

Translation of Soeara Rakjat, 1 November 1945

Around the Battle in Surabaya The Experience of Mr. Mohamad

Having received the order of the President, the agreement that has been agreed by both parties should be respected and obeyed, then some leaders and members of the Contact Bureau depart to forward this command to all the people who were still fighting. Among them there were also Brigadier Mallaby himself and three other British officers. The car driven by the entourage is marked with a white flag.

In places where people were still shooting each other, as in front of the Internatio Building, they were given an explanation. Both sides were ordered to stop the shooting. The people would release the Gurkha troops from the building, to move to the places that have been set, with the condition not carrying their weapon. This should be informed to them and to deliver it required the messenger who must enter into the building.

At first, there was an English officer who wanted to go alone into the building, but because the people had been cheated for several times, they asked that one of our side should follow him. Finally it was decided that Mr. Mohamad, former Daidanco Peta [commander of battalion], gained the trust of the people, would enter the building with Mr. Kundan as interpreter. Within ten minutes they had to return, otherwise the people would shoot again.

Taken captive

That's how the three of them entered. After going inside, we were asked to sit down, meanwhile the British officer said he wanted to negotiate for a while. Since stepping on the doorstep, Mr. Kundan had begun to suspect, especially after five minutes the British officer had not returned. This suspicious thing was also felt by Mr. Mohamad and he asked that Mr. Kundan return first to the situation to Mr. Dirman, Mr. Doel, etc that were waiting outside. Not long after Mr. Kundan (who deserves our praise for his services) stepped a few meters, suddenly from within by the British officer in constant contact with the radio communication was ordered to start shooting. The rain of grenades and bullets then began. The people who crowded outside was victimized, while Mr. Kundan got injured in his hands and feet.

Immediately, Mr. Mohamad felt that he was in a trap and would be used as a *gijzelaar* [hostage]. Seen by him, that the guard who was in front of him received an order from the British officer to [.....unread] him, but he pretended not to understand. Indeed, he

intentionally wanted to see, how high their character in terms of keeping promises, on the contrary, he wanted to show that Indonesian soldiers were not just an ordinary soldiers. A moment later the British officer approached him saying that the Brigadier had been shot dead. Surprisingly, at that time there were still no counter-fire from the Indonesian side. The Indonesian side apparently still adhere to the command of its leader, although there are one or two people who cannot wait again.

The Gurkhas' spirit

Hearing the hogwash of the British officer, Mr. Mohamad stood up from his seat, then opened his shirt and said that he could be shot as *represaille* [retaliation] if the death of Brigadier Mallaby was caused by people's gunfire. The Gurkhas soldiers who saw him were astonished and the English officer did not know what to do. In the meantime, from the outside, people started shooting. British officers were busy to give orders to the Gurkha soldiers, who had apparently been lazy to fight, to demand the firing intensified. It is clear now, that they [Gurkhas soldiers] are starting to feel pitted against the Indonesian people.

When we asked Mr. Mohamad, how they treated him, he said: "They treated me well, they always try to talk to me, but it's a bit awkward if the officers are there. But if the British go away, they try to be friendly with me."

Throughout his observation, the Gurkhas were not so much fed. As long as he was inside, he had seen them eat just once.

Released

The next day, the shots from outside were stopped completely and many people had gone home. There were only a few TKR soldiers who were on guard, so the Gurkhas soldiers in the Internatio Building had the courage to prepare to go to the places that have been determined. To Mr. Mohamad, the British officer who went into the building with him said that he would be released ten minutes after the troops departed.

When preparing and packing equipment before leaving the building, they always make contact with the radio, then the communication ended after they have departed. When the time as promised came, Mr. Mohamad received his pistol and wallet, but the bullet and his money were gone.

At about 2 pm Mr Mohamad, whose experience has grown about the British promises, arrived safely at his Headquarters.