profit from such a situation, such as gamblers, usurers, prostitutes, and sly opium sellers, have established themselves around the factories. And many of [the peasants] go from bad to worse. And the end comes when they have to sell their cattle, their house and land. The gogol [landed villager] then becomes an orang menoempang [labourer without land rights]. Village life has been demoralized and the villagers have been made unhappy.

Such are the consequences of the influx of European capital, which is considered by the majority of Netherlanders as of such great benefit to the natives, so that an influential party like the Liberal Union dares to preface its colonial platform with the words "the development of private industry". Learned economists usually summarize the benefits of this private European industry in this one sentence: "it brings so many hundreds of thousands of guilders among the population". But they do not mention or they do not know about the psychological destruction of the simple villagers. And then what does it actually mean, "to bring thousands of guilders among the people"? In fact it is no more than a grandiose generalization which does not say anything about the remuneration of the individual... After all, the question that matters is not how much the total wage bill of a factory is, but how much each worker in this factory earns. And also here... the answer is very unsatisfactory. Excluding the situation in East Java where, as we said before, the standard of living and therefore of wages is higher, normal coolie labour in the sugar and indigo plantations in the largest part of Java brings twenty cents for a twelve-hour day. Labourers during the planting season who work on a contract basis can earn more, but the work is heavy and demoralization lessens the energy—most of these coolies do not earn more than twenty cents per day. Labourers in the factory, depending on their particular task, earn from twenty to twenty-five cents, while women and children earn fifteen cents for twelve hours. Moreover, far fewer workers are needed than in earlier years because of the increase in the use of machinery, and other technical improvements.

The owners in Europe, usually directors of large concerns, are
solely interested in large profits or dividends, and they literally put
the thumbscrews on the managers to economize as much as possible
on wages and all other expenditure. There is for example the scan-
dalous situation where coolie wages, which were lowered because of
the sugar crisis (price decline) in 1883 by an average of five cents per
day, have not been increased again, although the sugar industry ... 
now shows great profits ... The owners, however, keep their money
boxes as tightly closed as the deaf ear they turn to the voice of justice
...

My conclusion is that our policy with respect to native agriculture
pushes the villagers slowly but surely into the same swamp of moral
and physical misery into which the disinherited masses of Western
society have sunk. These are at present struggling against the
heartless suppressors and attempt to push themselves out of their
misery. Once they are out, a bloody struggle will come about which
will end an era of great misery. In the Indies this is only just begin-
ing. And only later centuries will judge the period when a people was
robbed of its land and was made the slave of insatiable fortune-
hunters.

But people will ask: "What should we have done then?" The
answer is very simple. The State, which now in Western society will
have to wage a heavy struggle in order to obtain the power to make
the people economically happy and really free (i.e. to ensure for the
community a decent existence under reasonable working condi-
tions), did have such power in the Indies and should not have aban-
doned it. It was the narrow-minded bourgeois spirit, not a high-
thinking mind, that in 1870 attempted to repair the wrongs of the
Culture System by letting the European capitalists loose on the
natives. All these laws [i.e. Land Laws of 1870-71] were not the
result of a nobility of mind, of a sense of justice, but flowed from an
easy-going compliance with the slogans of the day. The misery
should have been taken out of state supervision, but this supervision
itself, which is so necessary for the naive Indies people, should have
been retained. Instead of private enterprises state enterprises should
have been set up ... which should be run by trained, honest, and
properly controlled personnel. Land and labour should be hired
from the people as is done now by the private firms, but without the
present abuses ... and with a system of payment which suits the
character of the Javanese better, that is, in small instalments. All
should participate in a certain part of the profits, and another part of
the profits should be kept in reserve for times of bad harvests and
price declines.

It is a fallacy to argue that the State in this way would take on too
big a risk. The hundreds of millions gained by private firms from
coffee and sugar cultivation prove that the Treasury, when it is
strictly just to the natives, can cope in all unfavourable periods, if only a sensible system of financial reserves is set up.

It is also a fairy tale that good state managers cannot lead an enterprise as well as good company officials. It is certainly true that to regulate all this in detail would have cost a great deal of time and effort. But were we not obliged—after hundreds of years of injustice—to do our utmost and to investigate in the greatest possible detail what the people really needed? ... Truly, the [Culture] System should not have disappeared, but it should have been turned into a blessing for the people. An iron fist would have been necessary ... to protect the small man against the voracious greed of the private capitalists.

But now the damage is almost irreparable. The exploitation of the Indies by private firms is difficult to stop. It is not possible to take away the rights of all these factory-owners and long-lease owners and little can be done to force them to give the native the greatest possible share of the profits made from his birth-land. But I still say: push things as much as possible in this direction. Use part of the debt of honour, which is to be paid by the Netherlands to the Indies, to set up state agricultural enterprises, especially sugar factories ... Hundreds of young men, who now are desperately trying to find a way to earn their livelihood, could find work there ... The model state factory would also push up the wages in private enterprise. This well-ordered system is the only way for the native to obtain a proper share of the richness of his land. At the same time the cultivation of rice should be developed by means of education, state loans, and the establishment of credit banks.

But I know that all this will not happen. The iron wall of a false sense of freedom, which rules our times, stands between me and the power of the State. I shall be pushed aside with such big words as "reaction", "return to obsolete systems". Still I wanted to say how I see the situation. And history shall prove me correct.

Not only in the field of agriculture but also in many other areas is the policy towards the Indies strongly capitalistic in character. I am referring here to the tendency to favour and to spare the rich and powerful, and on the other hand to take everything from the poor man and to neglect his interests. Mr van Kol [Socialist] was completely correct when in Article 1 of his "programme" he called the exploitation of the Indies capitalistic ... Not one European ... pays as the native does—25 per cent of his income [in taxation]. The principle of hitting the poor harder than the rich, which caused the great revolution of the eighteenth century and which now is generally condemned in European public finance, is still practised in the Indies year in and year out. And not one of the theoretical economists who run the Netherlands Government ... has even thought of protesting against this.
But in most other government decisions and deeds the capitalistic nature of policy is visible. For example it was strongly evident in the Mining Law of Minister Cremer ... A few years ago great enthusiasm was awakened in the Indies—as in almost the whole of the world—in mining exploration ... It became therefore necessary to revise the mining legislation, and this was a good opportunity to obtain new sources of revenue for the Treasury, which had been depleted by the loss of the surplus budgets, the Atjeh war [serious colonial war in North Sumatra], and the loss of profits from the Culture System. Large-scale exploration by the State and, where the prospects were good, exploitation by the State, were the proper way to make the treasures of the Indies soil serve the general interest ... But this capitalist Minister par excellence ... continued the policy of favouring the most powerful industrial entrepreneurs ... When the profits had to flow again into the pockets of private businessmen, one could have expected that the Minister by means of progressive taxation could have channelled at least an important part of these very high profits into the Treasury ... The fact is, however, ... that Mr Cremer asked, in addition to a straight tax of eighteen cents per bouw (which was rightly kept low in order not to hit too hard the entrepreneur who had not been successful), for a tax of 2 per cent on gross profits, which after strong opposition from the Chamber was finally increased to 4 per cent ... These very wealthy mining capitalists of the future ... will, thanks to Minister Cremer, be able to spend their millions again in Europe without having ceded to the Indies community a reasonable part of the treasures dug from the Indies soil ...

The government is also failing ... to properly ensure that contract labourers in the plantations and mining enterprises in the Outer Islands are decently treated ... the fact that more and more Javanese are prepared to do this (whole groups of them together with their wives and children can be seen sitting on the foredeck of almost every steamer leaving for the Outer Islands) is certainly one of the most obvious proofs of the growing poverty of these people, who are so strongly attached to the land of their birth. This alone is enough to make the departing labourers unhappy. But disease, dying far away from the village of the forefathers, the disappointment of the expectation of earning enough in the foreign land to return home, the loss of wife or children, and their own physical suffering or bad treatment, make this emigration a veritable martyrdom for its numerous victims.

The government is of the opinion that it did enough when in 1880 it issued paper legislation to regulate the contracts to be concluded with the labourers: money advances, working hours, the kind of work to be performed, the duration of the contract, etc. (the well-
known *Coolie Ordinances*). These contracts had to be *registered* before the local government official in the place of arrival.

As always there is again here the *apparent* care for the small man, while in fact he is not *really* helped. There is hardly any inspection to see whether the stipulations of the contract are adhered to and whether the people are treated humanely and honestly. [Inspection] is one of the normal duties of assistant residents or *contrôleurs*, who sometimes reside in district *centra* [centres of district administration by the government] or coastal cities far away from the plantations. Moreover they are often acting in line with government thinking, which is concerned to cause industrial enterprises as little trouble as possible. And so they mainly restrict their interference to the punishment or pursuit of runaway coolies ... or of one or other manager who has become too notorious because of the murder or maltreatment of coolies. Specially appointed and paid labour inspectors ... such as exist in the Netherlands and who regularly supervise working conditions, nutrition, housing, hospitals, and the treatment of labourers in general, are unheard of.

The facts prove that such supervision is urgently necessary. I will not use as evidence ... the various cases of serious maltreatment and the legal prosecution of managers and foremen that have occurred on the east coast of Sumatra. I consider these as "sensational", as *ce qu'on voit* [the obviously visible], while what really matters is *ce qu'on ne voit pas* [the invisible], that is, the daily suffering and hardships of coolie life, which for one reason or another do not draw the public attention ... I heard some details about this from a credible person who is in charge of such a plantation and who has seen the situation with his own eyes ...

After a tiring journey the group of coolies has finally arrived. The travelling passes are collected and a helpful *mandoer* [overseer] shows them their communal quarters. The building is made of bamboo and is not built on stumps as is usual in this region, but rests straight on the ground. Everything has to be done in there: cooking, sleeping, and eating. Everything is closed off and there is no ventilation. The coolies are obliged to buy rice from the plantation. Meat they do not get. As they are days walking away from a populated area they are also unable to visit a *woroeng* [little store] to feast on a piece of *ikan* [fish]. There are chickens, but they are only for the manager and his staff. After all, where is the coolie who has 2.50 guilders to buy a chicken from some *hadji* [usurer] trader? On payday the people get very little money in their hands, because the administrators take care to get the advance payments back as quickly as possible. And then there is the *hadji mandoer* [money-lender] from whom the coolie has borrowed money, who is waiting grinning at the door to get his money back immediately with the necessary interest. The manager does not care about all this and looks on laughing at these fellows who with puzzled faces and empty-handed return to work!
It happens daily that people get sick, often because of hunger, the lack of nutritious food, or exhaustion. This does not worry the administrator. If they are sick they still have to work until they collapse. The man starts to work again and in fact collapses a few moments later. My spokesman saw one lying down in his stuffy, dirty, smelly living quarters, dying without anybody taking any notice. The people look thin and emaciated. And they do their work listlessly from morning to night. And sorry will be the man who pauses for a moment to sit on a fallen tree to smoke a cigarette. The mandoer has been given special instructions to make good use of his stick, which he, however, does only very seldom use and only when the toean besar [manager] is in the neighbourhood. If he does nothing in such a case, the toean himself will use his horsewhip ... When my spokesman reported to the administrator that a coolie was lying in one of the huts with fever and suffering from convulsions, the answer was: “Oh, let this bastard get ... I can get ten other ones in his place,” [This administrator] loudly laughed when my spokesman proposed the construction of special bamboo quarters for the sick. This manager was a German. And he also dismissed the idea of setting up a store where dried meat could be sold with the words: “Surely they are not servant girls!”

Only compulsory action by the State can force ... the greedy plantation-owners to act in a more humane way. And only after an independent corps of officials charged with the inspection of labour has been established will it be possible, in my view, to ensure better treatment of the coolies in the Outer Islands ... Our investigation as to what we have done or are doing for the natives ... has unfortunately but of necessity become an almost continuous accusation against the Netherlands colonial policy. It has also been a continuous demonstration of the principle of selling the small and poor man short and favouring the rich and powerful ...

Where must the money come from to do all these things? ... There is no money to be found even for the most urgent measures ... This is not surprising! Imagine that in the Netherlands heavy taxes had been levied for half a century ... and that on the other hand no canals had been dug for seagoing vessels; that rivers had not been made navigable; that Amsterdam and Rotterdam could not be reached safely from the sea and that these cities could not be reached from Germany by river; that yearly floods ravaged large parts of the country; that there was only one central railway line and few side tracks and some privately run tram lines; and that the security of private property left much to be desired. Imagine also the considerable budget surpluses that resulted from this neglect of public interest and the heavy taxation being usurped every year by a power that argued that it possessed a historical right to rob the Netherlands of about 800 million guilders in capital and interest. What financial and productive power would our fatherland still possess under these circumstances? ...
After the introduction of the Culture System many millions flowed into the Netherlands Treasury. Ten of millions were shown on the Indies budget as contributions to the Netherlands finances. And by not allowing expenditure on even the most urgent matters in the Indies, many more millions were left, which under the name of "budget surplus" were transferred to the Netherlands. The financial expert Mr N.P. van den Berg has calculated that the Indies in this way has remitted 764 million guilders between 1831 and 1877 in capital and low interest to the mother country. This is after the debts to the Netherlands have been subtracted.

Any people, even if not burdened by an exhausting Atjeh war, would after such a regime be completely emaciated and would be unable to lift itself out of this poverty without help from outside. So it cannot be doubted that in order to cure the Indies of this far-advanced decay, the Netherlands must redress the injustice that has been done and restore a part of the millions that have been taken away from the Indies. The present [colonial] budgets are always closed with a deficit (only in 1901 was a balanced budget obtained because of the rise in the price of tin) ... and the most pressing needs cannot be filled; the capacity of the people to pay is exhausted more and more through heavier taxation ...

It does honour to Mr van Deventer that, while we other writers have only been complaining for years about the injustices done, he has had the moral courage to demand squarely in his article "A Debt of Honour" that the Netherlands should return part of the millions from which it has benefited.

As the starting-point he took the Accountability Law of 1867 ... With this "law for the regulation of the administration and accountability of the finances of the Netherlands Indies" ... the principle of the strict separation of colonial finances from those of the mother country was introduced, and as it was even more clearly put in the almost unanimous decision of the Second Chamber ... of 1898, that after that law "the mother country as well as the Indies have to provide for their own expenditures". Nevertheless, still another 151 million guilders in Indies budget surpluses were remitted between 1867 and 1877. But when in 1883 the Indies because of this new bloodletting had to stop its payments, the mother country did not come around to give back part or all of these 151 million guilders. It lent the Indies 45.5 million guilders against a considerable interest, and this game was repeated in 1898 when 55 million guilders were lent, so that since 1883 the Indies have already paid about 50 million in repayments and interest on these two loans. So also after 1867 the completely unreasonable system was followed by which the Indies and Netherlands finances were considered as one, as long as the Indies showed a budget surplus. But they were separated again as soon
as the Indies ran into deficits and needed help from the Netherlands. Restitution must now be paid for this injustice ...

The 151 million directly remitted, together with the 50 million-odd sent as repayments and interest, make together about 200 million guilders. And this is the amount which, according to Mr van Deventer, must be repaid as a debt of honour by the Netherlands to the Indies. The first hundred million should be used to transfer the accountability for the loans of 1883 and 1898 from the Indies to the Netherlands. The other hundred million should be given by the Netherlands to the colony in order to provide for urgently felt needs ...
An initial capital of a hundred million, spent on projects to increase production, would get us quite a distance in restoring the prosperity of the Indies. So the situation is not desperate if one only has the courage to use the proper medicine. However, developments during the last few days do not look very hopeful. During the recent parliamentary elections the Indies hardly counted more than a rotten apple in a greengrocer's shop. And the elections resulted in the coming to power of a clerical Cabinet and a clerical majority. Little is to be expected by the Indies from the Catholic section and although the Anti-Revolutionary Party (Neo-Calvinist) ... has declared in its programme that we no longer may only profit from the Indies and that the policy of exploitation must be replaced by one of guardianship and moral obligations ... there is little to be seen of this beautiful declaration of principles in its recent action programme. This contains three demands in terms of colonial policy:

1. Native Christians should not be left subject to the Mohammedan law.
2. The Christianization of the Indies should be furthered.
3. The poisoning of the people through opium should be stopped.

Does such a programme, which is almost entirely religious, not make a mockery of the great poverty of the people and of the urgent need for numerous measures that have to be taken to protect the Indies against a continuing decay?

Truly, if during the next few years the pauperised natives are being drugged with the privilege of becoming Christians, then I hope that Dr Abraham Kuyper [leader of the Neo-Calvinists]—who is so full of love for his Netherlands small people, for the baker, the small shopkeeper, who after all also demand from their worldly government first of all worldly benefits—then I hope that this Christian leader will be able to justify this gross deceit of the poor Javanese before the God of the Christians ...

C.J. Hasselman: General survey of the results of the investigation into economic prosperity in Java and Madura, held in 1904-5

Population statistics: in judging these figures, account must be taken of the incompleteness of the various regional returns and the unreliability of many figures because of defective and inexact enumerations in earlier years. However, it is certain that [in the period 1880-1905] the population of Java ... has steadily increased and that in the ten-year period 1895-1905 the population has grown from around twenty million to twenty-three and a half million, or by more than three and a half million people.

Although there has been a steady increase in population almost everywhere, in some districts there was a temporary decline resulting from epidemics, bad harvests, natural disasters, etc. (Bantam, Limbangan, 1880-85); (Grobongan, 1898-1902); (Soerabaja, 1890-95). Usually these temporary declines were followed by an equally speedy increase. Exceptional increases have been noticed here and there as a result of immigration. The various reasons for immigration were: the advantages offered by private industry, better living conditions, improvements in the means of communication, etc. Emigration takes place on a permanent basis (because of repeated bad harvests, epidemics, overpopulation, shortage of land), and also on a temporary basis (disasters, cattle pest, the tiger plague; sometimes also because of forced cultivation or other government measures). The extent of emigration was nowhere such that it resulted in a noticeable decrease in population.

Overpopulation exists only in a few regions. It can be said to exist in districts where the number of landless peasants is very large and where there is practically no opportunity to gain a sufficient income outside agriculture (Magelang, Temanggoeng, Poerworedjo, Blitar), or where the harvests are inadequate (Keboemen, a part of Madoera, Berbek) ... It appears that in Java there are per 1000 individuals 448 children, 480 adults, and 72 people who are fifty years and above. There are 1045 females against 1000 males. The number of births is around 50-60 per 1000 inhabitants. The yearly population increase in the period 1870-1905 was about 17.6 per thousand. The population density in 1907 was 225 per square kilometre. The average increase amounts to at least 8.5 per cent every five years, so that the population doubles itself every forty-two years ...

Nutrition: as a rule two meals are taken each day, one at noon and the other around sundown. The staple food is rice or rice mixed with corn, or cassava and other roots, meat, fish, and side dishes. In a number of districts breakfast is taken, consisting of tubers or other titbits, which are consumed sometimes together with tea or coffee.
Except for an increase in the use of meat and fish in some districts, no important improvements in the diet were noticed. In fact almost everywhere nutrition was considered sufficient. Often the food intake temporarily decreases during the last months before the rice harvest, when food becomes scarce and more expensive ... On the whole, more fish is eaten than meat. In a number of regions meat is only eaten on feast days. In twenty-four districts or parts of them an increase in meat consumption was reported. In seven districts meat consumption decreased mainly because of an increase in the use of fish, while in the remaining areas meat consumption remained the same ...

The consumption of salt rose in all areas, with the exception of Soerabaja. The consumption of salt is dependent on various factors such as economic conditions (there was a decrease in consumption during the disastrous years 1901 and 1902, followed later again by an increase); the production and consumption of clandestine salt; weather conditions; police surveillance, etc. The general increase in salt consumption is attributable mainly to the population increase, the increase in the number of salt stores, and the introduction of salt bricks ...  

Housing: in the main centra as well as in the countryside of almost the whole of Java and Madoera, some improvement in housing can be observed ... This was caused by ... the fall in prices of materials, greater prosperity, the influence of government officials, greater needs, the imitation of non-natives, the greater proficiency of tradesmen, the fear of theft and fires, immigration, and other local factors ... In one district (Temanggoeng) some decline was reported, and in some others the situation remained the same (Demak, Grobongan, Rembang, Probolinggo) ... The care and upkeep of house yards also improved in many districts, mainly as a result of greater pressure by government officials ... In fifteen districts the situation in this respect remained the same. In general the Sundanese take more interest in the upkeep of their houses and yards than the Javanese or the Madurese. This is partly because of the greater proficiency of the former in bamboo construction, but also perhaps because they do not indulge in opium-smoking. In a large number of districts an increase was reported in the number of brick houses and the use of roof tiles. Where this was not the case it was attributed to the lack of usable materials, fear of earthquakes, sometimes the cost of felling trees, and the obligation to obtain a licence. Generally, the increase in the use of tiles and galvanized roofing is greater than that of building bricks.

In Keboemen the superstitious belief is held that the chances of dying are greater in houses with tiled roofs ...
Housing timber is either bought (from other villagers, in the markets, or from private timber yards) or acquired by cutting trees on one’s own land, on land to be reclaimed, or in the government forests. Often it is also stolen from the forests ... There has been an improvement almost everywhere in furniture and household utensils and the ordinary villager makes use more and more of tables, chairs, cupboards, beds, plates, cups, glasses, and kerosene lamps, although they are usually rough and of inferior quality. In the houses of some traders more interest is taken in wall decorations. Of course there are many local differences. But in general the Sundanese have in this respect been quicker in taking over European customs than the Javanese or Madurese ...

Public health: this is considered satisfactory in almost all districts. In some regions the situation is unsatisfactory because of the existence of stagnant pools and swamps (South Priangan, Tjilitjap, Djember, Panaroeakan, Banjoewangi); recurrent floods (Demak, Keboemen, Besoeki, Bangil); lack of water for bathing, drinking, and cleaning; newly reclaimed land; or the planting of sawahs with east monsoon rice. In the various coastal areas health conditions are not good because of the influence of coral reefs and fish ponds ... So far as medical care is concerned, natives prefer to be treated by native doekoen [soothsayers] with native medicines rather than by European doctors or dokters-djava [native doctors]. The number of native doctors is sufficient to cope with the people’s demand for medical help. Moreover in some places use is made of the services of missionaries. The reasons for the people’s unwillingness to call for official medical help are distrust of European medical treatment and medicines, as well as fatalism, stupidity, and poverty, and partly also the long distances that have to be travelled to visit a doctor ...

According to some reports the dokters-djava only seldom visit the villages and they are generally considered by the people as too far removed socially. The respect of the natives for the European medical profession does not appear to have increased, because one of the official functions of doctors and dokters-djava is to check and treat prostitutes, which makes doctors servants of the police in the eyes of the people. Finally, European medicines are often incorrectly applied by the native chiefs, and the doekoen, of course, make capital out of this ...

In most districts there are no qualified midwives and of those who are available only little use is made. Many natives take offence at women in childbirth being treated by Europeans. Still, some officials are of the opinion that greater use would be made of qualified midwives if more were available.

It can be concluded from an investigation in the district of Serang
that the number of deaths of women in childbirth and of stillbirths is about the same among the native population as in Europe, where qualified medical help is available everywhere. Some are of the opinion that the use of doekoen must be preferred to the services of European midwives. Others argue that the population must be persuaded—if necessary by force—to take recourse to European midwives ...

In almost all district centra there is a hospital for natives. Furthermore, in various places there are missionary hospitals and hospitals for diseased prostitutes. The extension of old hospitals and the building of new ones is considered necessary in some districts. Almost everywhere the natives show an aversion to government hospitals, mostly because of the unusual food and treatment, often also because of prejudice or unfamiliarity. For the better-situated these establishments are not comfortable enough. Other objections are: the restriction on personal freedom, the lack of homeliness and being away from the family, the fear of dying without the observance of the ritual precepts, the presence of prostitutes, distrust of European medicine, fear of operations, etc. According to some reports, this general aversion is steadily declining and much is dependent on the tact of the doctors in question. Missionary hospitals, which are usually better equipped and better run, appear to be less objectionable to the natives, although these hospitals are not everywhere immediately successful.

Another objection against government hospitals is apparently that red rice is used, which is also given to prisoners. According to Dr van Buuren (Kediri) the situation in almost all government hospitals in the countryside leaves much to be desired with respect to equipment as well as treatment ... The policlincs (which are usually situated in the districh centra) are reported to be catching on well in twenty-nine districts, and are unsatisfactorily or not at all attended in thirty-one districts ... The question whether the population is suffering from chronic diseases that seriously affect the capacity to work (malaria, syphilis, eye diseases, leg sores, leprosy, beri-beri, etc.) received negative replies in forty-three districts, and more or less affirmative replies in fourteen districts, while no replies ... were received from seventeen districts ...

The reports from the district administrations are not always identical with those from the medical practitioners. For example, the district of Rembang gave a negative reply to the chronic diseases question and the civilian doctor gave an affirmative reply. Malaria and syphilis do have an important impact in many regions; the same is true of eye diseases, as for instance in Serang where in some families people regularly become blind by the time they are forty-five to fifty years old ... In this respect there are important differences between Europeans and natives, because the latter, although suffering from
ghastly leg wounds or a far-advanced stage of consumption, continue to work so that their output suffers little or not at all ... According to Dr van Buuren the most common diseases are eye diseases, malaria, syphilitic leg sores, consumption, and cancer. "They spread slowly but surely, while absolutely nothing is being done about them" ...

During the last twenty to thirty years there have been few large-scale epidemics, though mention must be made of the fever and cholera epidemics in 1901 and 1902. Only in one district were cases of beri-beri reported ...

The agrarian situation: communally held property is not found at all in the regions of Bantam, Batavia, the Priangan regencies (with one exception), Madoera and Besoeki, and Old-Probolinggo. Communal lands that are periodically divided are found, although not in the same measure everywhere, in thirty-three districts of Central Java, Soerabaja, and Paoeroeoean. The Culture System appears to have resulted in an increase in communal property. Little use has been made of the opportunity provided since 1885 to convert communal property into personal inheritable property. Instead a tendency has developed to periodically divide communal property into permanent shares. Shareholders are all members of the village community, who possess a house and yard and are able and willing to pay land rent and to render the seignorial and village services that rest on the land. Owners of hereditary, individually owned lands, which are larger than the communal share, are sometimes not allowed to share in the communal lands ... It is generally accepted that 1 bouw of sawah land or 2 bouws of tegal [tegalan] land are needed for the upkeep of a peasant's family ... In thirteen districts the portions of land were considered too small, and in twenty-nine districts they were considered satisfactory, more than satisfactory, or too large. In some districts a tendency was noticed to cut up the land shares in order to reduce the impact of the seignorial services, or because of the increase in the number of partners, or the unwillingness to emigrate. Here and there the number of partners is restricted to stop the frittering-away of land.

In some districts shareholders have to take turns and are allotted parcels of land once every two, three, four, or six years. In other areas the size of the allotment remains the same and only the user changes. Sawah shares that have become free are in the case of death allotted to the heir or his replacement or to one of the oldest inhabitants (hereditary owner) who still has no share, or to a newcomer. Sometimes the vacant shares are divided among the other shareholders or rented to the highest bidder or sold on account of the remaining partners. In some districts prospective shareholders must
live in a village for at least three years before they are eligible to share in the land.

The question whether abuses have crept in over the allocation of vacant shares has been answered in the affirmative in some areas. The abuses consist of the allocation of vacant shares by the village head to his own relatives or members of the village council; allocation to the highest bidder; allocation without consulting the other partners; the bribing of the village head ...; the renting of whole complexes for the benefit of the village council; and the selling of shares. Mention must also be made of the "dadal/right", i.e. the right to take away shares because of the refusal to pay taxes and to render seignorial and village services ... Although in the majority of districts where the system of periodical allotment is practised people are not interested in a more permanent form of land ownership, there nevertheless has been an evolution in this direction ... in some other districts the system of periodical division ... has been replaced partly or totally by communal landownership on the basis of permanent shares. The causes that obstruct this evolution are the uneven fertility of the land, the conservatism of the people, the influence of chiefs and officials, and the renting of lands to sugar factories. Favourable factors are the desire to increase productivity and to prevent the corruptive practices of village government. Also the influence of native and European government officials must be mentioned here ...

On land that is permanently owned (individual ownership and communal ownership on the basis of permanent shares) ... the area of land needed for the upkeep of a family varies from 1/1 bouw (Poerbolinggo, Grobongan) to 3 bouws (Limbangan). The availability of land is considered unsatisfactory in twenty-nine districts or parts thereof, and is considered satisfactory or too great in seventy-three districts or parts thereof ... The frittering-away of permanently owned land occurs as the result of inheritance, gifts, or marriages, and also because of sales or pawning. The cutting-up of land is impeded, however, by the taxes resting on the land, which are only bearable when the property is large enough to ensure a profit. As a result sometimes only one of the heirs takes over the property, while the others are paid an indemnity. Sometimes the land is cultivated each year in turn by the heirs, or it is sold and the money is divided.

The accumulation of land in a few hands mostly occurs as a result of sales on the basis of the right to buy the property again, or pawning, sometimes also renting, but seldom by straight-out sales ... The accumulation of land by people from outside the village is checked in some areas by the regulation that they must have a replacement to render services and pay taxation in the villages where they own land.
Against this there is the practice in some regions that a person is only obliged to pay taxes and render services once, irrespective of how many land shares he owns. This, of course, can further the agglomeration of land.

Large landowners are to be found mostly in the Priangan regencies and in a few districts of Ngawi and Djombang. The single ownership of many small parcels of land occurs in Bantam and various districts of Central and East Java ...

The question how long there will be sufficient agrarian land available can only be answered properly after an exact local investigation has been held by experts who are able to take into account all the factors involved ... According to the reports from the districts—in so far as they are reliable in this question—the extension of agricultural land is still possible in thirty-eight districts and not possible in thirty-eight other districts. In most districts it is felt that cheap agricultural credit is the first prerequisite for farmers wishing to start on new reclamations ...

Thrift: the natives are generally not thrifty. The Madurese and Tenggerese, however, show a greater inclination to save than the Javanese. Also women as a rule are more thrifty than men ... Account should be taken, however, of the fact that many do not save in terms of money, but invest in land, cattle, jewelery, boats, nets, etc. Money-saving (because of the introduction of better credit facilities) appears to be slowly on the increase, although not always in a productive manner. In some regions there is still the custom of keeping money in earthenware pots or bamboo cases. Sometimes money is saved for a certain feast or for a rest. An increase in the desire to save was reported in twenty districts or sections thereof and a decline in eight districts. Favourable factors mentioned included plans to reclaim land, the [Mecca] pilgrimage, increasing economic development and security, a better insight into one's own interests, the growing influence of government officials, and the impact of credit services. Unfavourable factors were the growing needs resulting from the expansion of European plantations, the greater opportunity to buy things, improvements in communications etc. ... Capital formation still occurs very seldom among the native population. And although in various districts of the Priangan, in Bantam, and in Paseroean, and in some regional and district centra there are to be found large landowners, traders, chiefs, and other persons who possess considerable capital, in proportion to the total population their number is very small. The capital is again not always held in money but in land, cattle, houses, or rice. It should also not be forgotten that yearly a considerable amount of money is leaving Java on account of the pilgrimage to Mecca. At a conservative estimate the
number of pilgrims could be put at six thousand per annum and if each spends about 400 to 500 guilders, then savings of two and a half to three million guilders are spent annually by the native population...

Money-lending: although the lending of money against interest is forbidden by Islam, most natives gladly lend out money under different pretexts such as sales, pawning, pre-payment, sale with the right of buying back, etc. And although few natives are professional usurers, it is still true that in the village a great deal of money is lent out against usurious interest. The lending conditions vary in accordance with circumstances and the profession of the lender... Usually collateral is demanded to half the value of money advanced. The interest varies from 32 to 100 per cent, and sometimes from 200 to 400 per cent per annum...

Whatever the form of the loan, the borrower usually ends up losing his possessions, because he is unable to repay or rebuy. Farmers usually start by borrowing from other villagers in order to be able to cultivate their sawahs. Repayment is usually in the form of rice. Later, in the months of scarcity before the harvest, an advance is taken on the crop. Furthermore, often I.O.U.s are signed without any understanding of their content and the final result is the alienation of land to the money-lenders... Especially in West Java, but also in other places, this system of usury leads to the accumulation of land in a few hands... It appears that, in the Priangan regencies, of the more than 6000 bouws of land on which money was borrowed, only 970 bouws or 15 per cent were returned to the borrowers. In a district of the region of Bandoeng there are forty-one landowners who together possess more than 2000 bouws of sawahs or an average 53 bouws per head...

It is considered impossible to obtain a reasonably accurate estimate of the state of usury. Such an estimate was attempted in the Priangan regencies, where the data were gathered by a native official who was disguised as a pedlar. It appeared that in that region alone there were 434 known usurers, who had a combined annual turnover of 2,300,000 guilders and 3400 piculs of rice. More than 9000 bouws of land were appropriated by them... European and foreign Oriental money-lenders [i.e. mainly Chinese] demand in the same way as native money-lenders the highest interest rates from the poorest section of the people. It often happens that peddlars and visitors to the markets who borrow 1 guilder in the morning must repay 1.05 guilders in the evening—or twenty-four hours later. It also sometimes happens that a borrower who is unable to fulfil his obligations is only charged with the repayment of the accumulated interest. If the borrower later happens to fall on better times he is again charged, because the interest keeps accumulating.
There was a case in East Java where in this way a borrower was required to pay interest of 520 per cent per annum. The district court dismissed this claim as contravening good public order and morality. The claimant acquiesced in this decision …

The influence of cultural factors on native economic welfare: the general feeling of native officials, traders, and other private persons who were consulted is that the Javanese masses are indeed lazy. This is evident from, or is the result of, the love of pleasure-seeking; of shyness; of weakness of character; or of the lack of courage, insight, self-confidence, and perseverance. Others attribute to the Javanese in addition a lack of forethought and co-operation, a lack of independence, sense of duty, self-control, and trust in his own opinion; or they point to his desire for popularity and prestige, his little interest in saving, the fact that he is quickly satisfied and has only small needs, and his intellectual and material backwardness. Some are of the opinion that the Javanese are not aware, or sufficiently so, of the state of decay in which they live. The reasons forwarded for this decay are despotism, the caste system, class privileges, the usurpations and avarice of the chiefs, the autocracy of the village heads, inequality before the law, and the hormat system [i.e. the customary acts of submission and reverence which the common people were due to perform with respect to the indigenous nobility and other officials]. Other natives seek the cause for the unsatisfactory situation of the people in the existing religious beliefs and the adat, and also in inadequate education and the competition of other races.

Most of the natives who have been consulted are of the opinion that the government and its officials must take the initiative in introducing measures to improve the situation. Some are going very far in this and demand that the government use compulsive methods also in those matters where it hitherto has abstained from any direct interference. Other measures that have been recommended are: sound education at home, education that is character-building and available to all classes of indigenous society; lectures and publications; education in the technical, agricultural, and literary fields and in cottage industries; the development of religious feeling and a religious doctrine which activates people; the emancipation of women; the restriction of polygamy; and the further simplification of the hormat system; easier communication between European and native officials; the abolition of hereditary government and despotism; and an equal and just law for all. Other desires were that regions with sufficient irrigation should be closed for the [European] sugar industry; that irrigation and credit facilities be extended; that the development of native plantations and mining enterprises be encouraged, and that practical information be given to the people about trading and co-operatives …
Early marriages and polygamy: it is customary almost everywhere to marry off children early. The unmarried state is considered by the people as something improper, abnormal, and unnatural. Moreover many parents wish to see their family increase quickly in order to ensure that they are taken care of in their old age. Other causes for early marriages mentioned are: the desire not to leave the children behind uncared for; the shame which many feel about having an adult unmarried daughter at home; the interest of good morals; the desire to receive the customary presents for the wedding-feast; and the conservatism of the Javanese, who in this respect still adhere strictly to the adat.

In Serang (Bantam) the natives argue that it is highly dangerous to have an adolescent virgin or a young widow in the house, because they cause more trouble than a herd of buffaloes. It is also preferred to have young men marry early for reasons of morality and to familiarize them early with responsibilities.

The age at which children are married varies for girls from seven to fifteen years and for boys from fourteen to eighteen or twenty years. Sometimes marriage is only a formality and the partners go and live together when they reach marriageable age. But also sometimes (for example in parts of Bantam) girls from seven to ten years old are completely surrendered to their husbands. Dowries are usually small and in some regions amount to only five guilders, and sometimes even less. Previous consultations about the mutual feelings of the prospective marriage partners occur more frequently among the better-situated families and the nobility than among the poorer sections of the population.

The better-situated families often have their children married early, for example at their eighth year, in order to profit in this way from their situation of prosperity and arrange a better marriage than later, when perhaps this prosperity might have declined ... It was felt in some districts that early marriages were decreasing, particularly among officials and the nobility. In most districts, however, it was reported that the situation in this respect has remained the same or that there was an increase in early marriages. Important factors in this respect are, of course, the struggle for existence, educational development, and the gradual penetration of Western ideas.

What has been said so far is only applicable to first marriages. Far less trouble is taken over later marriages and the interference of parents—if it is there at all—is much less. It can be taken for granted that early marriages often result in divorce and the taking of a second wife.

Polygamy is fairly common among the natives. Many believe that having more than one wife is pleasing to one or other god. Other factors involved are: sensuality, the barrenness of the first wife, a sur-
plus of women, or where the first wife has been forced on a man, who might take the wife of his own choice later. Polygamy occurs most in Serang (Bantam), in the Priangan regencies, Cheribon, Pemalang, Batang, Keboemen, Soemenap, Pamekasan, and Bondowoso, and the incidence is of course greater among the better-situated than among the poorer classes. Polygamy is decreasing among native officials, while village heads usually have two wives. The general impression is that polygamy is decreasing rather than increasing. The factors at work here are a growing feeling of their own worth by women, the struggle for existence, and yet also an increase in the standard of living. And although the number of divorces is decreasing here and there, especially among the higher classes, marriage ties among the lower classes are still far from being solid ...

The term the urge to squander money: this means ... for example, the custom of spending a great deal of money on various religious and other slametans [feasts] given on the occasion of marriage, circumcision, the commemoration of death, etc. Money squandering is considered to have increased in fifteen districts, while in all other (sixty-three) districts it remained the same or was decreasing. Increases were noticed especially in West Java with respect to the use of fireworks in the poeasa (fasting) month, while here and there a greater degree of ostentation was noticed at harvest festivals and at weddings ... The extent of gambling, which mostly occurs secretly, is difficult to estimate. Also in this respect it is felt that only in eighteen districts or sub-districts ... was there an increase, while in fifty-nine districts—or by far the most—the situation was reported as stationary or on the decline ...

The use of opium: it can in general be concluded that there has been a fair decrease in the use of opium after the institution of the government opium monopoly ... and that the usage of opium is generally dependent on economic conditions ... This conclusion is not supported by the Colonial Reports, which show that the use of opium in Java has increased from 735,000 thails [1 thail = 0.05409 kilograms] in 1904 to 870,000 thails in 1912 in spite of the closing-down of a considerable number of shops and dens ...

The consumption of opium is of old the largest in Central Java, in particular in Kediri. In West Java there is hardly any smoking of opium ... In Kediri (and elsewhere) a decrease was noticeable in years of economic depression such as 1901, 1902, and 1903. But when the situation improved in 1904 there was again an increase in the use of opium. Also in Malang the use of opium is very much dependent on the success of the coffee harvest. Little has been reported about the influence of opium-smoking on general
prosperity. It was stated in Grobongan that opium-smoking causes the people in times of economic decline to become quickly exhausted and collapse. In Pati it was felt that the provision of better medical facilities would result in a decline in the use of opium, because many natives with chronic diseases start to smoke opium ...

Conclusion: although the area of arable land exerts an important influence on the general level of economic welfare, other factors also play an important role. Such factors include the nature and fertility of the land; climatic conditions; the incidence of crop failures; the situation with regard to irrigation; cattle stocks; the opportunity to transport produce and earn extra income; and also the personal disposition of the people (diligence, energy, money-wasting, desire to save, etc.).

Considerably varying answers were received to the question whether prosperity was greater in areas where land was available in sufficient or abundant quantities than in areas with little or insufficient land. Almost everything depends here on local conditions ...

The same factors are also of primary importance in judging the question whether the ordinary landowner has the means at his disposal to provide for the needs of his family. In by far the majority of districts one was of the opinion that this question was to be answered in the positive. Negative answers were given with regard to parts of the population in the districts of Anjer, Buitenzorg [Bogor], Poerwokerto, Poerbolinggo, Tjilatjap, Pati, Poerworedjo, Toeban, Sidoardjo, Lamongan, Toeloengagoeng, Besoeki, Pasoeroean, and Probolinggo ...

The poor villagers, whether they are farmers, landless labourers, small traders, or tradesmen, provide for their upkeep by additional work such as coolie labour, peddling, the sale of grass, firewood, and forest produce, and by getting employment in one of the various [Western] plantations. The respectable people among them are usually able to provide sufficiently for their own needs and those of their families.

So far as the general standard of living of the natives in Java is concerned, there are indications that the way of life is becoming more costly. One can point to the increasing consumption of various imported goods, while also from the state of clothing, housing, and nutrition it can be concluded that an increase in the standard of living has taken place. The village women no longer wear ornaments in the form of a rolled-up coconut leaf, but jewelry made of nickel or Berlin silver. Sajur [vegetables] are no longer eaten from native-made earthenware but from Delft plates. The native tailor is now equipped with a Singer sewing machine and is able to deliver within an hour a coat and katok [short pants]. At festive meals one is no
longer content with rice and various sorts of fish and meat, but European canned vegetables are also served, and the tins of Huntley and Palmers can be found in the remotest villages. The flint and tinder have been replaced by matches, and the use of soap is on the increase. Tables, chairs, kerosene lamps, spoons and forks, etc., which formerly were only used by the prijaji or the better-off are now also found in the houses of many villagers ...

This increase in the standard of living is a fairly general phenomenon in Java. Only in four districts or sub-districts was a decline in the standard of living reported (Koenigian, Bodja, Wonesobo, and Magetan), while in six other districts (Cheribon, Madjalenka, Pemalang, Patjitan, Rembang, and Grissee) the situation was reported to have remained stationary. In all the other sixty-six districts an increase in the standard of living was clearly evident.

This increase is mainly attributed to the decline in price of many articles of daily use, the increase in imports, and improvements in communications ... Decreases in the standard of living were attributed to the cutting-up of land into small pieces or the disappearance of one or other plantation industry, which has not been replaced by something else.

It is difficult to find a categorical answer to the question how much the general economic prosperity is influenced by the increase in the standard of living. Against the damage suffered by the native industry from imports of European goods can be put the greater inclination to work that will result from the desire to satisfy the new demands, and the spirit of enterprise that will be stimulated by the contact with other more energetic elements ...

The general impression given by the reports from the districts—taking into account the circumstances under which, after all, the investigation was held—is that economic prosperity has declined in thirteen districts or parts thereof, and that it has increased in thirty-two districts or parts thereof. In the other districts the situation has remained the same ...

The regions where a decline in economic prosperity is considered to have taken place are situated mainly in the Residences of Banjoemas and Kedoe and also in some districts such as Krawang, Batang, Kendal, Toeban; Djombang, Panaroekan, and the district centre of Medioen ...
W. Huender: Survey of the economic conditions of the indigenous people of Java and Madura, 1921

The ... calculation of the Regent of Serang that a family needs 18.43 guilders per month or 221.16 guilders per year to have the same solid nourishment as is provided to state prisoners is, despite its local nature, a welcome piece of recent information. It should hardly be necessary to repeat that the foundations ... on which these sorts of calculations are based are always shaky.

It was calculated that the Sundanese, Javanese, or Madurese farmer gains yearly 103 guilders from his land and 30 guilders from his yard, if he possesses one. Almost all his available time and that of his family is needed for the cultivation and upkeep of his land and yard. So, if he is able to earn something extra, it can never be very much. Perhaps the hard-working family may have the opportunity to earn some additional income by helping others with planting or harvesting, labouring, cottage industry, trade, or keeping cattle or chickens. How much additional income would such a family be able to earn? According to ... data obtained in 1903 from sixty-four families in the Residency of Semarang ... the average yearly earnings per family were upwards of 17.50 guilders. This figure, which was only valid for a small part of the Javanese population and which is now comparatively dated, may now on a rough estimate well be increased to 25 guilders for the whole of Java and Madoera ... According to this estimate the average annual income of the Javanese peasant would be $103 + 30 + 25 = 158$ guilders. In Central Java this should also be the normal income of those who hold the land on the basis of hereditary tenure, while in large parts of West Java it will be less and in East Java more, although not significantly ... 

Although at a guess three-fifths of the indigenous population of Java and Madoera are exclusively engaged in agriculture, there are still two-fifths who earn their living in an entirely different way. There are few people who live entirely from grazing stock or trading. And with a few exceptions such as a Javanese batik establishment in the principalities which has a yearly turnover of 700,000 guilders and a profit of 50,000 guilders, industries that provide the main source of livelihood are almost entirely in the hands of Europeans, Chinese, or Arabs.

It has been calculated or assumed ... that all those who are engaged in activities other than agriculture are earning the same as coolies in Western enterprises ... According to the Colonial Report of 1920 the daily wages of a coolie in a factory or plantation vary from thirty to fifty-four cents. Taking the regional averages, then, the average daily wage for the whole of Java and Madoera would almost stand at forty cents. Assuming that a coolie in a Western
enterprise stays away from work only on Sundays—although in reality absenteeism is often considerably higher—the total annual income should be upwards of 125 guilders. Adding the extra earnings of a coolie’s family, which are roughly 45 guilders, the two-fifths of the Indonesian people who have no land rights will have an annual average income of 170 guilders.

Based on these averages, the total average annual income of the whole of the population will be ... 161 guilders. Comparing this figure with the calculation of Heyting (50.15 guilders [in 1885 and 1889], Sollewijn Gelpke (110 guilders [in 1901]), van Deventer (80 and 100 guilders [in 1904 and 1913]), and Steinmetz (122 guilders [in 1912]), a significant increase appears to have occurred ...

Has the rise in income kept pace with the rise in living costs? The Report of the commission to legally determine minimum wages of labourers in Java and Madoera of 1920 estimates the daily living expenditure at 1.25 to 1.40 guilders or 450 to 560 guilders per year for a coolie family that still has some extra income from land, and at 1.40 to 1.70 guilders or 505 to 630 guilders per annum for families that draw their income from land. Taking the calculations (221.16 guilders) of the Regent of Serang as a basis, one would be inclined to answer the question in the negative in the case of coolie families. The situation is somewhat different for farmers. The needs of peasants are usually small and their living standard low. At least the more orderly families will try to retain the largest possible share of the products they have grown for their own consumption. If the total harvest from sawahs and tegalans is stored, the value of which has been estimated at an average 103 guilders, then such a family, if it lives frugally, will perhaps be able to feed itself. In such a case a family will have at its disposal a sum of 158 minus 103 guilders, that is, 55 guilders, in cash, which will have to last for a whole year to pay for clothing, the upkeep of the house and furniture, etc., but also—and not least—to pay taxes ... Peasant families then, whose net income was estimated by van Deventer in 1904 at thirty-nine guilders, should be able to make ends meet. Price rises, however, of various items of produce, in particular rice, are not necessarily an advantage. An increase in the price of rice means usually that [farmers] now consume a quantity of produce that brings a higher price on the open market. Furthermore, the rise in prices of other goods that have to be bought with the cash balance of fifty-five guilders acts as a disadvantage.

Thus the conclusion must be that Indonesian peasant families can live on their incomes in the same way as in 1904. The fact that their average annual income has risen from 80 guilders to 158 guilders, i.e. by 97.5 per cent, is only meaningful in terms of their net cash income, which has only increased from 39 to 55 guilders per annum.
This is insufficient to compensate for the rise in the cost of living.

So the situation of these peasant families has either remained the same or has deteriorated, but in no case, even with a rise in income of 97.5 per cent, has it improved. It has been argued that in contrast probably to coolie households, peasant families in Java and Madura with a reasonable amount of land at their disposal must be able to make ends meet if they do not sell their crops but keep them in storage. However, such a family must not be hit by accidents such as diseases, bad harvests, floods, fire, or theft. One wonders how many families there are in such a fortunate position. The smallest misfortune, the least miscalculation, will upset the family budget and force the head of the family forever into the grip of the money-lender. In such a case the produce must usually be sold after the harvest for low prices in order to satisfy the demands of the money-lender. To finance the upkeep of his family, the land-owning peasant either gets himself ever more deeply into debt or hires himself out as a labourer ...

Underlying the Western measures taken in Java during the last fifty years to increase the prosperity of the people, there almost always was the assumption that the Indonesian was motivated primarily by economic considerations and that out of enlightened self-interest he would react to new stimuli. This assumption has been proved wrong at various times ... There are ties of a non-economic nature that caused the people to stick to the existing situation, and to remain immune to economic stimuli. The people also feel—probably instinctively—whether a new measure will endanger the existing social fabric or not. Moreover there is the fact that people in the tropics, such as the Sundanese, the Javanese, and the Madurese, usually act in ways called lazy and indolent by Westerners. Sometimes this is attributed to the native system of production, which is designed to produce only as much as is needed by a certain group of people, and sometimes the reason is the impact of climatic conditions. This lessens the living requirements of the people, and increases the means to satisfy these needs without too much effort; it also has a repressive effect on the social needs, i.e. those needs that do not flow from the personal desires of the individual but are in accordance with the general rules of society.

Thus it must be the task of the Western measures to create, if possible, individual and social needs and stimuli, and to try to change the mentality of the Oriental. There is ample evidence that the people ... are far from "lazy" when it comes to matters they consider important and useful. As long as this interest (be it rightly or wrongly) is lacking, attempts by the government to compel the people will have no effect. And yet this is how things were tackled after 1830 when, owing to his lack of interest in producing for the world
market, it was concluded that the Javanese would only work under compulsion. Later the same mentality often persisted and matters such as credit facilities and co-operatives on a Western basis were often pushed too hastily. Obviously these difficulties and disappointments can only be prevented when the government is aware of the real feelings and desires of the Indonesians.

Self-expression and auto-activity are the only way to ensure the welfare programme a chance of success eventually. It is well known, however, how in Java and Madoera things were really done; how a village even today is often forced to agree to and to act in accordance with the wishes of the controleur ... In spite of all these difficulties one can think of many government measures that will be of economic benefit to the people. The heavy pressure of direct taxes should be alleviated, tariffs on imports should be lowered, [the people]should be given the free disposal of their labour, and seigniorial services should be abolished in areas where people can work for wages. More roads, railways, and irrigation works should be constructed; the harm done [to the native economy] by the Western sector of the economy should be ameliorated, and ample amounts of currency should be circulated. Such measures must be of benefit to Indonesians, even though their ideas are different from ours and the stimuli and needs that characterize Westerners are lacking ...

The available statistics are often not very exact, and in many respects the situation in various regions of Java and Madoera is not comparable. This makes it very difficult to present a picture of the economic conditions of the indigenous population that is realistic in all details, and to make a reliable comparison between the present and the past. Yet a few general conclusions can be made and these can be summarized as follows.

The main field of economic activity in Java and Madoera is still what it has been since time immemorial: agriculture. The proportion of farmers to non-farmers has changed since 1905 in favour of the latter. Both sections of the population, however, show a considerable increase. The acreage of land in use by the people was sufficiently increased to cope with the population increase, partly because of the employment of Indonesians in the industrial sector. The number of irrigated sawahs—which consist of first-grade land—increased considerably, unless this increase is caused by the inclusion of lands cultivated in earlier times but not registered. The average land yields, however, remained stationary or decreased a little. It is doubtful whether cattle stocks have kept up with the population increase. If they did, this increase was attributable mainly to the eastern residencies where the number of cattle increased to such an extent as to compensate for the regression ... elsewhere in Java. In
any case the number and quality of horses is declining. This does not seem to be caused by the extension of railways and tramways. The fishing industry only provides a precarious and moderate income. Indigenous industry has nowhere developed strongly, and is usually very small. The Indonesians have for the most part been pushed out from the trading and shipping sector by the Chinese, Arabs, and Europeans. An Indonesian middle class that could act as the backbone of society is lacking. The few large indigenous landowners or capitalists do not form an integral part of the total indigenous economy.

All this would not be so important if only the many Western plantations provided the population with compensating benefits. But this is not the case. The sugar industry is disadvantageous to Indonesians who have land rights; and the wages it pays to Indonesian workers are, if sufficient to live on, certainly “minimum wages”. The cultivation of indigo is dying out. Tobacco cultivation provides considerable advantages to a part of the population in the principalities, Pasoeroean, and Besoeki, although abuses are not entirely absent there. The other, often more recently established, plantation enterprises pay very low wages. And even if wage increases have occurred or are taking place, there is still the question whether these rises are keeping up with increases in price of the people’s necessities of life.

On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that the Western plantations as a whole provide the population with more advantages than would have come its way if these enterprises had not been established in Java … While the average yearly income of Indonesians in the whole of Java and Madoera amounts to about 161 guilders, there are strong deviations in various parts of both islands. From this yearly income the Treasury takes an average 13.50 guilders or 8.3 per cent in money taxes. If services rendered in labour and land are shown in money terms, the amount of taxation increases to 22.50 guilders or 13.2 per cent of the total income … Such data have led to very divergent conclusions. Hasselman [see document 11] concluded in 1914 that “the prosperity of Java was increasing rather than declining”. Van Kol writes in his book *The Netherlands-Indies in the States-General*, which was published in 1911, about “emaciated regions”, “a destitute colony”, “physical decline of people and cattle”, and he was hardly less pessimistic in the First Chamber of Parliament of 17 March 1921 … Whether the assertion in 1902 about a “decline” in the economic conditions of the people of Java was correct or fictitious can not be answered because of the lack of … comparative material from the end of the nineteenth century.

The taxes paid by the people do not show a healthy natural increase. This must be attributed to the fact that there has been no im-
provement in economic conditions. Land rent ... amounted to 17,700,000 guilders in the first years after 1883 and in the period 1917-20 to about 21,500,000 guilders. Moreover part of this increase is due to the registration of land which earlier were secretly cultivated. The old trades tax to be paid by Indonesians, which in 1920 was amalgamated with the general income tax, yielded in 1880 in Java and Madoera 1,860,000 guilders, even less in the period 1908-13, and in the years 1914-18 an average of upwards of 2,000,000 guilders ...

It is disquieting that taxation is not increasing more. Stagnation, considering the considerable population increase means in this instance regression. On the other hand it is impossible to maintain that the indigenous population is not taxed heavily enough. Taking account of the low capacity of the people to pay the contrary is rather the case; and present plans to have the people pay even more (for example by increasing the head tax and the land rent) can only make one shudder. In fact the most difficult and pressing problem in Java and Madoera is that, while the people have been taxed to the utmost limit and are "minimum sufferers", apparently the various government measures taken to improve the situation have not been effective. The people themselves, however much they might have been "awakened" in their thinking and feelings, have shown so far very little economic initiative of their own. All that is noticeable here and there is action for higher wages. On the other hand it should be realized that the government, which was forced to run in on a large backlog within a short time, has only been able to realize its plans in part. And so, for example, measures relating to public security, education, public health, and the improvement of Indonesian agriculture and industry, are as yet only in the beginning stage. It also seems as if various measures taken during the last fifteen years are gradually beginning to show results. However, the lack of an Indonesian middle class ... remains alarming.

The final conclusion then must be: the Indonesians of Java and Madoera earn more than previously and, comparatively speaking, they pay less taxation than before. But because of the rise in prices of essential goods they enjoy little benefit from this situation, because they are left with too little cash in hand to pay for their upkeep. Government help to improve their economic situation is necessary and must especially be directed at stimulating and reinforcing their economic initiative and desire for economic independence.

W. Huender, Overzicht van den economischen toestand der inheemsche bevolking van Java en Madoera ("Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1921), pp. 138-42, 204-7, 243-47.
J.H. Boeke: Budget studies in various parts of Java, 1924-25

1. Samin of Tjiterep (North Banten)

Samin is forty-three years old and lives in the desa Tjiterep, heading a family of seven adults. His wife is thirty-nine years old. He has two sons of twenty-six and twenty-four years, a daughter of twenty-one years. Then there is his son-in-law of twenty-five years and his father of sixty-five years.

Except for a yard of ½ bouw on which the house is situated, the family has no land of its own. However, it share-crops 2 bouw of sawah salah mangsa (to be cultivated during the eastern monsoon) and 3½ bouw of sawah darat (which depends on normal rainfall). Half of the yard has been planted with cucumber. Furthermore, the men work as coolies; fruit is sold and a cart is rented out. The family owns four horses, two buffaloes, and two sheep, and has contracted a debt of 42.50 guilders. In terms of desa services each man has to carry out guard duty once per week and has to work on the road and irrigation ditches once per month. During the year investigated (September 1924 to August 1925), the four horses died in February and March and both sheep in May. In November a grandson was born, while in June the grandfather died. These events did not involve any monetary transactions. The family suffered a great deal of sickness (in total twelve months). There was a good harvest.

Because of the great variety of work the family earns a money income throughout the whole of the year. The most prosperous months are August, September, and October. In August the men earned 44.40 guilders in coolie wages. During September and October a profit of 12.85 guilders was made of the sale of sawoh [fruit] and 14.40 guilders on renting out the cart. There was another 7 guilders in coolie wages in October and 12.50 guilders was made from the sale of rice. So in October Samin was able to buy a new buffalo for 58.50 guilders. In contrast June and July were rather bleak months with a money income of only 7.40 guilders and 5.20 guilders for coolie work. Only between August and November and February and March was it necessary to buy rice.

Despite all the adversity, this family was able to manage. In December 1924 ten guilders were spent on a slametan [feast], probably in connection with the birth of the grandson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guilders %</td>
<td>guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food 131.15  76.2</td>
<td>Sale of rice 38.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light 8.51  4.9</td>
<td>Sale of atap/bamboo 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>13.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and furniture</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>10.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>33.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase buffalo</td>
<td>58.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>264.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure in more detail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>60.66</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn, cassava, peanuts</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Matches</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets and accessory dishes</td>
<td>10.28</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Head tax</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Planting costs</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Seedlings</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish and meat</td>
<td>24.69</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>Fertilizer</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coffee, tea, etc.</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Sawoh</td>
<td>19.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and sirih</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>131.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Nadi of Madjalaja (Central Priangan)**

Nadi, who is forty-five years old, is a small trader (called dagang blantikan in this area) and lives in the desa Madjalaja (district of Bandoeng). He does not own any land but only a house built of timber with a tiled roof. For the year of investigation (running from July 1924 to June 1925) he did not pay any taxes.

His family consisted of his wife, a son of fifteen years and a granddaughter of three years. Nothing extraordinary happened during the year.

The Nadi family did not contract any loans and the income from the little business, into which there was an average daily investment in goods of 1.83 guilders, steadily came in every day. The normal items of food such as rice (31 cents), salt (1.5 cents), fish (5.5 cents), firewood (4.5 cents), and tobacco and sirih (2 cents), were bought and paid for daily. Every two, three or four days kerosene was bought at an average of 3 cents per time.
The small business made a profit of 178.50 guilders, which was sufficient to keep the family in food, fuel, and lighting for the whole year. The running capital totalled from 2.50 to 3 guilders; only once (9 October) were purchases made to the value of 9 guilders; and only once, on 12 July, of 4 guilders. The capital was kept so small because of the daily balancing between expenditure and income.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>150.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>19.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent for yard</td>
<td>11.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>652.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>838.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure in more detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>113.13</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>Firewood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Total 19.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Purchase of goods 640.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
<td>18.01</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>Other 12.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136.28</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>Total 652.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea, etc.</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and sirih</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150.05</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Moernasan of Bandjaran (Central Priangan)

Moernasan of the desa Bandjaran, district of Bandoeng, is forty-five years old and lives in his own yard in his own house, which has a tiled roof. His family in addition to his wife consists of an elder sister and her mother and two grandchildren, nine and six years old. The eldest one attends the local vernacular primary school. Moernasan is a farmer and owns 332 r² sawah classed from fourth to sixth grade and 2.124 bouw dry land classed from third to sixth grade. On the sawah he cultivates rice mainly for his own consumption; on the tegalan he cultivates cassava and second crops such as chilis etc., mainly for commercial purposes. There are various fruit trees in his yard and some bamboo. The female members of his family make bamboo rice cookers, baskets, and other kitchen utensils. Furthermore, he owns
three chickens and twenty-four chicks. Two *menoempang* [landless villagers] have built houses in the yard; they do not pay him any rent but probably help him on the farm.

At the beginning of the year under investigation (July 1924) Moernasan has a loan from the district bank of 50 guilders which has to be repaid as a lump sum. He does this in September and has to pay 55.25 guilders, which was made possible because he had received a lump sum of 65 guilders for the sale of produce from his *tegalan*. In the next month (October) he again borrows 50 guilders from the district bank (it is not possible to determine from the account what he has used this loan for).

No unusual expenditure is shown during the next few months and whenever the sale of produce from *sawah*, *tegalan*, or yard or of the bamboo wickerwork was not sufficient to cover the normal household expenses, small loans were made by other villagers (between 1 and 5 guilders), which were paid back later in the year. Although there is a large number of sales recorded of produce from the yard and *tegalan*, and from the wickerwork (there were 82, 61, and 62 entries respectively), the amounts of money involved were always small. So in some months (May, July, and August) monetary income is only around 6 guilders, and although expenditure in these months is adapted as much a possible to the level of income, these attempts are not always successful. Moreover the cost of living for this family of four adults is rather low. Rather conspicuously, under none of the categories of this group are there daily entries. The entries for meat and fish and for drinks, respectively numbering 280 and 288, are the most frequent ones. Still, with the exception of meat and fish and rice, none of the categories shows an average expenditure higher than 5.5 cents per entry; most entries, including those for fuel and lighting, are not higher than 3 cents. Rice was only bought during seven months (September-January, March and April—in September and January to a value of about 2.50 guilders, in December and March for about 10 guilders, and in the other months for a little less than 5 guilders.

So far as taxation is concerned, it should be noticed that in the year investigated Moernasan has not paid any of the land rent he is due to pay for his *sawah*—2.25 guilders—and his *tegalan*—2.77 guilders. Also the head tax amounting to 3.87 guilders has not been completely paid.

Income is considerably higher than expenditure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sawah</em> produce</td>
<td>33.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tegalan</em> produce</td>
<td>188.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clothing, etc. 31.41 19.8  Yard produce 22.88
House and furniture 4.49 2.8  Eggs, etc. 2.14
Sickness 0.21 0.1  Wickerwork 17.84
Education 5.05 3.2  Various 0.10
Feasts 3.85 2.4  Total 265.03
Transport — —  Loans 76.20
Taxes 8.69 5.5  Total 341.23

Total 159.23
Running costs 25.90
Repayment loans 85.40
Total 270.53

Expenditure in more detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>39.81</th>
<th>39.3</th>
<th>Matches</th>
<th>0.18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn, cassava,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peanuts</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and sweets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Head tax</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
<td>30.21</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>Buying off village service</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea, etc.</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and sirih</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wages</td>
<td>18.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seed</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fertilizer</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Pa Tasnjan of Kalibakoeng (Tegal)

Pa Tasnjan is forty-five years old and lives in the desa Kalibakoeng in the district of Slawi, a mountainous area in the area of Tegal. He possesses three building plots. On one of these, measuring 34 r₂, his house is situated; it has a tiled roof and brick pillars. The second plot, measuring 62 r₂, is inhabited by two pondoks [landless peasants] who only have houses made of bamboo with atap [split bamboo] roofs. The third plot measures 16 r₂ and has a house similar to his own that he has put at the disposal of a younger brother. In addition Pa Tasnjan owns a tegalan classed as fifth grade and measuring 274 r₂. He has to pay 1.35 guilders land rent for his total holdings.

The family of Pa Tasnjan consists of his wife, his daughter of about twenty years, and his younger brother, about twenty-two years
old. So there are four adults. Cassava is cultivated on the tegalan and between the rows watermelons are grown. In the yards there are a few coconut trees and other fruit trees and four clusters of bamboo.

In February 1925 Pa Tasnjan borrowed 60 guilders from the district bank, apparently offering his land as collateral ...

There were only forty-one entries for money income, of which thirteen were concerned with loans and gifts. Only during 184 days of the year of the year (18 August 1924 to July 1925) was money spent, but during 131 of these days the total amount of money spent was below 10 cents ... The days when larger sums were spent coincide without exception with the receipt of money income, which was spend immediately or within a few days, usually on food and kerosene. In the case of larger earnings the money was also used to take coconut trees out of pawn; the buying of bamboo chairs (7 guilders); repayment of debts (2.34 guilders); the purchase of jewelry (19 guilders) and clothing (4.10 guilders); and the payment of divorce costs (2 guilders). The final account of the monetary transactions of the Tasnjan family is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal expenditure</td>
<td>Normal income</td>
<td>59.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking out of pawn</td>
<td>Loan district bank</td>
<td>60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayment debt</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking out of pawn of coconut trees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase bamboo chairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>82.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that income was also increased by the sale of chickens (25 guilders), which of course reduced the money-earning capacity of the family, and the fact that no taxation was paid during the year do not have to be taken account of because they are compensated for by an increase in the value of the family’s property in the form of jewels (19 guilders) and bamboo chairs (7 guilders).

In summary it must be concluded that this particular family can only be said not to have declined economically if at the end of the year (1 August 1925) it still had about forty guilders in hand of the loan contracted the previous February with the district bank. If, as is probably the case, this is not so then the particular loan has not been financially beneficial to the Tasnjan family—this is apart from the difficult problem of saving up the sixty guilders plus interest in adverse economic conditions ...
5. Pa Nawijah of Bedji (Pemalong)

Pa Nawijah is fifty years old and lives in the desa Bedji, in the district of Pemalong. His family in addition to his wife comprises a son of twenty-five years and his wife, a son of twenty years, and two girls of ten and six years: so there are five adults and two children.

Pa Nawijah himself works on his yard of 62 r², which also contains his house, and on 1 bouw of sawah, which is his communal share. The eldest son drives the dogcar [horsedrawn carriage], which is hired out for passenger transport. The second son is not permanently employed and was married during the course of the year.

Pa Nawijah has to pay the following taxes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land rent for the sawah</td>
<td>15.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land rent for the yard</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water rights</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head tax</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.88</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the income figures it is clear that the family tries to earn money in all sorts of ways, but the major income-earner is the dogcar business. This was started in June 1924 when a dogcar and two horses were bought from a Chinese for 400 guilders; 150 guilders were to be paid down and the rest was to be paid off in monthly instalments of 10 guilders. However, Pa Nawijah was not able to get together these 150 guilders completely and so he obtained a loan from the district bank for 50 guilders to be paid back in monthly instalments of 5 guilders.

In the beginning everything went well but in December the trouble started when one of the horses became sick and the dogcar could only be taken out every two days. As a result income fell from 50 guilders to 25 guilders. Then an amount of 42.50 guilders was borrowed from the pawn shop to pay off the full debt to the Chinese. During January the earnings from the dogcar fell to 20 guilders and at the end of that month again an amount of 45 guilders was borrowed from the pawn shop. Foreseeing more deficits, Pa Nawijah decides to pay the last two instalments to the district bank at once in order to obtain further credit. On 3 March ¼ bouw sawah was sold in tebasan [i.e. with the rice crop on it] for 22 guilders, and 10.13 guilders was paid to the bank. Seventeen days later he had a new loan from the bank of 50 guilders.

The poesasa [fasting] month arrived with its extra expenditure and feasting. New clothing had to be bought (10 guilders); a slametan had to be given (2.44 guilders); pawned goods had to be retrieved
(24.80 guilders); and horse rigging had to be renewed (2 guilders). The horses were worked as much as possible every day. To have more cash in hand, P. Nawijah rented out ¼ bouw of sawah for 15 guilders, and some jewelry was pawned for 11 guilders. During May the dogcar was working every day, although income was declining, but in June the horses were sick again. On 10 June one horse was sold for 14 guilders and the income from the dogcar business fell to 13 guilders. In July it climbed to 20 guilders, but this amount was still too small because the feed for one horse already cost almost 10 guilders ...

Looking at it superficially, the Nawijah family seems to have done well economically, because net income surpasses expenditure by 110 guilders. However, if it is taken into account that the capital investment producing the major part of this income has strongly declined in value and therefore the opportunity to earn future income is very much diminished, our final conclusion must be different.

### Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>93.35</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>Sale of djahe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>19.16</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>Sale of ginger</td>
<td>9.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>12.70</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>Sale of leaves</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and furniture</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Sale of fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>bamboo</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Sale of chickens</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Sale of eggs</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Tebasan ¾ sawah</td>
<td>22.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>137.43</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Renting ¼ sawah</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>216.74</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dogcar business</td>
<td>408.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>354.17</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wages</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>468.74</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sale of horse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pawns retrieved</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>502.74</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenditure in more detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>13.60</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>Matches</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup vegetables</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>17.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes</td>
<td>11.73</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
<td>16.27</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.89</strong></td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>horse:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea, etc.</td>
<td>12.07</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and sirih</td>
<td>14.39</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>Shoeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>93.35</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feed</td>
<td>196.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medicine 0.70
Upkeep dogcar 9.90
Wages 3.60
Purchase of one chicken 0.70
Total 216.74

6. Tamin of Ledok (Pekalongan)

Tamin lives in the desa Ledok, which is close to Pekalongan. He is a shoemaker, twenty-five years old, married but childless. As a shoemaker he has a fairly regular income. He did not spend anything on housing and furniture during the whole year, while he only spent 0.10 guilders on clothing and 0.15 guilders on transport. During the year the only extra expenses were for a slametan in November, costing 20.04 guilders but which netted 10 guilders, and in March 1925 for sickness of his wife (7.50 guilders). Otherwise his expenditure was for food, fuel, and lighting and, considering the smallness of the family, consisting only of two adults, costs varied little, moving between 14 and 18 guilders, with the exception of the month of June 1925 when economy measures brought down expenditure to 10.13 guilders.

In this case all conditions seem to be present to prevent the need for credit. Still the family is continuously involved in credit transactions, mainly for the purpose of balancing the budget, as is clear from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Income without loans</th>
<th>Expenditure without loans</th>
<th>Loans</th>
<th>Repayments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guilders</td>
<td>guilders</td>
<td>guilders</td>
<td>guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1924</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>14.76</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>16.15</td>
<td>14.08</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>16.52</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>12.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>22.25</td>
<td>34.47</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>19.65</td>
<td>18.28</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1925</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>16.42</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>17.15</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>16.70</td>
<td>28.14</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>25.40</td>
<td>18.29</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>13.35</td>
<td>17.41</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>9.75</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>198.70</td>
<td>Total 215.10</td>
<td>Total 66.65</td>
<td>Total 52.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tamin’s credit transactions are harmful to him because expenditure exceeds income by 16.40 guilders and at the end of the year he is burdened with an extra debt of 13.83 guilders ...

7. Wardi of Pontjol (Pekalongan)

Wardi lives in the desa of Pontjol near Pekalongan and works in a batik enterprise as koeltie ngjetiap [printer] earning 1 guilder per day, which is paid to him every day. His wife is a batik-maker but seldom works as such. They have one son of sixteen years, who still lazes about receiving daily spending money from 5 to 10 cents (which totals 23.04 guilders per year and is shown in the budget under accessory dishes).

Wardi owns a simple house on a plot of 27 $r^2$. The atap roof, when in need of repairs, is fixed by his father, and so no expenditure is shown on the budget for housing. He is to pay 0.60 guilders land rent, 2.60 guilders head tax and 3.60 guilders income tax. However, in the period under investigation (July 1924 to June 1925), he does not pay any tax with the exception of 1.50 guilders as pitrah [gift at the end of the fast].

Wardi’s situation is the opposite to Tamin’s (see previous budget) in that he is evidently able to save up for extraordinary expenses, and only has to borrow in exceptional circumstances. Apparently he does not like borrowing. On 15 July he pawned a kain [batik cloth] for 1.50 guilders, but afterwards felt that he would rather sell a table for 3.50 guilders; he retrieved the kain for 1.53 guilders. These transactions cost him two days in wages, as he stayed away from work. In July and August he repaid 4.10 guilders in private loans. But he borrowed no more during the rest of the year ... At the end of the year Wardi had a deficit of 8 guilders ...

8. Kasanmoestari of Pagergoenoeng (Magelang)

Kasanmoestari is fifty-five years old and lives in the desa Pagergoenoeng, sub-district of Grabag, district of Magelang. He owns 94 $r^2$ of sawah on which rice is cultivated and on the best part of his tegalan (34 $r^2$) he grows various sorts of vegetables; another tegalan of 268 $r^2$ is used for grassland, while 12 $r^2$ is planted with bamboo. He has two houses with a yard measuring 114 $r^2$. He has to pay 1.11 guilders in land rent.

His family consists of his wife, a son of seventeen years, who helps his father, and two daughters of ten and fourteen years, of whom the elder cuts grass and the younger is not yet permanently employed. He owns three cows.
Pagergoenoeng is a mountain desa where people own a great many cattle, mainly used to produce fertilizer. The desa is situated about 4 paal [approximately 4 miles] from the large market in Grabag. There are no Western plantations in the region where extra money can be earned. The desa itself has a market that is not of great importance.

The Kasanmoestari family obtains most of its food from its own land. In the months of October and November 3.95 guilders and 1.26 guilders were spent to purchase cassava, corn, and rice. In the same months sums of 1 guilder and 3.20 guilders were spent on repairs to the house, which caused a considerable drain on cash. Kasanmoestari borrowed 10.50 guilders privately, which covered the small financial deficits during the remainder of the year. He was able to satisfy normal money demands by periodical sales of agricultural produce ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>20.93</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>Sawah produce</td>
<td>31.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and lighting</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>Yard produce</td>
<td>11.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation of produce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewellery</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and furniture</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>Sale of chickens and eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>56.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure in more detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn, cassava, peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes, sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tea, etc. 1.54 7.4  
Tobacco and sirih 1.54 7.4  
Total 20.93

9. Hadji Abdoelgapoer of Kalipoetjoeng (Blitar)

Hadji Abdoelgapoer is about fifty years old and lives in the desa Kalipoetjoeng in the district of Blitar. He is a farmer and sugar-grower; runs a horse cab business and repair shop; lets houses and rents out furniture; and also runs the village lighting system. He holds 3 bouw of communal sawah, 14' bouw of tegalan, ten houses, eighteen cows, fourteen horses, seven cabs, and a steel sugar cane crusher. Furthermore, he has rented 1 bouw tegal for two years.

Hadji Abdoelgapoer is a village patriarch. His family, in addition to his wife, comprises fifteen children, grandchildren, and relatives; of these six are adults (fifteen to thirty years) and nine are children (three to thirteen years). In addition he employs seven young fellows as cab drivers. He has to pay 57 guilders in income tax and 65 guilders in land rent.

In June and July 1925 he planted 6 bouw of tegalan with sugar cane, and in November 1924 made a share-cropping arrangement for 6 bouw of corn. During the year investigated he harvested 6 bouw of sugar cane, but 3 bouw of corn had failed.

His stock increased by two calves, one cow, and two horses (the latter having been bought respectively for 190 and 80 guilders). Furthermore he took 160 coconut trees as collateral at 2.50 guilders per tree, and he installed a petrol pump for 108 guilders. Including the income gained from property added during the year, Hadji Abdoelgapoer considers that during the year investigated he has become 1070 guilders richer in earthly goods. The following table of income and expenditure shows a surplus of 59.75 guilders, which resulted from the following transactions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paid more into the district bank than borrowed</td>
<td>204.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid out more to private individuals than borrowed</td>
<td>215.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bought more land than he sold</td>
<td>360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took land out of pawn</td>
<td>280.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took goods out of pawn</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1159.75</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting, considering the size of the family, that the expenditure on food does not differ very much from that of the common villager. Finally it must be admitted that Hadji Abdoelgapoer was
unwilling to give complete and detailed information about his income and expenditure ...

10. Pa Marsidin of Patemon (Pamekasan)

Pa Marsidin is fifty years old and lives in the desa Patemon situated in the city of Pamekasan in the middle of a number of smithies. The station of the Madoera tram is situated in this desa, from where most of the drivers of hire cabs originate.

The family of Pa Marsidin consists of his wife and a daughter. He is himself already too old to work and his wife sells rudjak [spiced fruit salad garnished with chili], the ingredients for which are bought by the daughter in the market. Their house, constructed of timber with a tiled roof, stands on the land of a relative. Pa Marsidin does not own any cattle and he does not have to pay any taxes. During the whole year nothing is spent on clothing, the house or furniture, sickness, feasts, or transport. The family does not borrow money.

Money comes in every day and is spent every day ... The daily expenditure on ingredients is never higher than 0.50 guilders and with this capital, plus the labour of both women, the family’s income is produced; this averages 0.22 guilders per day. Even this amount is not totally used by these three adults. They live on an average of 0.18 guilders per day: 5 cents for rice, 4 to 4.5 cents for corn, 2 cents for additional food, 1 cent for salt, 2 cents for tobacco or sirih, 2 cents for firewood and 1 cent for kerosene, and they probably eat the remainder of the rudjak ...

11. Soerodiasstro of Kraton (Madioen)

Soerodiasstro is tjarak [clerk] of the desa of Kraton in the sub-district of Maospati in the district of Madioen. His family in addition to his wife consists of a son of eighteen years, a daughter of eight years, and two grandchildren of thirteen and eleven years. The son helps on the farm, while the grandchildren tend the stock.

Soerodiasstro holds 4 bouw ex officio and shares 2 bouw of sawah. He has let 3½ bouw to the sugar factory and on the remaining 2½ bouw he has planted rice (2 bouw) and cassava (½ bouw). His yard measures a bouw and contains his house, a kitchen, a rice barn, and a cow shed. Furthermore, coconuts, cassava, rice, and pisang [banana] are cultivated in the yard.

Soerodiasstro has to pay 29 guilders in land rent. His income is fairly regular. His sawah produces income during ten months (no income in February and April), the largest amount being in August (62 guilders) and the lowest in October (0.75 guilders), and in the other
months it fluctuates between 7.75 guilders (September) and 23 guilders (June). In February he makes 17 guilders out of produce from the yard, in March 1 guilder and in July 3 guilders. As a committee member of the desa bank he is paid between 1 and 1.30 guilders per week, while his job as tjariik also brings in money regularly, the largest amount in April (15.50 guilders) ... In October the sugar factory pays him 120 guilders for land rented.

The Soerodiastro family only has to spend little on food. In March 1925, 16.25 guilders were spent on food and 5.13 guilders on fuel and kerosene. In the other months food expenditure did not rise above 5 guilders, while in June only 2.55 guilders were spent and in November a minimum of 1.52 guilders. In the other months, with the exception of March, only around 1.70 guilders were spent on fuel and kerosene. Purchases of rice occur only in March, and of corn, peanuts, and cassava only between January and April. Only accessory food dishes are bought almost daily, while kerosene is bought every second day.

Here again is a case where credit is used solely as a means to balance temporary deficits and to pay off loans, especially those given by the district bank. During the year there are two entries in the budget for repayments to the district bank amounting respectively to 37.63 and 37.30 guilders. In order to meet the first payment a loan of 20 guilders is obtained from the desa bank and a loan of 10 guilders from the pawn shop. For the second payment 45 guilders are borrowed from the pawn shop.

Soerodiastro apparently likes parties; and the way he handles money can also be gauged from the expenditure on jewelry. The family is still largely living in a self-sufficient economy, although, comparatively speaking, it also has an ample money income.

In November Soerodiastro received 40 guilders as a debt payment, so he also shares his abundance with others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>guliders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>Sawah produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>23.30</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Yard produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>56.35</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>Land rented out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>to factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Wages desa bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>197.25</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>Wages tjariik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>37.20</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>380.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>59.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>440.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expenditure in more detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>30.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn, cassava, peanuts</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>26.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Landrent</td>
<td>34.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Pitrah</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matches</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>18.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Soemominhat of Poerworedjo (Madioen)

Soemominhat of the desa Poerworedjo (sub-district of Oeterna in the district of Madioen) is a share-cropper of 2 bouw of sawah on which rice is cultivated in the western monsoon, with second crops in the eastern monsoon.

Soemominhat does not have his own yard but lives on one owned by a relative. He is also allowed to sell the produce grown in the yard and therefore has to pay land rent to the amount of 1.51 guilders. He also has to pay land rent of 1.59 guilders on the particular part of the sawah he is cultivating. His family comprises his wife, who from time to time earns some money selling native medicines, and four children aged fifteen, thirteen, seven, and one. The eldest daughter works whenever possible, earning a daily wage of 10 to 25 cents. In October she worked in the sugar factory for fifteen cents per day, which can be considered a normal wage.

There is a regular income from the sawah and the yard during most of the year; rice is sold in April and June, peanuts in March, and cassava in September and November ...

Although Soemominhat has his own rice, this commodity is regularly bought from January to September. In April 80 cents worth of cassava is purchased. In May 2.50 guilders worth of corn is bought, partly instead of rice (3 guilders). In August cassava is purchased (4 guilders), partly in addition to and partly to replace rice (4 guilders), while in October corn and cassava are the only staple foods; during November and December only cassava is used (5 and 6 guilders). Only during these three months when cassava is the main staple food are accessory food dishes bought. Salt and kerosene are bought monthly ...
The family makes ends meet without the regular use of credit. Only once, in November, were goods (worth 25 guilders) retrieved from the pawn shop, but no money was borrowed during the year. One of the children goes to school at a cost of 0.25 cents per month.

The Soemominhat family is an example of a hard-working farmer's household that manages its finances carefully.

13. Kasanredjo of Sidomoeljo (Madioen)

Kasanredjo lives in the desa of Sidomoeljo in the sub-district of Tjaroeban, district of Madioen. His family comprises in addition to his wife five children from 1 to 9 years old. The eldest goes to school (costs 0.10 per month); the second tends the buffaloes. The youngest three are daughters. In June 1925 another son was born.

Kasanredjo only has the disposal of a yard of 223 r2 and a communal share in a sawah of 200 r2, for which he has to pay 0.70 guilders and 4.29 guilders respectively in land rent. However, in addition he has rented 1 bouw 84 r2 of sawah on the condition that he will pay the 12.31 guilders of land rent incumbent on this land. On his yard there are situated his house, a kitchen, a rice barn, and a shed for his buffalo and one calf. There is a small village bank which issues loans to be paid back within a week and selapan loans (of which a quarter has to be repaid every thirty-five days). Both husband and wife are members of this bank and make use of both kinds of loan provision. The wife, however, stops borrowing after the birth of her son, which is an occasion for relatives and friends to present gifts worth 28.50 guilders and which causes Kasanredjo to spend extra money for sweets, etc. Also in the following months more money is spent on sweets and cakes.

From the statement of income and expenditure one would conclude that the Kasanredjo family has lived above its means. Expenditure exceeds money income by 50 to 60 guilders—although the farm is well managed.

The solution to this anomaly is to be found in the incompleteness of the income statistics. Kasanredjo’s wife in fact received an inheritance from her father’s estate, which during the year was paid to her bit by bit by her brother (who lives in another desa). Kasanredjo did not record this income, perhaps because he was frightened that the village head or other excessively interested parties might hear about it. The inheritance amounted to 90-100 guilders, which in the year of investigation was not yet completely handed over.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>guilders</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>41.08</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>41.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and light</td>
<td>11.91</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Green beans</td>
<td>26.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>33.47</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>Coconuts</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and furniture</td>
<td>22.34</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>Cassava</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>7.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasts</td>
<td>31.10</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>Tamarind</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Sirih</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>20.05</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>28.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure in more detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassava, rice peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt and chilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirih and tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea and sugar, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**14 L. H. Huizenga: Some results of the Coolie Budget Investigations, 1939-40**

The families were divided according to the nature of their major occupation (usually determined by the occupation of the head of the family) into four groups, i.e.: 1. Plantation workers. 2. Factory workers. 3. Foremen and tradesmen. 4. Farmers.
The number of families investigated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of family</th>
<th>Living on the plantation</th>
<th>Living away from the plantation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantation labourers</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>1015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory labourers</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top workers</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>1393</td>
<td>1945</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average size of the family, in the case of plantation, factory, and top labourers who lived on the plantation, was 3.70, 4.07, and 4.52 persons respectively. For those living away, the figures were 4.85, 5.02, and 5.50, and for the farmers 5.26 ...

Of the three categories of labourer investigated, 30, 40, and 50 per cent respectively lived in houses provided by the plantations. Only in a few cases were they required to pay rent for this. The wage-earning families not living in plantation houses lived, in 90 per cent of the cases, in their own homes. In the case of the farmers this percentage stood at 98. The families which did not live in their own houses lived mostly in houses owned by relatives and did not have to pay rent. Of the remaining eighteen families that lived in houses owned by strangers, only seven paid house rent ...

The size of the houses varied a great deal locally. In general the families living on the plantations had less living space than those living outside. Particularly small was the living space of families housed in communal living quarters found on various plantations. The top labourers had by far the largest houses, while the factory labourers usually had somewhat more spacious houses than the plantation workers. The farmers’ houses were on the average almost as large as those of the top labourers, although account must be taken of the fact that especially in the farmers’ houses, space has to be set aside for storing agricultural implements and crops ... In general the plantation houses were more solidly built and better kept up than those outside. Among the latter the houses of the top labourers made the best impression, while the houses of the plantation labourers had the worst appearance. A higher percentage of the houses of top labourers had brick walls and tile floors, and few of them had atap roofs. With respect to furniture and utensils, there was a sharp division between the top labourers and the other categories, including the farmers ... Finally it must be mentioned that in particular those plantations that had to accommodate the whole or part of their workforce had taken certain social and hygienic measures for the benefit of the workers ...
The number of landowners among the families living in plantation houses was very small, although they usually had the right to cultivate their plots in the plantation quarters. Most of the out-living wage-earners owned some land, which in most cases consisted of sawah and yard or only a yard. With the exception of one family, all the farmers owned land, either sawah plus tegalan or sawah plus yard ...

The average size of landholdings did not differ very much for the three categories of wage-earners, ranging from 0.28 to 0.30 hectares. There were strong local variations in this average. The same was the case with farmers, who per family owned almost five times as much land [as the labourers]. The largest landowners were in West Java, the smallest in Central Java. In the heavily populated sawah regions of Central and East Java the average landholdings of farmers varied between 0.5 to 0.9 hectares. It must also be mentioned that the yards of the farmers were on an average about twice as large as those of the wage-earning families ... The upkeep of the yards and tegalans was almost always done by the owners themselves; in the sawah, however, this was by no means always the case. In addition to letting sawahs (mainly to sugar and tobacco plantations), share-cropping occurred a great deal in Central Java, the latter mainly in the case of top labourers. It was striking that in Central Java—not taking account of the letting of land to plantations—the farmers did not cultivate one-fifth of their land themselves. On the other hand some again rented more land or went in for share-cropping ...

The cultivation of the yards showed considerable local differences. The most intense cultivation was in Central Java and the least intensive in West Java. Moreover as a whole the greatest care for upkeep was shown in Central Java. The majority of trees planted in Central and East Java were coconut trees ...

The ownership of stock varied greatly from area to area. The farmers on an average owned a great deal more stock than the wage-earning families. Cattle were used exclusively for transport. The number of animals depended very closely on the size of the property, the particular kind of sawah, and the intensity of cultivation. The families living on the plantations usually only owned some chickens, with the top labourers owning more of them ...

The average size of the monthly income per family was in the case of plantation, factory, and top labourers living on the plantation 881, 1158, and 2334 cents respectively and for those living out, 520, 829, and 1798 respectively ... The farmers had an average income of 677 cents, the size of the income depending fairly closely on the size and quality of the land owned ...

The income and expenditure on consumable items of both plantation worker families and farmers’ families in general balanced each
other, while factory workers and non-resident top workers spent 10 per cent less on consumable items than their income, and resident top workers 40 per cent less. This indicates that saving occurred only in the higher income families ...

From the fact that many families during the period of investigation either spent money before they had received any income or spent more than they earned, it can be ascertained that as a rule they kept some money in reserve. In the case of more than 90 per cent of the resident plantation labourers' and factory workers' families, monetary income consisted of wages provided by the plantations, while in the case of the other categories this percentage varied between 60 and 80 per cent ... The most important category of other monetary income was in the form of loans, which depended in size on the amount of plantation wages received, and particularly in the case of top labourers fairly large sums were involved. Furthermore, loans were considerably more important among the non-resident groups than among the resident families. About 50 per cent of the monetary income of the farmers' families came from the sale of agricultural produce and the letting of land, while next in importance was income from commerce and loans, the latter being at least equally, if not more, important to the farmers than to the non-resident plantation and factory workers.

Among the wage-earning families money expenditure was for more than 85 per cent concerned with consumable goods and the repayment of debts. While among the resident groups the repayment of debts, especially among the plantation and factory workers, was much larger than expenditure on consumable goods, among the non-residents expenditure on consumable goods was on the average somewhat larger. Expenditure on consumable goods and repayment of debts accounted together for 80 per cent of the total money outlay of the farmers' group, with the expenditure on the former being more than five times as much as on the latter. So repayment of debts is by no means as prominent among farmers as among wage-earning families, because ... the buying of consumable goods on credit is far less customary among farmers. ...

The total expenditure of the resident categories of wage-earner families was respectively 883, 1048, and 1697 cents and of the non-residents respectively 549, 762, and 1612 cents per family per month: in per capita terms respectively 8.0, 8.5, and 12.5 cents and 3.8, 5.1, and 9.5 cents per day ... The farmers with an average expenditure of 666 cents per month per family or 4.3 cents per capita per day spent slightly more on consumable goods than the non-resident plantation workers. The families in West Java spent by far the most on consumable goods, while those in Central Java spent the least ...

The consumable items were partly bought and partly obtained in
kind from their own enterprises or in other ways. As was to be expected, the provision in kind was most prominent among the non-resident families, in particular the farmers, who obtained 41 per cent of the value of their consumption in this way, while this percentage was much lower among the non-resident wage-earners, decreasing to 22 per cent for the plantation workers and 7 per cent for the top labourers. The value of goods obtained in kind by the three groups of resident workers varied from 3 to 6 per cent of total consumption. Of the total value of consumable goods purchased, one-third was paid in cash by the resident plantation and factory workers' families, one-half by the non-resident plantation and factory workers' families, three-fifths by both categories of top workers, and five-sixths by the farmers. There was considerable local difference in this respect, with people in West Java buying proportionally a great deal more on credit than in Central Java ...  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Items</th>
<th>Resident Plantation workers</th>
<th>Factory workers</th>
<th>Top workers</th>
<th>Non-Resident Plantation workers</th>
<th>Factory workers</th>
<th>Top workers</th>
<th>Farmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire, light, water</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxuries [mainly smoking needs]</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various [mainly slame-tans]</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The volume of the total quantity of food consumed rose in relation to an increase in welfare. However, this increase was by no means as sharp as in the case of the total expenditure on food. From the statistics of the individual cases investigated it appeared that among the most prosperous groups the quantity of food in unprepared form was seldom higher than 800 to 1000 grams per day. Rice accounted for the largest share of the quantity of food consumed. In the case of the resident groups, which on the average consumed about the same quantity per head per day (400 to 450 grams), rice accounted for a little more than half of the volume of the total quantity of food, while the out-living groups used a little less than
half. This proportion decreased slightly with an increase in prosperity. Furthermore, there were considerable regional differences. For example, in West Java, where on an average 500 to 600 grams of rice were consumed per head per day, this proportion could increase to between 85 and 90 per cent. In East Java, however, it could fall to between 5 and 10 percent (25 to 75 grams per head per day), because there rice was being replaced by corn, the proportion of which rose to between 50 and 55 per cent (225 to 275 grams per head per day). Both among the resident and non-resident groups in East Java the consumption of corn fell in relation to an increase in prosperity while the consumption of rice rose relatively sharply...

Fresh cassava was consumed everywhere in Java, but in particularly large quantities in Central and East Java (150 to 250 grams per head per day), while the average consumption in these areas of the plantation workers’ families was many times larger than that of factory workers and top workers. The latter groups usually bought cassava in fermented form or in the form of sweets. The consumption of dried cassava was localized and the average quantity consumed varied from 50 to 100 grams per head per day, falling rapidly in relation to increased prosperity.

With respect to the other food items specified in the budget, it should be mentioned that, proportionally speaking, the consumption of granulated sugar, soya bean curd, coconut oil, and coffee showed the greatest rise in relation to upward changes in the income of all groups. Among the non-resident groups, particularly where the differences in prosperity were largest, relatively sharp increases occurred. Less pronounced were increases in the consumption of brown sugar and soya bean cake, while such articles as salt were hardly affected by fluctuations in income ...

The calorific value of the food consumed inclusive of festive food amounted to about 2000 calories per head per day for the resident wage-earning families and the non-resident top workers, while for the other three categories this average was considerably lower (1300 to 1400 calories). There were considerable local differences, in particular in the case of the non-resident plantation workers’ families ...

In West Java the average of all cases investigated lay above 1700 calories, while in Central and East Java they were all below 1600 calories. The lowest figures were obtained in Central Java where in some cases the food consumed by plantation workers’ families did not even amount to 900 calories per head per day. The farmers’ families there were not much better off, although the land in the regions concerned was fertile, irrigated, and cultivated during the whole of the year. However, there was a population density of more than 800 per square kilometre. In general the calorific value of food per head per day rose—although at a gradually decreasing rate—in
line with an increase in expenditure on consumable goods, that is, providing that this expenditure did not surpass roughly 10 guilders per month per family (about 7 cents per head per day). After that caloric value remained more or less stationary around 2000. Cereals—in particular rice—provided by far the most calories, i.e. from 70 to 80 per cent of the total. This percentage decreased with an increase of prosperity among both the resident and non-resident groups ...

The average percentage of consumption of albuminoids per head per day varied between 50 and 60 grams for the resident wage-earning families and the non-resident top labourers, while for the other categories this percentage was between 30 and 40 grams. For the last three categories about 10 per cent of this (3 to 4 grams) was of animal origin, while for the resident plantation and factory workers' families and the non-resident top labourers this percentage was more than 15 per cent (8 to 9 grams). There were wide local variations in the average consumption of albuminoids, with the variation in animal albuminoids being proportionally much larger than for vegetable albuminoids. The total albuminoid consumption was smallest among the non-resident plantation labourers' families on the two sugar plantations in Central Java, which were twice investigated and where the total food consumed did not even contain 900 calories per head per day. During the first investigation the average consumption of albuminoids was a little below and during the second investigation a little more than 20 grams per head per day, of which 10 per cent were of animal origin. The highest consumption was found in West Java where, with the exception of one farmer's family, none of the five families investigated in each category consumed less than 45 grams per head per day, with four out of twenty cases even consuming more than 65 grams per day. In families that spent more than 10 to 12.50 guilders per month (7 to 9 cents per head per day), the average per capita consumption of vegetable albuminoids usually did not increase, while the consumption of animal albuminoids often still did, in line with an increase in total consumption.

Cereals were the most important source of albuminoids, accounting for 55 to 70 per cent of the total, although their importance in this respect was not as great as in the provision of calories ...

The average consumption of fats per head per day varied among the resident groups from 21 to 36 grams and among the non-resident groups from 14 to 38 grams. All categories consumed more when prosperity increased. The averages showed considerable local variations, which proportionally were most pronounced among the non-resident plantation workers' families (3 to 24 grams) and least among the non-resident top workers' families (24 to 55 grams). Peo-
ple in West Java, generally speaking, consumed far less fat per head per day than those in Central and East Java. As in the case of animal albuminoids, the average consumption of fats per head per day continued to increase after total expenditure on consumable goods had reached 10 to 12.50 guilders per family per month. However, as the quantity of fats consumed at the same level of total outlay on consumable goods showed great local variations, the local rates of increase often varied greatly.

Among all the family categories investigated, more than 80 per cent of the fats consumed came from rice, corn, coconuts, and coconut oil. Both among the resident and non-resident categories the proportion of coconut oil used rose with an increase in prosperity, while the consumption of rice and corn fell ...

The consumption of carbohydrates by the three resident categories of wage-earning family amounted to about 400 grams; in the case of the non-resident top labourers’ families it was at least 350 grams, and in the remaining three other non-resident groups 250 to 275 grams ...

The consumption of vitamin A by the resident categories varied from 1500 to 3500 I.E. [Internationale Eenheid, International Units], and by the non-residents from 1900 to 3000 I.E. ... There were considerable local variations, with a relatively low consumption by the non-resident plantation workers’ and farmers’ families in West Java ... which did not rise above 1000 I.E. per head per day, and in five cases ... not even above 500 I.E. Although such low figures were also found in Central and East Java, on the whole the average daily consumption of vitamin A per head was much larger, and in East Java it amounted often to more than 5000 I.E. ... There did not appear to be any connection between the total expenditure on consumable goods and the quantity of vitamin A consumed.

Vegetables were by far the largest source of vitamin A, followed at a considerable distance by fruit, both categories of food accounting for 90 per cent of the total amount of vitamin A consumed. Among the non-residents the relative importance of vegetables as a source of vitamin A decreased while prosperity increased ...

The average consumption of vitamin B1 per head per day by the three resident categories and the non-resident top labourers amounted to between 270 and 300 I.E. while the remaining three non-resident groups consumed 185 to 205 I.E. ...

The existing government apparatus at the beginning of the twentieth century—which was highly centralized and autocratic—could no longer cope with the vastly changed conditions in the Indies. The central government was not only confronted with the gigantic task of administering a newly acquired and vast island empire, but also colonial officers were required under the terms of the Ethical Policy to interfere far more frequently and drastically in native affairs than previously.

In order to relieve the *Binnenlands Bestuur* (Department of Regional and Local Administration) from some of its burden, new "technical" departments such as Agriculture, Public Works, and *Volkscrediet* (the People's Credit Service) were set up: these were better equipped to implement the Ethical welfare programme.

To meet the growing pressure of Europeans for a greater say in the running of the colony's affairs the Decentralization Law of 1903 expressly stated that some measure of self-government would be granted through the creation of municipal councils and regional councils. In fact, however, only a slight measure of autonomy was conceded to these councils, which only had jurisdiction over roads, public works, and parks and gardens, while important matters such as police, public health, and education remained under the control of the central government. The first municipal councils were established at Batavia, Meester Cornelis (Jatinegara), and Bandung in 1905. The first regional council was established in 1909 in the important tobacco-growing area of East Sumatra. By 1918 there were thirty-two municipal councils and twenty-five regional councils.

In 1914 de Graaff, a former director of *Binnenlands Bestuur*, who had been appointed by parliament as a special commissioner for decentralization, submitted a voluminous report on administrative reform in the colony. He proposed that the Indies should be divided into twelve large *gouvernements* (administrative units) to be headed by a governor and supported by their own finances. Furthermore, de Graaff planned to increase the efficiency of the European colonial administrative corps by reducing its numbers, increasing
salaries, and by better selection and training procedures. The native administrative corps—the *Inlands Bestuur*—was to be given more responsibility, better training, and higher salaries. Finally, the regional councils, which had been found to work unsatisfactorily, were to be replaced by regency councils.

De Graaff's scheme, however, was rejected by parliament, where since 1913 a Liberal coalition had held a majority. Among others, van Deventer complained that de Graaff had ignored the instruction of parliament to seek a reorganization on the basis of self-government and he dismissed the *gouvernemen*ten of de Graaff as "*ambtenaarsstaten*" ("bureaucratic states").

The ruling Liberal coalition was far more concerned with accommodating to some extent the growing pressure of Indonesian nationalists at this time for a greater degree of participation in government. In 1916 the Liberal Minister of Colonies submitted a proposal to parliament for the establishment of a *Koloniale Raad* (Colonial Council), which was to have a multi-racial membership and advisory powers. This was approved by parliament, and the council, called the *Volksraad* (People's Council) was officially instituted in May 1918 by the progressive Governor-General van Limburg Stirum. Members of the *Volksraad*, who enjoyed full parliamentary privileges and immunities, were to be partly elected and partly appointed. The *Volksraad*, which could be consulted on all matters of state by the colonial government, was responsible for the preparation of the annual budget in conjunction with the Governor-General, although final approval still rested with the Dutch Parliament.

Any hopes the Dutch might have held about pacifying radical nationalists by instituting the *Volksraad* were dispelled almost immediately after the opening of the first session when *Sarekat Islam* leaders such as Tjokroaminoto severely criticized the colonial system. Again during the second session of the *Volksraad* on 14 November 1918 radical Indonesian members strongly condemned the colonial government for distinctly favouring the interests of European capital, and rebuked Europeans in general for their attitude of racial superiority towards Indonesians. While these speeches could obviously only accentuate the existing feelings of uneasiness in the colony, European fears about an impending revolution in the Indies were raised to a hysterical pitch when rumours reached the colony about a *coup d'etat* in the Netherlands led by the Socialist leader Troelstra (*see* document 15:1). Communist-influenced European soldiers and sailors in the Indies held demonstrations and the Indonesian Communist leader Darsono incited Indonesians to follow the Russian example. In the *Volksraad* on 16 November the Dutch Socialist Member Cramer pledged his
full support for the Indonesian nationalist cause and on his instigation the Radicale Concentratie, a front of radical Indonesian and European members, was formed.

The immediate reaction of Governor-General van Limburg Stirum was that the Volksraad would have to be transformed into a full parliament in case the Socialists came to power in Holland. And on 18 November he stated in the Volksraad that he envisaged important political changes in the colony and a transfer of responsibility from the colonial government to the Volksraad, the extent of which could as yet not be fully determined. On 2 December van Limburg Stirum informed the Volksraad that a commission would be established to advise on constitutional reforms (see document 15: 2, 3).

The Socialist coup in Holland fizzled out. And the Dutch Government—which after the elections of May 1918 had again come into the hands of the rightist parties—as well as the vast majority of Europeans in the Indies, were highly critical of van Limburg Stirum’s handling of the situation and of what they termed rash and irresponsible promises of Indonesian self-government (see document 16). The time of the more progressive colonial reformers, who were sympathetic to the Indonesian nationalist cause, was clearly running out; moreover many Europeans who previously had been “ethically” inclined now began to get second thoughts when confronted with the rapid and turbulent tide of radical Indonesian nationalism. By 1921 van Limburg Stirum and his small band of trusted advisers had been replaced by a group of more conservative and reactionary men who exchanged the earlier policy of rapprochement to Indonesian nationalism with one of stark repression. Many colonial Dutchmen and conservative politicians in Holland were apparently convinced that only a small segment of the top layer of indigenous society had been infected by the disease of “Communism” and that in any case the nationalist leadership did not truly represent the voice of the Indonesian masses. This reactionary spirit is well portrayed in the private letters of the progressive Creutzberg, who became vice-president of the Raad van Indie (Council of the Indies) in 1924, and de Graeff, a more liberal-minded governor-general (1926-31). (See document 17.)

In the period 1918-40, when various conservative coalitions remained in power in the Netherlands, the most influential figure in colonial affairs was Colijn, one of the leaders of the Anti-Revolutionaire Partij (Neo-Calvinists), and a colonial diehard. Colijn had a colourful and successful career. After having gained a medal for valour as a young lieutenant in the Lombok campaign (1894), he was appointed adjutant to General van Heutz, the conqueror of Atjeh, and became adviser on the reorganization of colonial government and administration during van Heutz’s term as governor-
general. In 1909 he entered the Dutch Parliament and served as Minister for War from 1911 to 1913. From 1914 to 1922 he was a director of the Royal Dutch Shell group. And after ending his formal business career he entered politics again in 1922, serving almost continuously in Cabinet posts—including the prime ministership and the ministry of colonies.

While Colijn agreed with the general condemnation of earlier liberal-minded colonial statesmen for having been too weak in dealing with Indonesian nationalists, his criticism was far more fundamental. In his pamphlet *Staatkundige Hervormingen in Nederlandsch-Indie (Constitutional Reforms in the Netherlands Indies)*, published in 1918, he argued that indigenous political development should start off at the grass roots level and that the establishment of the *Volksraad* had been entirely premature, as this institution had no roots in the people. Colijn also dismissed as unrealistic the attempts to superimpose on the Indies a modern unitary state on the European model. He argued that, considering the vast differences in cultural, economic, and social development within and between the various Indonesian islands, the only proper solution would be the establishment of a federation (see document 18). While, as his critics pointed out (see document 19), Colijn's ideas might, ideally speaking, have been correct, they were unrealistic because of the radical turn the Indonesian nationalist movement had taken. Any idea of federation would be rejected by radical Indonesian nationalists—and with some justification—as an attempt by the Dutch to postpone Indonesian independence to the far-distant future.

However, the *Herzieningscommissie* (Commission for Constitutional Reform), which had been instituted by van Limburg Stirum in 1918, in its report of 1921 rejected Colijn's proposals and advocated the creation of a unitary government with wide powers in internal affairs, although it did not press for full self-government. The commission also recommended that suffrage should be extended to all Netherlands subjects irrespective of race, providing that they complied with certain standards of education and economic prosperity.

The Minister for Colonies, de Graaff, dismissed the commission's proposals as "*studeerkamerwerk*" ("an academic exercise") and argued that the most urgent need was for administrative decentralization. And although, owing to the strong pressure of progressive opinion in the Dutch Parliament, the Netherlands *Grondwetherziening* (Constitutional Reforms) of 1922 laid down that in principle the Indies should be allowed to take care of their internal affairs as much as possible, and the name "colony" was officially abandoned, in practice very little notice was taken in the ac-
tual reform measures introduced by de Graaff in 1925. Admittedly the Volksraad was given co-legislative power and in 1929 Indonesians were granted a majority of seats, but without the introduction of the principle of ministerial responsibility to the Volksraad these measures were largely meaningless, as the final power still lay with the Dutch Parliament.

De Graaff, taking advantage of the swing towards conservatism in Dutch politics, managed to have his earlier proposals for administrative reform accepted by parliament, and Java was now divided into a number of semi-autonomous provinces, regency councils, and municipal councils. The Outer Islands were also divided into provinces, but administrative and political decentralization at the lower level was—unlike in Java—to be based on adatgemeenschappen (ethnic group communities). This was much closer in line with Colijn’s ideas than the administrative decentralization of Java based on the Dutch model.

Although Colijn and his followers did not deny that Indonesia should eventually be granted independence, they saw this as a far-off prospect. Only after the Netherlands had completed its difficult and slow-grinding task of bringing the Indies to a sufficiently high level of modern civilization would the colony be allowed to go on its own.

For the remainder of their rule, then, the Dutch stubbornly refused to give in to the demands of Indonesian nationalists for self-government or independence. From the mid-1930s onwards, when the threat posed by Japan began to loom ever more ominously on the horizon, the pressure of Indonesian nationalists for political concessions began to be intensified. Influenced perhaps by American promises of independence made in the Philippines, a number of Indonesian Volksraad members, led by Sutardjo, presented a petition to the Dutch Queen, requesting that an imperial conference be held at which the question of self-government would be discussed and a definite timetable for its achievement determined (see document 20). It was more than two years before the colonial rulers deigned to give their negative reply, arguing that Indonesians were not yet ripe for independence (see document 21). Similar arguments were used to dismiss the agitation for a full parliament in the Indies led by the G.A.P.I. (a federation of Indonesian nationalist organizations) in the period 1939-41. (See document 22; for G.A.P.I. see also documents 69-71.)

The only "concession" made to Indonesian political demands was the declaration by the Dutch Queen in a radio speech on 10 May 1941 that an imperial conference would be held after the conclusion of the war; but by then, as it turned out, the initiative in political matters was by no means any longer solely in the hands of the Dutch
15 Promises of political reforms in the Indies, 1918

1. Telegram of the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 15 November 1918

[No. 411] Widespread nervousness caused by Troelstra’s speeches socialist meeting Rotterdam repeated Tuesday in chamber urging immediate transfer Government to socialists following German example to realize women suffrage, abolition senate, eight hour day, and other social reforms, stop This pointing to intended co-operation socialists with anarchists. Ruys [prime minister] declared government, though prepared expedite decision and support reasonable reform proposals provided no departure from legal procedure will resist all violence and attempts overthrow constitutional powers, this declaration was followed by general movement all quarters to resolutely resist revolutionary movement which would endanger food supply and is not countenanced by majority people. Yesterday nervousness considerably allayed. Troelstra declared no intention use violence.

2. Telegram of the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum) to the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg), 19 November 1918

[No. 462] Referring to your four-eleven I had statement made in Volksraad yesterday declaring new course imposed by recent world events for Holland also determinative for Indian government policy which more question of accelerated pace than change of course stop Close co-operation with Volksraad requested concerning food provision comma advance of social prosperity and necessary reforms in shortest possible time stop Government firmly resolved maintain order stop Renewed endeavours of Sneevliet [Communist leader] to lame organs public authority compel government expel him stop Announced institution committee investigate conditions sugar industry, quickest enforcement new military penal code, catering soldiers entirely at government’s expense, rapid amelioration barrack conditions.

3. Letter of the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum) to the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg), 1 December 1918

The telegrams about the revolution in Germany caused a great sensation here on 11 November. Everybody asked themselves what the
consequences would be for our country and I myself was compelled to consider what attitude the Indies Government should take in case the revolution would cross over to the Netherlands. My greatest worry was the possibility of mutiny of the navy, which almost certainly would have been imitated everywhere else. I therefore consulted Admiral Bron, who was unable to prophesy what effect the hoisting of the red flag would have on the people here. We agreed that the ships should be dispersed and that in case things went wrong the commanders should impress upon their crews what consequences a mutiny of the navy could have for the wives and children of their compatriots. It seemed to me that the loyalty of the Menadonese, Ambonese, and native soldiers did not have to be doubted ... 

I had decided that in case of the overthrow of the legal authority in the Netherlands, the Indies Government should continue its activities, ignore possible telegrams, and consider a revolutionary government as temporary until possible laws and regulations would arrive by mail. However, in that case an appeal would have to be made to the Volksraad to co-operate with the government and to take over temporarily the controlling power now exercised by the Minister of Colonies and the parliament. It seemed unthinkable that I would transfer authority to a local follower of the Bolsjewiks such as Baars, Sneevliet, or Coster, who probably would have been appointed from Holland if their friend Wijnkoop [leader of the Dutch Communists] had taken over the government.

Although I suppressed the most disquieting telegrams from Reuter and the Melbourne agency Orient about the happenings in Holland, a strong red wind was nevertheless blowing in the Indies, which for example did not leave the Advocate-General [G. W. Uhlenbeck] unmoved, as he told me. And its influence was so strong that even one of the most highly respected High Court judges demanded that a parliament should be established immediately in the Indies. Your Excellency will realize then what far-reaching desiderata were being put up by others. On the whole people were highly agitated and very nervous ... and wild rumours were circulating about the Queen having abdicated and that I was being replaced. The telegrams I had released about Toelstra's speech appeared ominous to many.

On 16 November the S.D.A.P. [Socialist] Volksraad Member Cramer made a speech ... and an agreement was reached for cooperation between his party, the S.D.V. [Communists] and the natives, inclusive of the Budi Utomo [nationalist organization]. The Resident of Batavia sent the head superintendent of police to me with disquieting reports about conspiracies ... 

All this made me decide on 16.11 to intervene in the deliberations of the Volksraad and to make a declaration indicating that the
government was not blind to what was happening ... I invited the President of the High Court [J. H. Carpentier Alting], whom I have learned to appreciate highly for his knowledge and his activities ... for a discussion on 19 November about the preparation of the reforms which, according to the majority of authoritative public opinion in the Indies, were considered necessary. He agreed with me that the most effective thing to do would be to institute a commission, which he would be prepared to head in addition to his many other duties. I felt that his appointment would also guarantee to Her Majesty's Government that a thoughtful approach would be taken. After repeated discussions also about the composition of the Commission, its mandate was formulated as follows: to advise the government regarding proposals which are to be made to the supreme government concerning the desirability of a revision of the principles of the government structure of the Netherlands Indies and the changes which accordingly must be made in the Constitutional Regulations and other ordinances ...

Your Excellency's telegram of 20 November, from which it was clear that the revolutionary movement had misfired, caused a general feeling of relief and there was a great feeling of gratitude for the averting of such a calamity. Tens of thousands of people signed the address of homage to the Queen, including sailors and soldiers, but the native members of the so-called Concentration [Radical Concentration] desisted. Tjipto [Mangunkusumo] acts as a real guttersnipe these days and reasonable discussion with him is impossible; Tjokro [Tjokroaminoto] is as untrustworthy as ever; and Dwidojosewojo [moderate nationalist] is unstable ...


16 Conservative reaction in the Netherlands

1. Letter of the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 11 December 1918

From your telegrams—and from press reports ... I have noticed that the current situation in Europe has also had a great impact on the Indies. And looking at it superficially I would say "too much". I would not be surprised that agitators have played an important role and that the situation has been greatly misrepresented. Certainly the whole world is moving into what one likes to call a "democratic"
direction. But surely there are differences in the degree of urgency ... I am convinced that in the Indies we must avoid giving in to fashionable delusions, not only because this cannot be right theoretically, but also on practical grounds, because this must lead to chaos in the Indies. What is happening in Western countries lives more or less in the people and is a product of centuries of historical development. Neither the history nor the development of the Indies took place along these lines, and even if it did it has been very weak and incomplete. An uncritical adoption of Western ideals—or do I have to say slogans?—does not achieve what is aimed at in the West (where it has a certain right to exist), but the result will be an oligarchy of the worst kind, that is, of incapable people. We must be firmly opposed to this. If the participation of the people is wanted, this should not be restricted to a few, but this right should be given to many and not in matters which are only understood by a few, but in matters on which they can give a judgement, more or less. I am of the opinion therefore that the democratic development of the Indies must be channelled through the village councils and the regency councils, which must gradually be given greater responsibilities and allowed to influence provincial government as well as the Volksraad, if this is wanted. But I believe that it is a wrong policy to press already for an extension of the powers of the Volksraad ...

It was with interest that I noticed from your telegram that you have set up a commission for political reforms. My first impression was that such a commission should have been instituted in this country ... But on reflection I understood that your commission is meant as a type of lightning conductor and as such—apart from disadvantages—can have advantages.

If there is still an opportunity, perhaps the Commission for the Revision of the Constitution [instituted on 20 December 1918] will take account of the work of your commission, although I doubt very much whether the Netherlands Government will be prepared to make proposals at this stage which in fact would surrender the whole of the Indies to a small group of intellectuals and semi-intellectuals, who so far have shown very little evidence of altruism and a willingness to sacrifice themselves for the general benefit.

Of course ministerial "responsibility" to the Volksraad is out of the question; at least I refuse to co-operate in this. First of all "responsible" ministers can only be considered in the provinces—after the provincial councils have first been established and are working well, and then only carefully and gradually. These [provincial councils] are even considered necessary in British India, and consider how much further British India has advanced in this field, and how much greater its right is to participate in government through the sacrifices of at least some of its people in the war ...
2. Private letter of A.C.D. de Graeff to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 17 February 1919

The day before yesterday I visited Mr Idenburg for two hours, and I am still very much impressed by our interview, which I will try to relate to you as fully as possible and without disguising anything. Mr Idenburg informed me that the feeling here in this country has generally turned against you. This is so in Amsterdam in the first place and in general among the "capitalists"... The ruling tone in the Chamber has also turned against you. The Social Democrats are on your side, the attitude of the Liberal-Democrats is still uncertain, but all the other parties in the Chamber and all persons outside the Chamber who interest themselves in the Indies were angry about the fact that the government declaration of November was made without consulting the Home Government and the Chamber, as well as about the declaration itself. You know how Idenburg himself thinks about the matter from his Cabinet letter, which he read out to me. The Minister finds it a pity that you have gone so far without his foreknowledge, not in the least because he considers himself bypassed as a Minister—this is not his nature and he understands very well that no time was to be lost in the November days—but because also to your later explanation he cannot responsibly give his support.

He literally told me that there were few matters about which he had such a definite opinion... as his conviction that a parliament with responsible government powers would during the first twenty-five to thirty years be disastrous for the Indies and would lead to the total loss of the colonies. He wants to leave the Volksraad as it is and does not want to give this body any participatory powers... because this means responsibility. He would rather abandon the Volksraad again than push this institution prematurely into the foreground... The Indies are politically still completely unripe: an Indies people which could be represented in a parliament does not exist. Even in British India one does not dare to introduce responsible government yet, etc., etc.

I must tell you honestly that I was aghast to hear "my" Idenburg speak in so reactionary a manner, and again I felt that Idenburg, with all his excellent qualities, is quickly influenced by others and will unconsciously present their thoughts as his own. This is not Idenburg who is talking—who while he was Governor-General repeatedly pressed the Minister to give the Volksraad at least co-legislative powers—but here speaks Colijn, who rules over everybody and everything; Fock, the disappointed eternal candidate for the office of Governor-General; MoreSCO [Secretary-General of the Department of Colonies] (the composer of the Cabinet letter in question), who is the aggrieved candidate for the vice-presidency [of the Council of the Indies], and many others.
I have talked long and earnestly with Mr Idenburg and I have explained my position to him ... I have argued that I cannot judge whether the circumstances during November were such that a declaration like yours was unavoidable, but that I immediately accepted that this was so. I said that I completely agreed that the heterogeneous masses called the people of the Indies are not politically ripe and that therefore the establishment of a parliament would be premature and wrong in principle. [I said] that such a parliament would probably be very one-sided and would be composed of strongly leftist elements; that the Indies Government would be caused a great deal of trouble and that the relationship with the Home Government would be threatened, etc., etc. But [I also stressed] that nevertheless it was my strong conviction that it would be out of the question to ignore any longer the ever-louder-sounding demands for parliamentary representation; and that we cannot wait for "political ripeness", and that now people in the Indies will no longer be put off with village, provincial, and regency councils only. [I argued] that in short a parliament and responsible government can no longer be postponed ad calendas Graecas [indefinitely] and that one must bite into the sour apple whether one wants to or not and hope for the best, because otherwise the Indies will come close to revolution.

I believe that my argument made some impression and will have some effect, although it is such a pity that Idenburg has already bound himself to so many others. Furthermore, it would have been better if your declaration could have been avoided but, as it has been given now, its disavowal by the Minister and the Chamber will cause such deep disappointment and will increase the accumulated grievances so much that it will hasten along the fearful process.

There are also some brighter aspects. Idenburg is worried on two counts that you will ask to be called back: firstly, because he has the highest appreciation and respect for your person, your gifts of character and intelligence, your earnestness, diligence, and dedication, etc. ... I know that you do not like to hear such praises about yourself, but I must tell you about them. They were so well meant and they were said without any reserve by a person for whose integrity I can vouch completely ... And secondly, he is anxious because your abdication now would be immediately connected with the action that the capitalists have started against you. The general opinion will be that you, who rose up for the hungry Javanese, had to capitulate to the exploiting Dutch capitalists ... This connection would be fatal.

So I promised Idenburg to tell you that it is his fervent wish that you should remain and that a way should be found that makes this possible without forcing you or him to abandon any of your respon-
sibility. I cannot judge whether this is possible. Much will depend on the discussions in the Chamber ... Idenburg promised me that he himself will explain his point of view in such a way that the existence of a serious difference of opinion on this vital point will remain hidden as much as possible. He will avoid giving any decision on the question when a parliament will be instituted; he will emphasize the lower councils and warmly advocate their blessings, and he will even mention the possible institution of a parliament to crown the completion of the political detutelization process ... I do not have to tell you how much I am impressed by all this. I sympathize so much with you about the disappointments you have to suffer in your endeavours, with which I am also sympathetic, and I have the feeling that if the reactionaries win, untold harm will be done. But I also sympathize with Idenburg, who is a democrat at heart and yet misses—physically and mentally tired as he is—the strength to row against the reactionary current ... I also realize, now that I have taken your side, that I have in all probability lost all chance of becoming your successor. I do not really have to tell you that I have no regrets for myself, but I am sorry for the Indies in so far as now a person will be selected who does not understand the spirit of the time, who is a conservative, if not a reactionary ... I pray you, do not make any hasty decisions. The Minister desires nothing more than that you remain and he seriously intends to make things as easy as possible for you. The world is moving so fast that although we have no immediate result at present we will be more successful next time.

S. L. van der Wal, *De Volksraad* pp. 298-303.

3. Private letter of the Vice-President of the Council of the Indies (Creutzberg) to the Dutch Ambassador in Berlin (van Limburg Stirum), January 1924

I would gain a great deal more satisfaction from my new position if I could persuade my colleagues to accept a somewhat different view about the best way to govern the Indies. I am sceptical about this, however, and I fear that we are confronted here by a *Zeitgeist* [spirit of the times] that is much stronger than we are. Most of the prominent leaders are in this regard no different from the masses and they are incapable of differentiating. They are completely caught by the very understandable spirit of reaction that pervades various European countries, and this prevents them from realizing that the situation in the Indies must be viewed in a different perspective from that of the mother country. There are a considerable number of leading figures in the administration here who perhaps in Holland would be excellent administrators, but who have not the slightest under-
standing of the situation in which a colonial government is finding itself! The most irksome impressions of this I gained in and around the Ministry of Colonies. It seems to me that this is largely a question of fashion. One is considered to sin against the _bon ton_ if one does not express oneself as coldly and cynically as possible about everything that appears in the Indies as a new and impetuous life. I am absolutely convinced that it is far more the "tone" of our present regime than specific legislative and administrative matters ... that sets the young people of the Indies—and I fear irrevocably—against the Netherlands. The bitterness in more or less intellectual native circles, especially among the students in the Netherlands, is taking on alarming proportions ...
Tideman of Palembang, Hardeman of Soerabaja, and perhaps a few more); a few heads of departments, in so far as they are interested in general policy, such as Hardeman (Education and Religion), Rutgers (Agriculture), and Rutgers (Justice), but that is about all. In the Volksraad I am supported by the left wing of the European group but often in a manner which sometimes brings to my lips the expression "beware of your friends".

I wonder whether you can realize how depressing such a position can be? I have come here, averse to all "politics" and with the purest of intentions, in order to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and cordial co-operation around the government. But the result is that one side callees me a traitor of my country, while the other side is becoming continually more convinced that, no matter how good the intentions of the government may be, it is no use supporting it because the Europeans have clearly shown their true colours and have made it known that thinking natives do not exist, that all of them are inferior beings who should be greatly mistrusted, and that the watchword should be "to keep them down" (the words of Trip). Things that a year ago would have been greatly appreciated by the native side now leave them more and more cold. That is the worst of the situation. Trip cum suis cannot talk about anything else than "the maintenance of the Netherlands authority", but it baffles me how they can emphasize this while at the same time they are undermining every day the representative of that authority in all sorts of ways, directly and indirectly, in season and out of season. Moreover I am even more handicapped by the fierceness of the campaign against me. And whenever I take a decision I ask myself involuntarily how it might be explained and what venom could be extracted from it. It is inexcusable to me that the President of the Java Bank even takes the opportunity of a farewell dinner to the departing vice-admiral to make a political speech which was definitely intended as an attack on government policy, and which was warmly applauded and appeared with great headlines in all the papers the next day. It is inexcusable to me that, on the initiative of Trip, a petition has been circulated among the public against the present draft law [proposal to have a native majority in the Volksraad] and that this petition was sent to all the departmental heads, the heads of the Services, the heads of regional administration, etc., with the request to circulate it among their personnel.

I have attempted rapprochements in all directions, and over and over again I have earnestly attempted to show my good intentions. The result is that I, who have so little aggressiveness in my personal make-up and am basically humble, have widened the gap so much that the possibility of bridging it is further away than ever. I have asked myself, of course, whether and how far I am guilty myself. But
I can declare with my hand on my heart that although I might perhaps be guilty because of a too naive and too unpolitical trust in humanity, the blame must be put on the other side. After the riots of November and January [Communist-inspired rebellions in West Java and Minangkabau] and the resulting fear among the European community, daily stirred up by the press, it has let itself be ruled so much by racial instinct, racial superiority, and racial hatred that all proportion has been lost sight of, and there is no place any more for quiet reasoning. I have to fight against sentiment, and that is a completely hopeless struggle. The situation is simply abhorrent; and the fate of the Indies, of the land and people which I care for above all, fills me with the greatest anxiety when I see how passionately white and brown are confronting each other, how action has bred reaction ...

S. L. van der Wal, *De Volksraad* ... pp. 28-29.

**18 H. Colijn: On political Reforms, 1918**

The same institutions that can be democratic for a people at a certain stage of development can become an instrument of repression and can cause a loss of freedom for a people with a different background ... [Colijn then argues that before the arrival of the Dutch there was no Indies state in existence and that whatever political unity there was in the twentieth century was the result of Dutch polices.]

This historical fact, that we Netherlanders are the rulers and the people of the Indies are the subjects, is the only realistic basis on which political reforms must be built so that serious mistakes can be avoided ... In the last few years a number of people who have the interests of the Indies at heart strongly deny this fact ... They are actually ashamed about the fact that we are the ruling power. So far as the past is concerned they certainly have a point, but they also feel that our present and future policy must be based on completely different premises, that is, on the principle of *association* [of all the races], which in the future will result in a complete *fusion* ... It should be easy for the politically educated reader to recognize that the basic premise underlying this ideal is the denial or underestimation of the primeval fact that there are differences between individuals and races ... It is an attempt to apply the revolutionary idea of equality to the field of ethnology. This is very significant because it is identical to the idea of neutrality in the field of religion ... [Although agreeing that the indigenous people in the past had
often been wronged, Colijn argued that colonialism was a necessary evil. Colonialism in his view was historically inevitable and nations resulted from the interaction of cultures either indirectly or by the occupation of a weaker nation by a more powerful and more highly developed nation.]

The latter method always appears to be the most effective one. From the antithesis between the ruler and the ruled there evolves—historically speaking—the antithesis between prince and people, and government and subjects. This is characteristic of political development everywhere. Thus the course of historical development is such that the original sharp antithesis between ruler and ruled is an impetus for the latter to work towards gradually replacing the ruler. When this process is fully completed and the differences between the government and the governed have completely disappeared in a full democracy, then also the motive underlying political development will have disappeared and the danger of disintegration will be imminent, resulting eventually in another colonial situation. This explanation I found necessary to make it clear that in political life the antithesis between ruler and ruled is in no way unnatural and that therefore our acceptance of the historically grown relationship between the Netherlands and the Indies is in itself no reason for shame; the accusation of being reactionary is not at all justified providing the ruler is fully aware of his vocation ... Colijn compared the relationship between the Netherlands and the Indies with that of father and son].

When the son is growing up, inevitably the moment will arrive when he feels he should assert his own individuality ... the moment will arrive—to use a popular phrase—when he will ask for the front door key. This will happen—and is in fact happening—in the Indies ... Even at this stage all kinds of unripe elements demand rights which they are not yet capable of exercising. They loudly demand that the Netherlands should relinquish its rule. But does a good father immediately give in to such demands by children? It would be the easiest way out and he would save himself a great deal of trouble and abuse, also from outsiders. However, it is the father who is most conscious of his vocation who does not give in so easily, because he realizes that his resistance will be of very great importance in the character-building of the child. He realizes that the child, because his ideas are in conflict with his father's, must learn to test his personality and character so that he will be able to distinguish between what is capricious and undisciplined and what is part of his true personality. So far as education towards political independence is concerned, a similar relationship exists between the Netherlands and the Indies. However, we tend too much to give in out of weakness to the often unjustified demands of small groups asserting themselves as
the voice of the young Indies. In this way one certainly avoids being branded as a reactionary, and one might even get a short vote of thanks from the democratic side.

However, abdication would not in any way whatsoever be in the real interests of developing an Indies democracy. This can only develop normally and strongly as a result of the balancing power provided by Netherlands rule. Nothing therefore would be more pernicious than that the belief in our vocation—under the influence of ideas of association—should weaken prematurely ...

[Colijn criticized the fact that Ethical politicians had concentrated too much on setting up autonomous units of government while they neglected the need for the decentralization of executive power. According to Colijn administrative decentralization and the granting of autonomy were interconnected because decentralisation was] ... a means to educate towards autonomy, because just as somebody who has learned to obey is at the same time taught how to give orders, somebody who has learned to execute faithfully the rules made by others is trained at the same time to make rules himself. As a result administrative decentralization is always followed by autonomy ...

[However, reforms so far were based rather mistakenly on] ... the type of modern, unitarian, parliamentary state which exists in the Netherlands, with its simple division into realm, province, and municipalities, which is apparently accepted by the designers as the optimum for all times and all nations, including the Netherlands Indies ... [A case in point, according to Colijn, was the Volksraad, which was introduced too hastily. The Indies were not yet ripe for a system of full parliamentary government with ministerial responsibility, so that all the present Volksraad could do was to subject the colonial government to constant criticism.] After all in democratic countries the minister is free—when the opposition is becoming unreasonable—to resign and to force the opposition to take over the government itself. He can say, as it were: If you can do it so much better, then do it yourself and we will have a turn at controlling you ...

The Indies Government has been denied this normal means of defence against the Volksraad. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, even the sharpest criticism does not guarantee that the opposition, when it has finally succeeded in toppling the government, has the will and the capacity to govern ... This is of course, even more true of men who have never had the opportunity to gain practical experience in government. In the second place, in the Indies the opposition between the government and popular representation will coincide more and more with racial division. Therefore, if at some time Dutch bureaucratic rule will have to cede power to a nationalist opposition, the return of the old government will be out
of the question and it will mean the end of Dutch rule, not only in Java but in all our other possessions. The Volksraad in its present form is in a position to indulge in unrestricted and irresponsible criticism, the consequences of which it will never have to bear. One has created in the form of a merely advisory body an institution which possesses more power than a modern parliament ... [Colijn criticized the attempts to create a unitary state, without first having started to democratize local and regional government. He also pointed to the great cultural and ethnic diversity of the Indies, which necessitated the gradual construction of a federal system of government at the regional, provincial, and finally at the national level. This had produced:] the political dogmatism that, instead of trying to build self-government in the Indies on what has historically grown, has tried to create an Indies state out of nothing ... It should be immediately obvious that in instituting the Volksraad the all-important condition that autonomy must be built up from below has been completely neglected. The roof has been constructed before the supporting walls ...

[The most important advantage of a federal structure, according to Colijn was that it avoided direct confrontation about imperial matters between the Dutch Government and the various democratic institutions in the Indies. Moreover a system of direct elections could be more easily introduced at the provincial level than in the case of the Volksraad, because the] complete, or at least relatively greater, ethnological homogeneity of the provinces ... would exclude or certainly very much diminish the danger of one nation dominating the other through the Volksraad ... A federal organization opens up the possibility for each territory to develop at its own pace. It will be possible, for example, for a completely autonomous Java to be represented solely by natives in the Federal Council, while at the same time the deputies from Sumatra—because it is still in a stage of transformation—will be partly elected and partly appointed native members. Then again the deputation from New Guinea, because it is still completely underdeveloped, would have to consist entirely of officials of the autocratic Netherlands Government. Finally, while in a unitarian state it is certain that the various nationalities—in the absence of a positive community of interests—will unite themselves into a common front against the foreign ruler, this will be avoided in a Netherlands-controlled federation. In such a federal structure the Dutch Government will be able to retain for a long time to come its moral role of disinterested arbiter in the ever-sharpening struggle for national and economic dominance between the various territories. Dutch power will only remain as long as it is considered indispensable ...

H. Colijn, Staatkundige Hervormingen in Nederlandsch-Indie (Kampen: 1918), pp. 6, 8-10, 18-19, 23-24, 30, 35-36.
19 Commentaries on the views of Colijn

1. The Vice-President of the Council of the Indies (de Graeff) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 15 April 1918

You can be sure of two things: firstly, that there will be pressure to make the electoral system for the Volksraad more democratic; and secondly, that there will be pressure to change the Volksraad from an advisory body into a co-legislative institution. This is inescapable; we may be able to temporize a little, but that is all. It is simply unthinkable that people might be appeased by local institutions, which they are to accept as their parliaments, when they have already been given a taste of a central representative body. Colijn has always been right in arguing that one should have started off with those local parliaments and built up to a central parliament. However, Colijn has not been able to understand that one should have started with those local parliaments twenty years ago and that now the central parliament can no longer be postponed. He became wise after the event when the course of events could no longer be changed.

I would also consider it fatal for the government not to present the Volksraad with a perspective [of future political development] now. Otherwise the gentlemen will take care of this matter themselves. There is no doubt about it ...

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad ... p. 225.

2. Despatch of the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum) to the Minister of Colonies (Pleyte), 14 July 1918

According to the telegrams, the moment is now coming near when our working relationship will be ended. And I really do not have to say again how sorry I am, because I will lose out with this change of portfolios. It is also by no means certain that I will be able to work together with a minister from the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Colijn will certainly gain great influence ... he just does not realize that it is impossible now to change course again, and I certainly would not agree to it. I am also wondering whether in Holland they are sufficiently aware of the views and aspirations gaining momentum here in the Indies and whether they will agree with the view that it is necessary to steer the Volksraad in the direction I am aiming at ...

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad ... p. 236.
3. Despatch of the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 8 October 1918

Immediately on taking over the Department of Colonies I was forced to take up a position concerning the Bill submitted to the Second Chamber by my predecessor to change the Constitutional Regulations of the Netherlands Indies and to reform the principles of colonial government. Although I cannot agree with a number of important and even fundamental points developed in the explanatory submission accompanying this Bill, in order to avoid any misunderstandings I would rather not withdraw it, but I intend at the appropriate time to amend it to the extent that it will be more in line with my present views, which differ somewhat from my earlier submissions. [Minister Pleyte's Bill envisaged the establishment in Java of autonomous regencies in which administrative and legislative power would rest in fully elected councils and not in the centrally controlled bureaucracy. Idenburg had initially agreed with this.]

I have been reflecting more deeply on this indeed highly important matter, and I have also taken note of the recently published Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms by the English Minister for India and the Governor-General of India [i.e. the Montagu and Chelmsford report] and I have studied the sagacious writings of Mr Ritseman van Eck [basically similar to Colijn's] and the excellent booklet of Mr H. Colijn, Member of the First Chamber, entitled Staatkundige Hervormingen in Ned. Indie [Political Reforms in the Netherlands Indies]. And I have become convinced that an effective reform of our government in the Indies can only be based on the following two fundamental principles: firstly, there must be a separation between the organs of actual popular government, autonomous government, and the government of the foreign, leading, Netherlands power. This fundamental idea of Mr Ritseman van Eck, which is also warmly supported by Mr Colijn, I consider correct and very useful if implemented.

Secondly, it must be kept in mind that the gradual evolution of the Indies State must occur in line with what Mr Colijn terms the federalist idea. As we are now engaged in trying to reform the government of the Indies, we must keep in mind that also with respect to the future Netherlands Indies the following words of that British India Report (p. 277) do apply, i.e. that it must become "a sisterhood of states, self-governing in all matters of purely local or provincial interest."

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad, pp. 248-49.
4. Telegram of the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum) to the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg), 14 October 1918

[No. 405] In order to dissipate misapprehensions of those who confuse self-government with independence and feeling of uneasiness as to future existing among Europeans I think desirable statement in Volksraad placing in foreground indissolubility ties uniting Holland and India, further on lines of your 360 adding that ultimate goal you sketched can only be attained when electorate sufficiently developed intellect and character to hold their representatives to account and that above self-government bodies will ever be maintained for whole archipelago central government in which native population will gradually have greater share and which will be responsible to Indian peoples in manner to be determined later. Please telegraph before end month whether you concur.


5. Telegram of the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 16 October 1918

[No. 371] Entirely concurring views expressed your 405 I would only add granting responsible government must also depend on experience gained and skill acquired by elected representatives in managing public affairs in local bodies.


20 The Petition Sutardjo

Letter of the President of the Volksraad (W. H. van Helsdingen) to the First and Second Chambers of the States-General, 1 October 1936

The Volksraad, making use of its competent power ... granted in Article 68 of the Indies Constitutional Regulations, has decided at its meeting of 29 September 1936 to request Her Majesty the Queen as well as the States-General to promote the calling of a conference of representatives of the Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies. This conference should on the basis of the equality [of the partners] construct a plan for the granting of an independent status to the Netherlands Indies within the limits of Article 1 of the Constitution and by means of gradual reforms and in a period of time within
which the conference considers the realization of this ideal possible ...

This decision of the Volksraad resulted from a proposal made by six of its members, Messrs Soetardjo, also called Kar
tohadikoesoemo, Dr G. S. S. J. Ratu Langie, I. J. Kasimo, Land
joemin gelar Datoek Toemenggoeng, Mr Ko Kwat Tióng and Said
Abdoellah bin Salim Alatas ...


21 Reply to Sutardjo

Despatch of the Governor-General (Stachouwer) to the Minister of Colonies
(Welter), 14 September 1938

I was requested in a letter from the Minister of 11 November 1936 ...

to give my views as to how the Queen should be advised [with
respect to the Petition Sutardjo] ... I had this ministerial despatch
handed to the previous Government Representative for General Af-
fairs in the Volksraad [Mr Peekema] ... who in his note of 27
January 1937 came to the conclusion that the petition in its present
form and in the way it came about “is a somewhat crude summons
to speedily grant self-government to the Indies along certain definite
lines”, which certainly cannot be agreed to unconditionally, but
which on the other hand can also not be dismissed with a shrug of the
shoulder.

“There is a lack of systematic thinking and guiding principles in
the Indies Constitutional Regulations; and there is a great deal of
uncertainty about where this country is going, in what way and in
what tempo.” This, together with the desire for a greater degree of
self-government, which lives in many different forms in the Indies
society, makes it, in the opinion of Mr Peekema, desirable to set up
a government commission, which has also been recommended by Mr
C. C. van Helsdingen during the debates in the Volksraad about the
petition Sutardjo.

This commission should be charged with “indicating the lines
along which the gradual political development of the Netherlands
Indies is to take place ... ”

Also the previous Adviser for Native Affairs [Gobee] ... was, ac-
cording to his letter of 25 March 1937, ... of the opinion “that to
further a quiet development of political relations in this country it is
required that—taking into account the opinions of the inhabitants of
the kingdom—guidelines should be established for the development
of the political relations between the Netherlands and the Indies in
the future".

Differing on this point from Mr Peekema, he was of the opinion,
however, that for political reasons it would not be advisable to dis-
miss the idea of calling a conference of representatives of the
Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies. Its task could still be very
restricted and the working-out in detail of the principles indicated by
[the conference] could be left to the government commission.

The previous Director of Education and Religious Affairs [Dr De
Kat Angelino] ... concluded first of all in his secret letter of 5 May
1937 ... that the existing constitutional order rules out the granting
of the petition. The requested conference of Netherlands and
Netherlands Indies representatives chosen on the basis of equal
rights, which, as is obvious from the petition, should be able to take
binding decisions with regard to changes in the Constitution and the
Indies Constitutional Regulations, is unconstitutional.

In contrast to these advisers, Dr De Kat Angelino dismissed the
usefulness even of a possible programme of measures to regulate the
development towards political independence of the Netherlands In-
dies, either within a definite period or not. All political influence that
can be exerted by the Indies people on the policies of the central
government without affecting the ultimate responsibility of the
Netherlands nation for these policies has already been granted to the
representatives of the Indies citizens in the Volksraad. Any further
political emancipation means a transfer of power by the central
government, i.e. the responsibility of the Indies Government to the
Netherlands nation is shifted to the people of the Netherlands In-
dies, and therefore in his opinion the government must dismiss in
principle the idea of a programme of political reforms. In his view
the further political emancipation of the Indies can and may—if the
Netherlands sees its duty as a leader correctly—only be the culma-
tion of a many-sided, and completely social, development. In his opi-
nion the Indies Government can say with the fullest conviction that
it does not know any uncertainty, that it works towards the emana-
tion of society, that it welcomes all parties to participate, and
that every step forward in this work automatically brings political
emancipation nearer.

Although completely opposing the petition, Dr De Kat Angelino
nevertheless ... considers it a fact of great political importance. He
is of the opinion that the Volksraad should be told why the petition
cannot be granted, while at the same time the government should
make it clear that it is fully prepared to have an exchange of views
about the further development of the political relationship between
the Netherlands and the Indies.

He argues that the problem of the relationship between the
Netherlands and the Indies should not be seen solely in terms of the independence of the Indies, but that a system must be constructed for the whole of the kingdom, in which the various parts of this complexity of states will be able to lead their own lives as healthily as possible and in accordance with their own natural dispositions, while at the same time they will mutually co-operate and form a kingdom that is united and as strong as possible. So he advocates the establishment of an authority, which he calls the Imperial Council, that should have the task of advising the Crown about matters of importance to the empire as a whole ... I finally had these submissions ... sent to De Raad van Nederlands-Indie [the Council of the Netherlands Indies], which in its detailed and sound advice of 25 November 1937 ... came to the following conclusions:

1. The granting of the Petition Soetardjo is in the first instance not possible because in the way it is worded it is incompatible with the existing constitutional law.

2. Completely ignoring this point, the granting of the petition is, however, also undesirable for political reasons. It is true that an expression such as "an independent status within the limits of Article 1 of the Constitution" leaves room for a great variety of interpretations. But the so-called dominion status which the proposers of the petition have in mind ... is a form of organization for which the Indies community—considering the stage of political development it has reached—cannot yet bear the responsibility.

3. It follows from 1 and 2 that a conference, the purpose of which is neither considered desirable nor possible, should not be advocated by the government.

4. Administrative reforms [i.e. establishment of autonomous provinces] that are now being implemented should be continued energetically. At the same time the delegation of autonomous power to the lower administrative units and a regulation of the financial relationship between the central government and these lower administrative units should be pushed through as far as possible. This means a considerable increase in the participation of the Indies community and its institutions in their own affairs, but it still leaves untouched the extremely important areas for which a greater and better assured participation of the Netherlands Indies is necessary.

5. This greater participation cannot for the time being be achieved by changing clauses of the Constitution or the Indies Constitutional Regulations ... because then the as yet indispensable principal powers of the Home Government would be abandoned. But [this greater participation] can be achieved in practice when
these ... powers are carefully handled and when full account is
taken of the needs and demands of the Indies and also as far as
possible of the views of the Indies.

6. In accepting the so-called technical revision of the Indies Con-
stitutional Regulations, which has already been designed by the
Department of Colonies, it is possible to show the participatory
powers that already have been granted to the Netherlands Indies
to their fuller advantage. [This technical revision was concerned
to enable the Standing Committee of the Volksraad to deal with
auxiliary budgets, draft legislation, and other government regula-
tions, when the Volksraad was not in session.]

7. It would be useful to carry this revision further by changing Arti-
cle 91 of the Indies Constitutional Regulations and by putting
forward the times fixed for the discussion of the main budget.
[Article 91 stipulated that matters dealing with international rela-
tions and international law were to be dealt with by the Governor-
General. In practice this meant that in “mixed” cases such as
opium legislation, trade regulations, and production restrictions,
the Volksraad was not heard. Another grievance was that the
Volksraad was asked to discuss the budget too early, i.e. about
eighteen months before its implementation.]

8. It is necessary for the Indies Government to again explain and de-
defend openly in the Volksraad this state of affairs, because only in
this way will it be possible to keep within reasonable bounds the
dissatisfaction about the attitude of the Home Government
towards the Netherlands Indies that has been repeatedly shown
and that can also be expected to occur periodically in the future.
On the other hand [the Indies Government] must be diligent to
the utmost in carrying out measures such as a large-scale ad-
ministrative reorganization that will give the citizens a greater
say in their own affairs. And the possibilities under the existing
legislation of having a say in matters of imperial importance,
which also touch on Indies interests, must be fully utilized.

As Your Excellency will have seen from this very concise survey,
the considerations of the advisers are in general concerned with two
aspects, i.e. the formal side, and the material or rather the political
importance of the petition ...

I also recognize the political importance of this petition in so far
as in my opinion it is widely believed that these regions are quickly
outgrowing their constitutional framework. The European part of
the population is in particular concerned about the influence the
Home Government is allowed to exert on the activities of the Indies
Government. The part of the indigenous population that rises to the
discussion of political problems and that has desires such as were ex-
pressed by Mr Soetardjo is driving towards something far more fun-
damental, ... the realization of the ideal of bringing the control over these regions completely into indigenous hands. I agree fully that this striving is a political reality, the dynamic power of which is destined to increase. It would be a mistake to ignore the numerous examples provided by history and not to attach any importance to the desire for self-determination of awakening colonial peoples.

The Netherlands Government, however, has not failed to take notice of the signs of the times nor has it neglected to give the indigenous people a part in the central and local administration. Surveying what has been done during the last twenty years in the political field and what is still on the agenda for the near future, and taking into account the intellectual and material state of this society, there is no justification for concluding that political rights are not granted quickly enough. Furthermore, we are working diligently and energetically—as far as economic and financial conditions permit—towards the intellectual and material development of the indigenous people, in order to bring closer to fulfilment the conditions that are indispensable for the granting of further political rights to the people. It would be superfluous to go into further details about the matter in this despatch. The Council of the Netherlands Indies and Mr De Kat Angelino have in their submissions commented on the same ideas. And I agree fully with the latter where he underlines the great political importance of the much-discussed “ripeness” ...

On the one hand it can be admitted that in spite of what has been and is being done, there remains a strong and natural pressure to obtain more extensive political powers, and this pressure is a factor to be taken into account. On the other hand, there is the condition that for the time being we must hold to the present situation. This admission therefore should not be taken to mean that we should try to satisfy [indigenous demands] to some extent now, and construct, as the conference is supposed to do, a programme for the distant future, which pretends to indicate stages that are to be gradually realized as well as the tempo in which these goals are to be reached. The uncertainty about the future, the uncertainty especially about the course of the intellectual and economic development of the people, which is dependent on so many unforeseen, indeed uncontrollable circumstances, excludes at once the possibility of creating something realistic. If the government, ignoring the reality of the matter, should nevertheless wish to co-operate in designing the desired programme in order to open up a perspective—however little value it may itself attach to it—then I am completely convinced that it would not cause any satisfaction, not even temporarily. I do not share the hope apparently cherished by Messrs Peekema and Gobee that in this way it [the government] would profit from a desire to co-operate and would give a more happy direction to the indigenous
movement. Such a programme would in this society not bring clarity and direction but commotion and confusion among the intellectuals, who in political affairs are still primitive thinkers. [Such a programme] would certainly be shouted down as inadequate and it could easily be attacked because of the numerous hypotheses on which it would of necessity have to be based. I instructed [government spokesmen] to be purposely reserved and to dismiss discussions about vague possibilities in the future during the general political debates of last year. In my opinion the government can easily say too much in these matters and it would serve her well in its dealings with the Volksraad and political movements to direct attention to concrete things ... 

To call a conference as is wanted by the petition or to set up a commission as is desired ... by Mr C. C. van Helsdingen would give the unfavourable impression that government policy is uncertain. It would also create expectations that something new and great was to happen. This again would cause a great deal of loud commotion, while the final result of it all would be negative, or a programme would be worked out that would embarrass the government ...

I also wish to record here that the idea of Mr De Kat Angelino to set up an imperial council should in my view not be recommended. I find it difficult to see how such a body can be properly fitted into the political structure, nor can I see its usefulness, while I can not imagine how a satisfactory membership of this body can be composed. Mr De Kat Angelino wants to give a considerable number of seats to the political parties, which probably would have to be promised an important say in order to get the idea of such an institution accepted. But I fear that this would immediately pull down the quality of the council in view of the lack of expertise ...

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad, pp. 382-90.

22 Rejection of an Indonesian parliament

Despatch of the Minister of Colonies (Welter) to the Queen, 13 February 1941

The Gaboengan Politiek Indonesia is a federation of a number of indigenous political associations that are very much nationalistically inclined. [The G.A.P.I.] has already earlier propagated the idea of instituting a full parliament in the Netherlands Indies, to which the government would owe political responsibility ... During the
deliberations in the States-General about the Indies budget for 1941, which took place during March 1940, the aspirations of this association were the subject of a great deal of discussion. There was almost unanimous agreement with the view held by the undersigned, that we are confronted here with a premature slogan which does not fit in the course of gradual political development of the Netherlands Indies. This is so, because this slogan demands the immediate realization of something that is in fact the finish of a democratic evolution of the government system. Such a final stage, when a full Parliament to which the government is responsible will be instituted, is in its own good time only thinkable when such a structure is founded on a society that has advanced intellectually to the stage where it can support it.

It would not be objectionable in itself if a leftist-oriented political federation such as the G.A.P.I. nevertheless continued to work for the implementation of its political slogan. What makes the activities of this group objectionable, however,—and the Governor-General is apparently driving at this when he calls this action “improper”—is that it seemingly attempts to take advantage of the difficult situation the Kingdom of the Netherlands finds itself in, and to suggest that such large-scale political reforms are needed just now in order to strengthen the “moral resistance” of the Indies population. The suggestion is then apparently that in the event of these reforms not being effected, the population would not be found prepared or able to bear the trials of the war and the separation from the mother country with the required calmness and firmness.

The only proper attitude is to dismiss such a political action. It does not need saying that on the other hand the traditional policy towards the Indies must be continued, and that one should continue to work towards the gradual preparation of the Netherlands Indies for self-government within the context of the kingdom. One must add that because of the present circumstances there can be no question of political and constitutional reforms, which would necessitate a change in the Constitution or the Indies Constitutional Regulations ...

Finally, with regard to the telegram of the Secretariat of the G.A.P.I., this does not in the opinion of the undersigned need any answer or other treatment. The undersigned would therefore respectfully suggest to Your Majesty that the papers concerned should be deposited.

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad, pp. 570-72.
Declaration of the Netherlands Government in exile in London, 27 January 1942

The present political structure of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as the internal relations between the mother country and the overseas territories, are based on the Constitution of 1922 and the resulting Constitutional Regulations of the Netherlands Indies, Surinam, and Curacao. Since 1922 the intellectual and material development of these overseas territories, especially of the Netherlands Indies, has shown some marked advances. As a result of this, special attention has been directed in the representative institutions in the motherland and the Indies as well as outside to constitutional measures for the further emancipation of the overseas territories within the framework of the kingdom.

While the occupation of the mother country has lamed the political life there, the situation is different in the overseas territories. In spite of the fact that the ties with the mother country were broken, these territories under the leadership of their governors have shown an excellent bearing and strength of mind and have given proof in these times of their capacity to stand on their own feet. This has stimulated the process of intellectual and political awakening in ever broader layers of the population.

In order to give direction to this respectable striving for a relationship between the various parts of the kingdom that is in harmony with these changed circumstances, on 10 May 1941 Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina announced in a radio speech that after the war an imperial conference would be called.

S. L. van der Wal, De Volksraad ... pp. 670-71.

EDUCATION POLICY

The provision of modern education facilities for the indigenous population, on which a rather hesitant start had been made during the second half of the nineteenth century, received a considerable boost under the aegis of the Ethical Policy.

Around the turn of the century a larger number of Dutchmen—both in the colony and at home—had begun to believe implicitly in the value of education, which in the typically liberal philosophical atmosphere of the time was considered to provide an effective cure for the inherent evils in indigenous society and as an absolutely necessary condition for indigenous economic progress. A typical example of this reasoning is provided by the writings of Habbema, Inspector of Education during the first decade of this century (see document 24).
Even more idealistic, but no less genuine, was a smaller group of Dutch colonial reformers, of whom Snouck Hurgronje, the noted Islamic expert and Adviser for Native Affairs, was probably the most brilliant representative. He believed that only by giving in readily and at the right time to the growing demand for Western education, particularly on the part of the Indonesian upper classes, could the Kingdom of the Netherlands retain the Indies. They argued that in associating the leading Indonesian classes with Dutch culture and by granting them an ever-increasing share in the running of colonial affairs and government they would tie them inextricably, spiritually, intellectually, and politically, to the ruling classes in the Netherlands. And when this process of association had finally run its course there would have come about the beautiful ideal of a Kingdom of the Netherlands consisting of two autonomous parts: one in north-western Europe and the Other in South-east Asia (see document 25).

Another more prosaic, but nevertheless powerful, argument for allowing larger numbers of Western-educated Indonesians into the more responsible positions in the colonial public service was the consideration that Indonesians, because of their lower standing of living, could be paid considerably less than the expensive expatriate Dutchmen (see document 26).

A considerable controversy, however, arose as to what kind of educational programme should be introduced; and in particular, such questions as what minimum standard of education was to be provided, and whether in all native schools Dutch was to be used as a medium of instruction, caused a great deal of altercation in official and educational circles. Some educationalists and politicians, such as the Minister for Colonies, Fock, who strongly believed in the rapid industrialization of Java, wanted a frontal attack: he advocated that primary schools with a technically based curriculum should be made available to all Javanese as quickly as possible and irrespective of the cost involved (see document 27:1). The majority of officials, however, including Governor-General van Heutz and Snouck Hurgronje (see document 27:2), were strongly opposed to Fock’s plan on the grounds that it would result in a vast waste of public money and might even create a discontented and politically dangerous intellectual proletariat. The general European opinion was that the government should only provide education when a certain section of the indigenous population expressed a need for it. And assuming that the vast majority of Indonesians, who were still agrarian-based, did not have such a need because they did not express it, it was felt that only the simplest possible education was necessary for the indigenous masses, on whom the Dutch language, modern science, and history would be completely lost.
It was Governor-General van Heutz who hit on the ingenious idea of the communal village school, which after 1907 became the standard elementary school for the vast majority of Indonesians. The village school was in many ways a typical Dutch treat in that this three-year school, providing reading and writing in the vernacular and simple arithmetic, had to be built and paid for (and have the teachers' salaries provided) by the villagers themselves on a voluntary basis. Only in very exceptional cases would the government be prepared to grant a very limited subsidy to villages. In addition so-called Second Class Vernacular Schools were established, providing a somewhat more extensive curriculum primarily for lower-class Indonesians who were no longer rurally based. Vernacular Continuation Schools were set up for the brighter pupils who had passed through the village schools.

Between 1900 and 1942 there was gradually established a dual system of education: a vernacular one that did not reach beyond the primary level; and a Dutch-language system reaching from primary school to university.

The vernacular system, which was primarily designed to eradicate illiteracy, only progressed very slowly. And the argument advanced by van Heutz in establishing the village schools, that people only appreciate something when they have to pay for it, might perhaps have been applicable to the generally thrifty citizens of the Netherlands. But to the vast majority of Indonesian villagers these new-fangled institutions were of very limited appeal; and it soon became apparent that if van Heutz's instruction about a voluntary communal effort was adhered to, hardly any schools would arise. Officials therefore began to put pressure on the villagers, with the result that in many areas the village school came to be widely considered as another form of taxation, another curse of Allah superimposed upon them by the colonial government (see document 28:1).

Only after the early 1920s, when the colonial government decided to grant more liberal subsidies to village schools, did the situation begin to improve; it was, however, to deteriorate again during the Great Depression of the 1930s when funds for vernacular education were also severely curtailed. By 1940 the number of village schools had risen to the extent that they could accommodate a little over 40 per cent of Indonesian children in the six to nine age group. The average literacy rate was, however, by this time probably still below 10 per cent (see document 30). And whatever gains the colonial government had been able to make in eradicating illiteracy were almost immediately absorbed by the continuous rapid increase in population.

In addition to the apparent unwillingness of the colonial government to allot sufficient funds to allow a rapid increase in the number
of vernacular schools, there were a number of other important factors which adversely affected the literacy programme. For example, vernacular schools were basically intended to produce literate farmers and workers, but the vast majority of lower-class Indonesian parents could not see any value in sending their children to school unless this would help them to advance themselves on the traditional socio-economic value scale, that is, to obtain white-collar jobs. Another factor was that the vernacular school did not sufficiently fit in with the rhythm of rural life, and holidays, for example, did not take any account of harvesting seasons, when children were urgently needed on the farms, of days of religious observance, or of other feast days. Some Dutch educationalists (see document 29) also criticized the curriculum of vernacular schools as too intellectualistic and claimed that, in order to prepare pupils better for the rural life they were supposed to return to, the idea of the “work school” of the Montessori and Froebel type would be more suitable. They said that the curriculum was too Western-oriented and should be changed to take much greater account of local cultural patterns. And although some attempts were made during the 1920s and 1930s to follow up these criticisms, the indigenous population in general remained uninterested in the vernacular schools, and the high rate of absenteeism and premature leaving continued, which of course reduced the efficiency of the vernacular system even more.

In contrast, the Dutch-language schools system expanded very rapidly during the first two decades of the twentieth century. And in addition to various types of primary schools catering for specific population groups (European Primary Schools, Dutch-Native Schools, Dutch-Chinese Schools, and Dutch-Arab Schools), three-year secondary schools (M.U.L.O.) and five to six-year secondary schools (H.B.S., A.M.S., Lyceum) were established. The M.U.L.O. gave entry to various tertiary institutions for study in Agriculture, Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Education, Veterinary Science, and Engineering—_institutions somewhat akin to Australian institutions of advanced education_. The five to six-year secondary schools gave access to university. Between 1919 and 1941 the following faculties were established in Indonesia: Engineering, Law, Medicine, Public Administration, and Arts. There were also a number of Indonesians studying at universities in the Netherlands.

Entry into the Dutch-language schools was restricted to Europeans, Eurasians, and children of upper-class or well-to-do Indonesian or other non-European parents. The high school fees introduced to reinforce this rule did not seem to have deterred a considerable number of lower-class Indonesian parents from sending their children to Dutch-language schools. A government investigation held in 1926 found that out of a sample of 52,600 children in Dutch-
Native Schools 66 per cent did not comply with the social and economic entry norms originally laid down. This obvious predilection of Indonesians for entry into Dutch-language schools was not caused solely by a thirst for Western knowledge for its own sake, but also because a Dutch school certificate opened up the possibility of a position in the colonial civil service, which carried the highest degree of social prestige in the Javanese world.

By the mid-1920s, however, the production of Indonesian Dutch-language school graduates was surpassing the number of vacancies in the civil service and an enquiry held in 1924 found that in Batavia 16.5 per cent of the estimated ten thousand Dutch-speaking Indonesians were unable to find clerical work of any description and preferred to stay unemployed rather than accept manual work. This unemployment problem was viewed with considerable alarm by a large section of Europeans in the colony, a number of whom came to believe that a relationship existed between this "intellectual proletariat" and the radicalization of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement that was occurring at this time. And although an official investigation held in 1926 (see document 58) concluded that no valid correlation could be established, this did not deter a growing number of critics of the Ethical education policy from persisting in their belief and demanding a slowing-down in the expansion of Dutch-language schools (see document 31). One of the most prominent critics was Meyer Ranneft, an important colonial official and spokesman in the Volksraad of the sizeable group of Dutchmen who considered the Indies as their permanent homeland (the blijvers) as opposed to those Dutchmen who returned to Holland after their tour of duty had been completed (the trekkers). (See document 32.)

As a result the colonial government instituted in 1926 the Dutch-Native Schools Commission, which after a series of important sociological investigations concluded in 1929 that the Dutch-language school system suffered from two basic defects. Firstly, it failed to satisfy the actual educational needs of society, because more graduates were being produced than could be absorbed by the economy. For example, it had been found that in 1928 about a quarter of Dutch-speaking Indonesians employed in the civil service and by European industry held positions in which Dutch primary school qualifications were not necessary. Moreover in the school year 1928-29 as many as 9120 Dutch-speaking Indonesians were graduating, while there were only 3900 new openings. And although the Commission pointed out that it did not subscribe to the current opinion that there was a special relationship between Dutch-language education and the incidence of Communism, it nevertheless believed that the "overproduction" of Dutch-speaking
Indonesians was an important contributory cause of the widespread discontent in indigenous society.

The second basic defect of the system was its inefficiency, caused by the fact that large numbers of pupils left school before the completion of their courses. It was found that only 40.9 per cent of students entering the first year of the Dutch-Native Schools managed to obtain the final diploma. This wastage was caused partly by the difficulty of the teaching programme and partly by the high cost of Dutch-language education, which lower-class parents often could not sustain for the whole period.

The main solution to these problems suggested by the Commission was to severely curtail the influx of students into these schools by restricting entry—as had been originally intended—solely to children from upper-class Indonesian milieux.

Realization of the deep and widespread political discontent that a curtailment in Dutch-language education would undoubtedly cause in the Indonesian community initially restrained the colonial government from taking any drastic action (see document 33). However, a fortuitous opportunity to act on the suggestions of the Commission was soon presented to the colonial government by the advent of the Great Depression of the 1930s, which enabled it to slash savagely the funds for Dutch-language schools ostensibly on the basis of budgetary considerations alone (see document 34:2).

Not to be thwarted, Indonesians began to set up their own private Dutch-language schools, which spread so rapidly that by 1937 they had surpassed the number of government schools in terms of students. Attempts by the colonial government in 1932 to stop the growth of these "Wilde Scholen" caused such a furore in the whole of the indigenous world that the government finally was forced to withdraw the proposed legislation from the Volksraad. Again the realization that the Dutch-language school issue was highly sensitive politically prevented the colonial government from continuing its policy of curtailment after 1936 when the worst of the Depression had passed; and as a result a rapid expansion of these schools took place again until the end of Dutch rule.

The dual nature of the Dutch colonial education system came under severe attack from a number of progressive Dutch educationalists, who in particular criticized the "concordantie" principle, i.e. the insistence on keeping the Dutch-language schools in Indonesia on a strict par in terms of standards and curricula with their counterparts in Holland, which was considered to be wasteful and contrary to the real educational needs of indigenous society. A typical representative of this school of thought was Albert de la Court, the politically progressive former Director of the Teacher's College in Bandung (see document 35).
Many still doubt the wisdom of providing the native masses with education. The desirability of education for upper-class children is recognized, but not for children of the ordinary villager. It is often argued that education should not be provided for all children not only because they do not need it but also because it will make them averse to manual labour. Boys who have been to school do not want to go back behind the plough but aspire to a "position" and as the number of positions is limited the result will be the creation of an intellectual proletariat. This could cause the government a great deal of trouble because disappointment followed by discontentment can lead to all sorts of excesses. And in particular among dissatisfied intellectuals will criminal and other bad elements be found.

But the best way in fact to counteract the formation and expansion of an intellectual proletariat and to reduce any other disadvantages of native education to a minimum is to spread the idea of education ... as widely as possible among all classes.

But what is the situation at present?

A Javanese boy who has successfully completed a course in a primary school and has obtained his final certificate ... fancies himself to be quite somebody and this is understandable, considering that in Java and Madoera, with a population of about thirty million people, only about a thousand pupils per year are able to obtain such a certificate.

It is not surprising then that these boys develop pretensions and consider themselves too good to walk behind a plough again.

In fact the vast majority of them succeed in getting a position in private enterprise as *mandoer* [foreman] or clerk in the village, the regional government service, the Surveyor-General's department, the railways, the post office, etc ...

As soon as the majority of the people have been educated, the prestige of being an educated man will be reduced ... And the demand for positions will become so great that the graduates from native schools will be forced to find other employment, in agriculture or in a trade.

I do not deny that probably the number of "troublesome" natives will increase with the spreading of education, but against this there is the considerable advantage that the influence of fanatics and other individuals who are hostile to authority will diminish in line with the degree of intellectual development of the people, who will no longer allow themselves to be so easily aroused and incited as "the stupid masses" by the first rebel-rouser that comes along.

It can also be assumed that it will as a rule be far more difficult for the chiefs, Chinese, and Arabs to fool and exploit an educated native
than a villager who still remains in a state of complete ignorance.

Finally, education can play an important role in eradicating superstition ... which still presses as a heavy yoke on the native people and seriously obstructs the people's freedom of action. The people are allowed to work only at certain times ... and things have to be done in certain ways otherwise there will be conflict with Dewi Seri, Gendroewos, Poentianaks, and all kinds of other spirits and spooks. A great deal of time and money is lost because of superstition. One only needs to refer here to the time-consuming stalk-by-stalk harvesting of rice, which is interspersed by the necessary slametans and sedekahs [feasts and prayers] in memory of deceased relatives. One only needs to think of the money wasted on doekoons [soothsayers] and the exorcising of devils ...

Lately, the question whether the natives are lazy or not has been often discussed, and opinions differ very widely—ranging from not lazy to very lazy.

It seems to me that, if given a sufficiently strong stimulus to work, the natives are no lazier than Europeans. One must remember that in the Indies the enervating climate makes working, particularly on the land much more burdensome than in Europe; and in the tropics less effort is required to provide for one's daily needs than in a more moderate climate, where so much more is needed in the way of clothing, lighting, and fuel alone ...

So in my view the natives are not lazy, but they are very careless and thoughtless about the future. The main reason for this is that they do not use their brains, because they have not been taught to do so ... In our own society carelessness is often found in uneducated people who live from day to day and who worry very little about their future and that of their families. When money is plentiful, most of it is wasted. This is also true of the natives. When they have money, they cannot wait until it has been spent on finery and sweets. They never think about saving, and in the event of the least adversity, sickness, or crop failure, there is no money to see them through the bad days. The result is poverty ...

How then can education be a means to combat this native thoughtlessness and so indirectly lead to an improvement in native economic conditions? ... It will be mainly through the civic virtues inculcated at school, that is, when the teachers perform their task properly. Orderliness, neatness, diligence, a sense of duty and obedience, are just as much taught at school as reading and writing, and it is just those and other civic virtues that are lacking in native children, because they are usually badly brought up by their own families ...
C. Snouck Hurgronje: The ideal of association, 1911

It is not enough, however, just to take measures designed to prevent the population from becoming discontented or rebellious and in this way secure our rule. Our objective should not be the hitherto so highly praised peacefulness, but movement. Our rule will have to justify itself on the basis of lifting the natives up to a higher level of civilization in line with their innate capacities. Education and training are the means to achieve this objective. Even in countries with a much older Islamic culture than in our archipelago we see education successfully at work in liberating Mohammedans from some of the medieval rubbish that they have carried in their train far too long. Admittedly the system that has historically evolved does not lend itself to deep-going reforms, neither through the modernization of the law nor through the popularization of mysticism; but the Muslim society nevertheless proceeds in the direction of modern culture, going outside the system and silently ignoring what it does not dare to touch. This is what is happening in Turkey, Egypt, and Syria.

Our task as educators and tutors of the East Indian Mohammedans is made easier by a number of factors which in other countries do not exist, or only to a lesser degree. One such is the relatively short period of time the Islamic system has been in force here. As a result many aspects of life have been left untouched, which facilitates the adoption of new cultural ideas, as long as we abstain from attacking the religious content. The centuries-old custom of the natives, particularly in Java, to come to terms with very different races and civilizations, has saved them from the narrowmindedness that results from isolation. It would be difficult to find anywhere in this world a people more willing to obey its chiefs than the Javanese, and it would be equally difficult to find foreign-dominated indigenous administrators who are more willing than the Javanese aristocracy to act according to the advice given by foreign government officials.

Particularly with respect to the education of their children, the native officials are not only wont to ask the advice of European officials but they also follow up this advice with an almost moving trust: In the early days they were usually advised to give their sons a fairly simple education, because it was argued that the knowledge needed by Europeans to get on in life would be useless to them in their rather limited field of work. Even this sort of advice was obediently followed up although many, thrusting their tongues in their cheeks, thought differently in private.

Since the change that has occurred in European opinion about the intellectual capacity of the natives and perhaps also even about their moral fibre, providing they have received a proper education, it has
become apparent that there is a strong desire among the Javanese upper classes to familiarize themselves completely with modern civilization, so much in fact that soon the facilities provided by the government will not be able to cope with this demand ...

What other colonial powers are trying to force upon their subjects with great difficulty—i.e. an education that prepares them to participate in their own way in the life of their rulers—is in fact being clamoured for by the indigenous population in Java and parts of the Outer Possessions. Would it not be terribly shameful for our colonial administration to leave this intellectual gold mine unexploited, just like a person who has obtained a concession but has no capital and keeps his business ostensibly alive until a more energetic syndicate will take it over from him?

But what has all this actually to do with the Islam question confronting the Netherlands? In fact, everything. The only real solution to this problem is to be found in the association of the Mohammedan subjects of the Netherlands state with the Netherlands. If this succeeds, the Islam problem will no longer exist, because there will have been created a cultural unity between the subjects of the Netherlands Queen on the shores of the North Sea and those of Insulinde [i.e. Indonesia], which will obliterate the importance of religious differences in the political and social sense. If [association] is not successful, the Indonesians, because of their inevitably increasing intellectual development, will of necessity be drawn ever further away from us, as others will take over the leadership from us.

Experience teaches us that we cannot expect the government to achieve this solution alone or in the first place. And although it does not lack the necessary sympathy in this matter, it actually lacks the will to move. The reasons for this we may as well leave aside, because after all the government is a rather cumbersome body that usually can only be moved by rude shocks ... There is, however, still another way which with less noise, although perhaps less quickly, can achieve the objective ... : that is the irresistible pressure that is usually exerted on the government by public opinion.

So large sections of the Netherlands people have first to become convinced that the association of the civilization of the native population of the Indies Archipelago with ours must be effected; that the present intellectual movement of the higher classes of native society urgently requires us to further this association; and that there is periculum in mora [danger in delay]. And we must go further than just words and become actively involved. We must be willing to make sacrifices both in terms of money and time. If it is left solely to the government there is a great danger that, owing to its innate irresolution, it may be taken by surprise in the end, when the correct moment to take and maintain control of the movement would have irrevocably passed.
So far the realization that we are dealing with an urgent popular need is only to be found in a fairly small group of people here [i.e. in the Netherlands]; and in fact the only ones who apparently are fully aware are the active supporters of the [Christian] missions. Or, rather: they are striving for an association of a much higher order than the one we have just mentioned, that is, a unity, if it could be achieved, which would take away all the obstructions to the unity of civilization and national consciousness of the eastern and western parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands—if such a thing is possible!

However, the great admiration with which we view the sacrificing labour of the missionaries, and our great appreciation of the liberality of the many people in the mother country who support these efforts, should not make us forget how limited are the chances of success for the Christian missions in countries which have been touched by the spirit of Islam. The more sensible missionaries have no illusions about this, although this does not stop them from giving up. Under no circumstances should our people and government even consider the possibility of delegating the implementation of the ideal of association to the Christian missions, while neglecting the movement in the native world that is at present gaining momentum and that provides such a very favourable opportunity.

The existence of this movement points undoubtedly to the practicability of the realization of a beautiful political and national idea, that is, the creation of a Netherlands nation consisting of two parts widely separated geographically but spiritually closely united, one in north-west Europe and the other in South-east Asia. This is not a Utopian ideal, but is is an objective which the people and government of the Netherlands would reproach themselves about for ever if they did not grasp it in time, letting the present opportune moment pass by without taking any action. In this case the following quotation from Goethe is entirely applicable: "Was du ererbt von deinen Vatern hast, erwirb es, um es zu besitzen". ["What you have inherited from your fathers, you must gain again in order to possess it."] Our inheritance in this case consists of the beautiful and rich tributary regions held by us until now by force. But if this claim is to withstand the stormy pressures of the times, we must now follow the material annexation by a spiritual one.

In order to avoid disappointment and confusion we must become fully aware of the limitations within which this spiritual annexation is possible. However important religion may be in the life of our people and state, even in this small Western country of the Netherlands it is not what holds us together. Our unity is rooted in more general cultural ideas, to the formation of which Christianity has undoubtedly contributed a great deal, but under the aegis of which not only Christians but the members of a great variety of religions, in-
cluding Jews and freethinkers, have equal rights to the accommoda-
tion of their particular views. This unity is so great that they would
oppose with all their strength, even at the cost of sacrificing their life
and goods, any attempts to force them to take on another nationality
or to become subject to another government. So it is logical
therefore that neither our government nor our people can mount a
propaganda campaign for the purpose of trying to convert the
Mohammedan natives to a [different] religion, however large the
number of its adherents here. An attempt to undermine the funda-
ments of the Islamic system, which partly rules and would like to
completely rule the life of the natives, may only be made by a
religious association, church, or missionary society. The state may
only make sure that nobody is obstructed in his freedom of action.

However, it is allowable and not out of place in this particular
case to stage a campaign for the purpose of annexing the natives to
our state and nationality more firmly than hitherto has been the
case. After all, for centuries they have been devoid of their own in-
dependent political power or national life; and we, who took away
from them what they may have had in this respect, promising to
respect their religious institutions, therefore accepted the moral
obligation to educate them so that they could participate in our
political and cultural life. They themselves are now dismissing
whatever pretexts there may be for postponing the fulfilment of this
duty, because of their own continuously growing pressure for this
spiritual annexation. Here it is by no means sufficiently realized how
strong this pressure in fact is. It is not only the native officials and
... aristocracy who in the first place want their children to learn
Dutch, and after that to gain as much as possible of the knowledge
that is opened up by this language; even the number of Moham-
medan religious teachers is increasing who entrust the education and
training of their sons to European control rather than having them
trained in Islamic scholastic knowledge. One is repeatedly told by
natives in Java that the patronage of pesantrens [Islamic centres of
learning] is strongly declining and that everybody is nowadays bent
on attending school. The fear expressed in earlier days in pious cir-
cles that such a rapprochement to Dutch culture would endanger the
faith inherited from the forefathers is being more and more replaced
by the conviction that is possible to remain true to the old religious
concepts and customs without continuing to live in the old ig-
norance, from which the best possible way to be extricated is to
entrust oneself completely to the training in the European school,
and even, if circumstances permit, also to education in an European
family. This trust is not unconditional when the native is forced
because of lack of space or financial reasons to send his children to a
Christian school, where children are obliged to attend lectures on
religion. The fact that many are prepared to take this in their stride is certainly strong proof of how deeply the need for education is felt. It would be dangerous to draw any other conclusions. [Forced religious instruction] is very much felt to be objectionable, and the fact that of necessity many remain silent should not tempt us to hope that subsidized Christian schools of this kind would be a suitable means to satisfy the enormous demand of natives in Java for European education.

It is true that, owing to the religious tolerance of the vast majority of the Javanese aristocracy, which borders on indifference, as well as the fact that the lower classes of the people have been used for centuries to dealing with people of different races and religions, the missions here do not experience the degree of difficulty that in many other Muslim countries obstructs them. On the other hand, the majority of the Mohammedan religious teachers, although generally used to restricting themselves within their own narrow field, are stimulated into reaction by the vigorous activity of the missions. They consider this attempt to convert the Mohammedans to Christianity as part of a European plan to rob the natives of what Allah has destined for them in the other world, after first having taking away already so many of their earthly possessions. If the government forces people who desire Western-style education to publicly subsidize schools in which Christian religious instruction is imposed on the pupils, then one can undoubtedy expect strong opposition to be mounted against the idea of association. This would either stop the rapprochement to our culture or would at least result in a strong demand that if schools with a specifically religious basis were to be subsidized, the natives should be allowed to express their preference, which would be for subsidized schools on the basis of Islam ...

Let me stress it again: the strong desire to be incorporated in our cultural life, which has been apparent in the native society during the last quarter of a century, has occurred entirely without any reference to religion. We should rejoice that the natives have not been held back by the system of Islam, which actually is opposed to such an association, from striving for such a rapprochement as is also so desirable to us ...

With respect to the conviction that our people have the urgent obligation to satisfy the ever-pressing demand of more intellectually developed Javanese and Malays for better education, the objection is sometimes raised that in this way only the upper layers of the people are reached, while the infinitely larger masses of common people remain untouched. And it is further argued that because of this a hitherto unknown cleavage will come about in the level of civilization of the aristocracy and the masses, which threatens to break the natural links between them.
It would undoubtedly make our task more successful if we could start from all directions at once, providing one knew the correct methods and had sufficient means at one's disposal to lift by means of effective education the mass of small Javanese peasants simultaneously to a higher intellectual level and to draw the Javanese aristocracy as closely as possible within our own spiritual atmosphere. However, this is beyond our power if only because the psychology of the common man poses for the moment too many insoluble riddles. And since we lack the proper data to make a correct diagnosis, the prescribed cure could well turn out to be completely wrong. With every attempt we make in the present circumstances to bring the villagers to a higher level of civilization, we run the great danger of superimposing something on them that they do not want, while at the same time we cannot be sure at all that such a thing is in fact suitable for them.

I do not hold any great hopes for the recently established village schools. They probably will not do any harm, but even the greatest optimist could not possibly consider these institutions as a gigantic step forward in the direction of association. I would rather see important experiments of this kind postponed until the time when we can make use of a considerable number of highly trained Javanese who can combine Western wisdom with Eastern experience. They would also be less likely to err than we in determining how the small-scale farmers of their own people could be induced to participate in the present-day economic life within the limits imposed upon them by nature.

Surely one prefers to start a project at a point that shows the greatest possibility of success; and one can be sufficiently sure of success if one starts with the Javanese upper classes ... 

No less urgent than the speedy multiplication of facilities by which natives can obtain the higher training desired by them is the need for the government to revise its practice of job delegation in the public service in such a way that all the work that can be done by the modern educated indigenes is in fact also entrusted to them. The present situation should no longer be maintained where the young natives who have come to the fore as the best products of the new policy are considered by the departmental chiefs as phantasms, which after a great deal of hesitation are pushed into some forgotten corner where one can no longer be disquieted by their countenance. Surely these people do not come falling out of the sky like meteors. Their arrival could have been expected for years and there is no excuse at all for being unprepared. The Indies Government must keep hammering on the door of the Department of Interior Administration and the Department of Education until they have satisfactorily solved these various interrelated problems ...
Fainthearted critics have often tried to put the fear of God into the supporters of association by prophesying that if this policy is continued it will eventually have disastrous consequences, and that an unbalanced and rebellious class of natives will be created, having lost contact with their own society without fitting into another social system.

Such objections have always been uttered in the past when a particular group of people tried to push itself out of a way of life that had become too narrow for it. However, such objections have never been able to stop this craving for enlightenment once awakened. We have also experienced political and social changes that did not occur as peacefully and gradually as had been intended. In these ventures to unknown heights there are always some participants who make thoughtless, giddy jumps, which cause some moments of general confusion. We expect that this will also occur in the East Indies, and those prophets we just mentioned will be ready to point out triumphantly that their sombre divinations have been fulfilled. We only hope that because of the exceptionally peaceful nature of the natives things will not get too far out of hand, and that under wise direction equilibrium will be soon restored.

However, we must by no means think that we are still at the crossroads in the history of the development of the Indonesians and that the decision whether to go to the right or the left is dependent on the will of our government. The process has begun without having been elicited by the government or the people of the Netherlands; in fact it has occurred despite unofficial obstructions. It is no longer a question whether those sections of the people of the Archipelago who are most open to higher development will surpass us in the intellectual field or not; the only question we can raise is whether the further growth of this movement that has begun so forcefully will occur with our co-operation and under our guidance, or whether it will happen despite our opposition and under the direction of others, who would soon appear on the scene. It seems to me that the answer to this question could hardly be the subject of a prolonged discussion …

We have viewed here the consequences of the adopted policy of association from the restricted vantage point of Islamic policy. But we may certainly add that it also provides the solution in so many other aspects of the problem to the future relationship between the people of the Indies Archipelago and us. Also from a general political point of view it is extremely important for us not to wait until, surprised by events, we have to make concessions to the natives, concessions which at present we still give to them voluntarily and in a form we consider the most suitable.

Dr van Hoevell many years ago desired that the Netherlands should try to overcome the disturbances in the interior of Java not by
the building of material fortresses but rather fortresses of gratitude in the hearts of the Javanese. Such idealism is too noble and beautiful to be realistic. A people is never thankful even for the greatest benefactions superimposed by foreigners. However, if on the other hand by means of association, which is desired by both sides, the stage is reached where both the Javanese and the Netherlands have achieved the greatest possible common intellectual ground, then there will be no need to speak about gratitude to foreigners because what was foreign will have become part of oneself; there will be only Eastern and Western Netherlands, who politically and nationally form a unity, irrespective of the difference in race.

What then could possibly obstruct the realization of this ideal? The differences in skin colour or background? From how many countries of Europe and Asia do many of the present Netherlands originate, and what is more untrue and conceited than the line in our national anthem, “free from foreign stains”? The mixing of our blood with that of the Indonesian race has already been occurring to such an extent for centuries that all shades between white and black in skin colour are represented among Nederlanders.

What then about too great a distance in civilization and philosophy of life? The upper classes among the natives would like nothing better than to reduce this gap to the minimum. Their students, who live with us at Leiden, Delft, and Amsterdam, are spiritually much closer to you and me than whole classes of our own people and sailors. However, such a strong spiritual unity is never responsible for tying a whole people together. A common past is the thing that holds together what is variegated; this applies to the various classes of our people, and it applies also for our people as a whole with respect to Indonesia, although the realization of this unity has not yet penetrated all strata of our nation.

Islam and Christianity can in the practical national life tolerate each other quite well, as long as the Pan-Islamic idea is set aside ... So far as tolerance is concerned many of us could learn a great deal from the majority of natives.

As a student I once attended a lecture by Ernest Renan on the question, “What actually constitutes a nation”. The answer was in the main as follows: the really constituting element of a nation is neither race nor skin colour, nor language, nor religion, nor natural frontiers, but it is “le desir d’etre ensemble” [the desire to be together]. And although this phrase does by no means explain it completely, it undoubtedly contains part of the truth. We know the feeling that despite differences in origin, sphere of life, and level of civilization, and notwithstanding all the political and religious dissension, when it comes to the point, we all want to remain together
as Netherlands. So now we have the situation where the most noble representatives of a large group of peoples, who already for a long time have been under our political control, urgently beg to be adopted ... into our national family. Let us extend our hands to them, and let us transform into positive deeds this mutual desire to live together as one nation, "le désir d'être ensemble", so as to show that our small nation has never forgotten to perform great deeds!


26 J. W. T. Cohen-Stuart: The Indonesiation of the Colonial service, 1907

It is of great importance for the continuation of our rule that we should bind the people to us, partly by letting them participate as much as possible in government administration and partly by letting them feel our rule as little as possible. Both these objectives can be achieved most effectively if we restrict ourselves as much as possible to a supervising role and leave the task of governing wherever possible to the natives themselves. In this way also the mistakes that are made will not be blamed so much on us as on their own countrymen ... The appointment of native officials instead of European ones wherever feasible will also greatly decrease the burden on the budget ... A European type of administration is too expensive for a country like the Indies ... Obviously a rich country like the Netherlands with a population six times smaller can easily afford a larger budget than the Indies, which is a poor country. But a serious inconsistency has crept into the Indies budget, which has to provide for a European administration that is twice as expensive as that in the Netherlands. The first thing to be done is to change this situation, if we want to be in a position to provide properly for the unmet needs of the Indies. And this can only be done by gradually replacing European officials by native ones, who will be paid at a lower rate based on the lower standard of living of the people ...

J. W. T. Cohen-Stuart, "Oprichting van Inlandsche Rechtscholen", *(Indische Gids* 1907, pp. 1332-33.)
27 Controversy on mass education

1. D. Fock: On mass technical education, 1905

We must go in the direction of technical education ... I do not want a slow and gradual development ... I envisage a large-scale organization. I realize that this will cost money, but this expenditure is in fact an investment. Only practical education can advance the population economically. The cost should not be considered unbearable, and most of the money can be found by borrowing. This is a matter which cannot and must not be postponed any longer. A slow and gradual expansion will achieve nothing ...


2. C. Snouck Hurgronje: On the fallacy of mass education, 1905

Supposing that it was desirable to industrialize a large sector of the Javanese economy, it would still not be possible to achieve this because the native population itself has not the slightest interest in the matter. I say it again. The European educator is only able to guide development. He cannot create something out of nothing ... Let us suppose that the foreign doctor, in spite of this completely impassive attitude of the patient, is not only able to give a correct diagnosis but also an effective remedy—risky suppositions to make. The result will be that these people, after having completed their training, will ask the government for suitable employment, because their own society can neither use nor pay for such highly trained workers. The state, which created these superfluous tradesmen and industrial workers, will not be able to back down from its obligation to keep them alive ... Saving banks and credit institutions, emigration, and technical training, if superimposed from above ... do not bring the Javanese one step closer to prosperity ...

S. L. van der Wal, "Het Onderwijs ... ", pp. 49-50.

3. J. B. van Heutz: On Fock's plans, 1907

Two possibilities were open to me: either to carry out blindly what the ill-informed Minister wanted, which would have cost the Treasury approximately 100 million guilders per annum; or I could have discreetly gone my own way still leaving him [i.e. Fock] the
honour of being progressive in education. I have chosen the second path and I have restricted the expansion of Tweede Klasse Scholen [more advanced vernacular schools] as much as possible … And, more realistically, I have immediately set up village schools which only receive temporary government support and which—at an annual outlay of one million guilders—will achieve just as much in the way of reading, writing, and arithmetic as the far too expensive Tweede Klasse Scholen of the Minister. The latter are only useful for the comparatively small group of people who are entirely removed from the village sphere …

S. L. van der Wal, Het Onderwijs …, p. 123.

28 Obstacles to vernacular education

1. J. H. Gunning: On the progress of village schools, 1919

In some parts of the Priangan [West Java], on the west coast of Sumatra and Korintji [West Sumatra] there seems to exist a great deal of interest in village schools. But everywhere else … the founding and upkeep of village schools depend on the pressure of the native heads, which varies from “gentle persuasion” to outright force … Perhaps initially one has fallen for the illusion that villagers were already influenced by the new spirit that animates the “awakening East”. After all it is easy to believe in what one hopes for … But when it became clear that in the village the situation had remained almost unchanged, it was obvious that the activity of the government officers would be construed into a command from above … The natives know indeed that it pays them to obey the government …

J. H. Gunning, Koloniaal Onderwijs Congres, 1919. Praeadvice, p. 105

2. C. O. van der Plas: On forceful methods in education, 1919

In Madoera I once saw a small group of crying children who, undergoing a form of punishment, sat in front of the house of the Assistent Wedono [lower indigenous official]. They were stamped all over in ink with “Je Maintiendrat” [motto on the coat of arms of the Dutch royal house], because they had been guilty of not attending school …

P. Post: The need to adapt village schools to local demands and culture, 1927

In the beginning the school is determined by society ... When the school has finally been completely accepted it will be possible to introduce very carefully new elements. Only then and not earlier will the school begin to influence its surroundings ... At present the village school has not been adapted to [local conditions] and is therefore not accepted ... [Post argued that, for example, school times should be changed to suit village life].

The village school, however primitive it is, is something new. It is different from the pesantren, which is a haven for everybody in the district. In harvest time, when many migrate elsewhere to work, the pesantren opens its doors widely for everybody ... The village school is not a centre, except in those very few places where the teacher has a strong personality. After one o'clock it is dead until half past seven the next morning. If only this school could have been built in such a way that it could become an extension, an enrichment, of village life. In Javanese districts, for example, this could be done by building the school in the form of a pendopo [pavilion-like building]. Why should the children of a people that lives with its whole soul in nature be confined in such a sombre, windowless space? In this climate a roof is all that is needed. Classrooms could be separated by bamboo partitions, which would be as efficient as the present thin walls in the village schools. Behind the pendopo there should be the dalem, the house of the teacher. In the East there have never been schools as we know them. The asramas [dormitories], the pesantrens, are the homes of the pupils, or at least the teachers live there ... The pendopo would be suitable for meetings in the evening, where the contact with the family or rather the desa [village] can be better established than in the houses of the parents ...

If it was possible to have elementary religious instruction, then the school would undoubtedly rise very much in stature. This religious education would have to be in accordance with the wishes of the respective parents in the villages, which—and here there is a great difference between these people and Europeans—hardly differ in rural areas ... An investigation among six hundred families in Batavia ... showed that all of them, without exception, wanted religious instruction ... Why then should this unhealthy and very miserly idea of a school without religious instruction be maintained any longer ... ?

P. Post, "Advies van den Onderwijsraad aan den Directeur van Onderwijs en Eeredienst over de verhoging van de maatschappelijke en karaktervormende waarden van het Inlandsch Lager Onderwijs ... 17 October 1927, no. 345" (Publicaties van het Bureau van den Onderwijsraad VII, Weltevreden, 1929), Bijlage F.
The indigenous literacy rate—from the 1930 Census

Geographical Distribution of Literacy 1930

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<tr>
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Literacy in Urban Areas 1930

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The Growth of Literacy between 1920 and 1930

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<td>Outer Islands</td>
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<tr>
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**The Resident of Besuki: Education and radical nationalism, 1924**

In a prosperous country with an economically healthy peasant class Communism will find it difficult to get a hold and extremist political agitation will be the exception. The government will have to take upon itself the difficult task of achieving this objective by means of a complexity of measures, which naturally should be concerned in the first place with native agriculture, the major means of existence of the population. There can hardly be any doubt that the productive capacity of native agriculture can be improved to a considerable extent.

So far the farmers have made very little use of the comprehensive government aid scheme, partly because of the conservatism inherent in the peasantry and partly because this scheme did not go far enough.

For years funds that should have been earmarked for agriculture were diverted to education owing to the growing pressure of the natives for more and better schools. Education is after all considered in native society at its present stage of development as a panacea for all evils, and it is too often lost sight of that the graduates of the rather sophisticated primary schools have to fall back on a society that lacks the capital needed to make these intellectuals productive.

Periods when the arts, sciences, and educational institutions are flourishing usually coincide with or are preceded by periods of great economic development, which create a big demand for intellectually trained people in all sorts of fields. The situation in the Indies, however, is rather different. The structure of colonial society is more complicated as, in addition to the indigenous population, which is lacking in capital, there is an economically strong group of foreigners. And it is in fact this foreign capital that has caused the expansion of education in its present form. As soon as the demand of this comparatively small sector for intellectually trained personnel is
satisfied, the system will gradually but surely get into a jam.

It is therefore becoming more and more obvious that it is necessary to take more immediate measures to increase prosperity and to create a national indigenous capital. In order to restore the threatening imbalance, for a number of years in the future more funds should be allocated to the Department of Agriculture than to the Department of Education. The government lacks the means to expand energetically in all directions at once ...

The present political situation in Java is the result of a natural drive for development by a resistance movement which, although it has been unable to remain free from foreign influences, would also without these influences have come about, though perhaps under another name, with the same extremist and Communist tendencies. So it is a movement that has not been instigated and sustained from the outside, but has its origin in internal conditions. The realization of this fact is very important because it indicates at the same time what kind of measures should be taken in opposing this resistance movement. While measures of a political nature would be sufficient to deal with a resistance movement that has come about as a result of outside influences, a resistance that is rooted in the country itself can only be combated by improving local conditions ...

The indigenous education policy that has been pursued in the Indies for a considerable number of years now has resulted in the establishment of a number of educational institutions which yearly produce a large number of people trained for a particular job or profession. However, when they return to their own social milieu they will have difficulty in finding employment because the people are not wealthy enough to afford their services and to sustain them properly in their particular professions or trades. Not all of these graduates can be absorbed by the civil service or the large plantation concerns, because the number of vacancies is limited. Still, every year hundreds of graduates from primary schools and M.U.L.O. schools—tradesmen, doctors, and now also engineering graduates, and within a few years Masters of Law—will have to be found jobs. The government and private industry will soon no longer be able to employ all new graduates. And it is also very doubtful if this problem can be solved by attracting foreign capital, as it is by no means certain that French, English, German, American, or Japanese companies will be willing to employ native doctors, engineering graduates, and Masters of Law, not to mention the graduates of the primary schools and M.U.L.O. schools who every year enter full life by the hundreds. The result will be the creation of an intellectual proletariat which, unable to find work, will be an easy target for agitation, embittered as it must be about a government that, having provided the opportunity to obtain qualifications for ad-
vancement, has at the same time failed to provide possibilities for employment ...


32 J. Meyer Ranneft: Speech on education and radical nationalism, 1927

Although I am a layman in the field of education, I still venture to participate in this debate on the grounds of my deep conviction that in the final analysis education is only a means to an end—and that it may never be more than that and become an end in itself. After all the interests and needs of society come first and about them I want to say a few words now. Society in the Indies, which the government is at present forcing to develop rapidly by means of education, has two important characteristics. Firstly, this society ... is one of sharp contrasts; it is ... a conglomeration in a labile state of equilibrium. Secondly, the country is poor, and there is an enormous difference in per capital national income between us and Holland—not to speak of America. When we examine the results of our education system, we see that they fall short just on these two important points. Are the discontent and the contrasts heightened by education? Is education a contributory factor in making these [socio-economic] contrasts so sharp that the country could disintegrate? Do not misunderstand me ... I realize that education brings development, a greater sense of self-importance, nationalism. I realize this and appreciate this. I also realize that just because of this a struggle will come about ... which may bring progress ... If I did not realize this I would not stand here before you and fight.

However, in spite of all this there is still the threat of dangerous excesses. I can appreciate struggle ... but not murder. I can appreciate nationalism, but not the extreme form which is called Communism, with its tactics of terror and force ... Mr Moelia [moderate Indonesian nationalist] said yesterday in his important speech ... that the impact of education in this respect is not of primary importance ... I also believe that this is so, but that does not mean that although of secondary importance this impact should not deserve our fullest attention. It is in Japan [cited by nationalists as a country with a progressive education policy] that the government keeps a constant watch to ensure that education shall not produce the dangers and excesses I have just mentioned. Do such dangers also
exist in this country? If so, to what extent? This I do not know, and that is why I am asking for an investigation in order to get some clarity in this matter. In any case there are surely some indications that these dangers in fact exist ...

Let us for example consider the age of the Communists who have been transported to Digul [concentration camp in West New Guinea]. We see that more than 80 per cent of them are young men, who were educated during the last twelve years [see document 58]. At the same time we must consider that the large expansion of the Dutch-Native Schools began in 1914. Is there a connection between these two facts?

We must also keep in mind the large number of boys who could not cope with the programme and had to leave school before the completion of the course. There is something wrong with this almost institutionalized failure rate, which particularly in the case of the Dutch-Native Schools is very high. I have calculated that within ten years between twenty and thirty thousand people will wander around Java who have not been able to complete their schooling and therefore will be disappointed ...

I must admit that I am sorry that we have already sacrificed so much to the spirit of the times, even to the extent that we have already established a Faculty of Law and that in a little while we will also have a Faculty of Medicine. While in themselves they are excellent institutions, we must ask ourselves in the first place whether we will be able to pay for them and secondly whether they actually fit into the framework of the existing stage of development in this country. The opportunities to receive tertiary education elsewhere, that is, in the mother country, appear quite adequate ... Those Ethical, socially committed people [who advocated a continued expansion of Dutch-language education] are certainly idealistic. And although I also feel somewhat Ethical and socially committed, I wish to add immediately that I always look at these matters rather soberly and always want to stay within the realm of reality and possibility. And if it is not possible, then I desist.

But people here want to persist in the manner of “apres moi le deluge” [“after me comes the deluge”] and everything will be all right. No ... but everything will not be all right. A father at a certain moment says: my sons must have a brilliant education, they must go to university; and everything the father owns he spends on this education, but when he cannot sustain it he has to send his sons into the world with uncompleted degrees and half-cocked ideas. This is the great danger in the strong pressure for more education. And the situation will become steadily more dangerous when in future budgets more money will be allocated to education, unless, as we hope, more people will object to this and put up a strong opposition.
In my view education is not the panacea that will improve the lot of this people. Intellectualism has already taken too strong a hold here. It is not that I am against the intellectual development of everybody, but if we look at the countries where education has been more practical in nature and has been restricted to what is actually needed by society, then we see that the results of education are much better than here, where education is still solely directed at the gathering of ever more knowledge. This increased knowledge is good in itself but it should also be practically useful.

And we must ask ourselves whether we are on the right track with our education in so far as the demands of the economy are concerned. Education should be of benefit to the economy in that it should strengthen business life by producing native employees who can handle any type of job in industry, commerce, and shipping in the same way as is now done by Europeans. However, in this area a great deal is still left to be desired at this moment ... because we are on the wrong track, from which we must turn away as soon as possible. Therefore, we must relate education to practical life and adapt to the economic needs of this country.

Mr Stokvis [Socialist Member of the Volksraad]: Cheap labour!


33 Suroso: Speech on the right of Indonesians to receive Dutch-language education, 1927

The great interest shown recently by Europeans in native education leaves me with a feeling of suspicion rather than gratitude ... In this interest I can only see the danger that the education system for the native people will be disorganized and that its expansion will be halted ... Furthermore it has been suggested that an education policy should be introduced that is based on the needs of the economy. The advocates of such a policy are correct, the only purpose of education in their eyes being to train employees, in thinking that the results of education should be judged by the number of graduates produced. It is therefore not surprising that these voices were only heard for the first time after the Communist danger had started to threaten this country. For is it not true that many consider the existence of unemployment as the cause of this danger ...?

The Netherlands Indies is now being drawn into the world economy. Its population does not only consist of indigenous people, but also of an ever-increasing number of foreigners, who consider Indonesia as their fatherland. If these population groups are allowed
to receive a better education ... then it is no more than just that the
government should bring the indigenous population to the same level
of development as the other population groups, so that it may take a
worthy place in the world economy and can cope better with the
struggle for life. So, if every European or Chinese child is given the
opportunity to receive elementary education in the European
primary school or Dutch-Chinese School, then every indigenous
child must also be given this opportunity ... The fact that European
society is in a better economic position than the other groups is due
in the first place to the education the European receives ... The level
of development in a society is thus to a certain extent dependent on
the level of education the people receive. That this could well result
in an intellectual revolution, because society is living through a
period of intellectual overproduction, is unavoidable. But are the in-
ventions in all kinds of scientific fields in Europe not the result of
this kind of overproduction? Overproduction and unemployment ac-
tually stimulate every individual to find a way out, to carve out a
new means of existence. Therefore this phenomenon ... if it exists at
all, causes me no anxiety, but it rather encourages me ...


34 The Depression and education

1. Despatch of the Minister of Colonies (Colijn) to the Governor-General (De
Jonghe), 10 October 1930

It should be clear by now even to the greatest optimists that we are
not dealing with a short-term economic disruption ... This is a
general collapse which will severely affect the world economy for
years to come ...

I do not have to emphasize to Your Excellency that I am very
much aware of the very great importance which in many ways is at-
tached to a steady expansion of all types of education facilities.
Nevertheless, I cannot close my eyes to the precarious financial state
of the country, which decidedly does not permit an expansion of
education at the present rate ...

Koloniaal Archief. *Minister van Kolonien aan den Gouverneur Generaal, 10 October,
1930. Verbaal 10 October 1930 no. 23/754.*
2. Despatch of the Governor-General (De Jonghe) to the Minister of Colonies (Colijn), September 1932

Before the beginning of the economic depression, when there was no possibility of economizing on the present scale, it was clear—also because of the investigations of the Dutch-Native Schools Commission—that during the preceding years unintended or unforeseen outgrowths had appeared in the education system ... which necessitated a drastic reorganization in the provision of education. This especially applied to Dutch-language education which, because of the unsystematic expansion of Dutch-Native Schools and also because of subsidy legislation that was too liberal and difficult to control, soon came to be disproportionate to the capacity of the Indies Treasury and the socio-economic need for Dutch-speaking personnel. It was thus obvious that the government, when it was forced by the Depression to severely curtail education, had to grasp this opportunity to introduce reforms at the same time. To a certain extent it is fortunate that compelling external causes instigated this action; without this stimulus the purging process would have taken much longer and the opposition would have been even stronger and tougher. But it had to come ...

S. L. van der Wal ‘Onderwijs ...’ pp. 562-63.

35 J. F. H. A. de la Court: A postscript on the principle of concordantie, 1945

The fact that the education system was too expensive and too top-heavy was caused primarily by the insistence on concordantie, i.e. the requirement that education in the Indies should be equal to that in the Netherlands not only in terms of standards but in everything else ... Thus this Amsterdam standard has pushed more advanced education to such a level that a far too large proportion of the education budget was devoured, while the social effect of this education remained far below expectations. This was so in the first place because the capacity of the Indies society to absorb graduates was inadequate ... causing discontent and disappointment, and secondly because only a few Indonesian parents could afford to pay for this long-extended schooling ...

Dutch-language education dislocated society and was not adapted to the needs of the country. It stimulated the desire to reach a higher salary scale rather than the desire to serve the country and the people. It sometimes offered material advantages, but it did not create idealism ...

J. F. H. A. de la Court, Paedagogische Richtlijnen voor Indonesie (Deventer: 1945), pp. 69-70.