

## TESTIMONY TRANSCRIPTION

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= Historic Events =

**(Seizure of the flag at Yamato Hotel, Tunjungan, Surabaya)**

One day, on September 19, 1945, at about 9 am, I left my office by secretly. I went on a bicycle to the office of Suara Rakyat, to meet one of my friends there for weapons purposes.

Unfortunately, I could not meet the friend I was looking for. But there I met Kusnadi, who stated that in Tunjungan Street, there is something needs to got the attention of all Indonesian people in general and the people of Surabaya in particular, the red-white-and-blue flag flown at Yamato Hotel.

In fact, I had heard since the morning, about the Dutch flag raised at above the Yamato Hotel on the right wing building by the Dutchmen from the Red Cross member.

We both agreed to go to that place. In front of the Suara Rakyat office, I met Mohammad Arsan and then I invited him to go too. Mohammad Arsan went there by using electric tram, meanwhile Kusnadi went on a bicycle with me. Upon arrival at Tunjungan, the three of us proceeded to the Antara office, where Bung Tomo (the leader of rebellion, but at that time was not yet as a leader of rebellion) worked as a journalist to get news about upheaval of our nation especially from Jakarta.

On the Tunjungan Street, it was still not so crowded with people at that time, so vehicles still able to go on albeit slowly.

Here and there people were clustering irregularly. They all looked at the hotel, on the roof at the hotel where there was a fluttering arrogance flag. Odd circumstances, in contrast with the spirit of the struggle of the Indonesian people who were still depressed. Everyone looks confused, walk here and there, ganging up each other. With flushed angry face, looked at each other unsatisfied, whispering to each other, "how could this happen...what is that...it cannot be...the flag should be lowered". That was what they say, while looking at each other, they said the same thing, but no one acted anything. I was among them, also affected with the atmosphere that overflowed at that time. Kusnadi and Arsan stayed in front of Antara office, which is quite far from Yamata Hotel. Driven by a sense of aggravation that greatly affects the soul, I leave my two friends, I went to the north, to whomever and for what purpose, I, myself did not understand either.

I just came out of the crowd, I saw two of my other friend, coming from the north. When we got closer, then I turned them around, back to the north.

They were Sumarsono and Ruslan (PRI), by riding a bicycle Ruslan ride with Sumarsono, then the three of us went around to Praban Street, Blauran Market, Embong Malang Street, and then came back to Antara office. On that trip, the three of us shouted out loud, inviting all the people to come to Tunjungan: "Let's all come to Tunjungan, there is great thing happen there". That's how our screams were repeated many times, and then we went back to Tunjungan again.

After returning to Tunjungan, there was already crowded with thousands of people thronging Tunjungan Street from the north end to the southern end and Yamato Hotel as the centre of attention. For us there was no chance that we can do and cannot ignore.

I quickly left Sumarsono and Ruslan behind, I put my bicycle on the sidewalk in the front of Antara office with no further thought, I did not care with the possibility of lost my bicycle. I went into the crowd of people who had been there since the morning.

I could easily came to the front row of the crowd, because the crowd seemed to lift me up from the ground and push me quickly forward, as if I did not have to walk, suddenly I was in front. The back row pushed the front row, so that the front row has been right in the front of the hotel, the place where the enemy was hiding. Strangely, none of the Dutch or the foreign Red Cross dared to come to the front of the hotel.

The people's spirits increased. From here and there came a loud shout, contain the threat of condemnation directed to the Dutch "put the flag down immediately or we will destroy it later. Hi Dutch, put the flag down!".

"Hi you colonialist..." That's how the situation of the youth masses gathered in front of the Yamato Hotel building. The pressure from behind was already unbearable. The people in the front row were increasingly annoyed and irritated, because the Dutch they were looking for, could not be find in the front of hotel.

The shout of the people who received no response from the opponent, causing some youths, because of the pressure from the crowd, were forced into the hotel through the windows. I myself with other friends stormed into the hotel, through the big and unclosed door. To the right of the hotel, a young man jumped onto a car belong to a Japanese, which was stuck in the crowd, shouting loud in the top of the car, then another youngster followed him. In the dangerous moment because of the heightened spirit of the people at that time, it was impossible that nothing will happen.

I felt the vibrations of my soul at that moment, I am sure that the spirit of the people will explode because it has been depressed since the morning. Even if the Dutch at the hotel would

not respond to the resistance, the people would rush on anyway, destroying anything that hinders them, to vent their anger. At the moment as I have described above, there was a battle between us and the Dutch.

I heard a rowdy noise from behind me, apparently all my brothers have started fighting. The Dutch stormed from the right wing of the building. The raid was easy to understand, because if they did not raid would be destroyed, if they raid would also be destroyed. So they prefer to attack first. Probably that's what they were thinking. Without thinking, I joined in the fight. One on one, one on two, even one on three fight.

The fighting or more precisely as brawl to hit each other without any weapons or guns used by both parties. Indeed as what I saw myself upfront, I see there is a Dutch Indo-European who will use firearm (revolver), but when the revolver had just been taken out of his pocket, from his side was ready two of our Indonesian friend who took the revolver, until the coward was powerless. It was ridiculous to see the course of a tumultuous battle. A man struck his opponent from the front, but he himself was struck by his other opponent from behind.

That's what I also experience. First, I was fighting face to face with a young Dutchman. As I hit each other with him, then another opponent came from behind who quickly hit me with a rubber stick, so that my left side of my head was swollen, and the hat I wear became damaged because of it.

My first opponent ran away to look for another enemy, then I went on to face my second opponent. He was a rather old man, willing to defend his younger friend who became my first opponent earlier. While fighting I realized, that he was exhausted, because he also cannot avoid the punch of my friend from behind him. It was definitely easy to beat him, because he's just trying to survive. He quickly swung his rubber sticks in order to deflect my attacks. But since he did not understand my attack tactics, I hit him several times in his face and thighs. But the impact is my hand becomes swollen due to my blows earlier. Fortunately I still have other weapons that are foot, knees, and elbows. The most important weapon was courage. All can be used as a weapon, it was proven at that time. That's how the fight lasted for a few minutes. During that time I faced three opponents alternated one by one. The shouting of the people's masses were replaced by the voices of people grappling, struggling, and boxing.

All my friends also fought greatly. But I was shock, when I saw, who joined in the fight was only those in the front row, so not all involved yet, while others mostly just stood open-mouthed watching "the bulls" fighting furiously. This was the real fact of that day, no more not less.

That situation was really unfavourable for our moral struggle, even benefit our enemy only. I felt the opponent's insistence, and as what I saw myself at that time, the brothers around me were forced to backward slowly to avoid the opponent's attack, breaking into the crowd as the spectator.

The nature of the battle changed, the Dutch attacked and our side survived. The insistence of the opponent was so great. Until I myself was forced to backward. According to my estimation, that our side who involved fighting was only 20 youth, while the Dutch there were around 50 people.

Given where I originally was at the very front, then by itself when I retreated, I was in the back row. In the retreating process, there were some of our friend who were captured and kept beaten by the enemy. I saw the form of a fight to survive or die. I was not free from being hit and kick by the opponent. Unfortunate for my brothers who were held by two or three opponents, who continue to be persecuted. There was also our friend who ran chased by a big-bodied Dutch, who was not dressed, carrying a drawn sword that he could took from a police officer there.

I admit, in the first phase of this battle, that we are on the defeated side. But the results can be said not a bit. As long as what I saw, there was a Dutch whose nose was damaged and covered with blood, other Dutchman whose ears almost broke, and also many of them whose mouth and chest were covered with blood from his wounds. For this, our party also must pay the same price.

But according to my own vision, from our side there are many young people who are swollen on the face and hands only. Only one person who got injured so badly and has to be transported to the hospital by the police using motorcycle. Besides all, I see a very sad and regrettable occurrence, that is why the multitudes crowd were unable to do anything to the incident that they have seen so far. Why are they just silent only as spectator.

Instead I see some of those people who seem to want to leave the battle field. So I came to them and shouted to them aloud: "Hi brothers, do not go, do not go home first, wait, the reinforcement for us are coming soon.". That's what I said while waving my arms with the intention that they were fighting again.

I repeated my shouting so many times, until my voice was almost gone. Spontaneously the people flipped in unison with ferocity to the enemy. Coincidence at the time, it came the reinforcement from all directions, flooding like an ocean wave that cannot be retained. This time it seems our attack would be able to paralyze the enemy. From the northern side, came the reinforcement of ex-prisoners by using electric tram, from the southern side came out our

brothers using train and trucks, from the western side came people by carrying many type of weapon, many of them un-dressed. By the time they came the battle had broken out, no less great than the first battle. This time all the people also fought all out.

In just a few minutes, the opponents pressed, they quickly ran inside the northern part of the hotel. With an incomparable malignancy, the people rage over all the enemy. When arrived at the hotel door, for a moment the battle stopped, because from within the hotel room, there are stones thrown insistently from the former war shelter that has been dismantled, thrown by the opponent to our side. We retaliated by throwing stones from the former war shelter in front of the hotel, which during the first fight was not used at all. How many casualties on their side, due to our aggressive attacks, we cannot count them, what we know is that the enemy's attack stopped completely.

Thus I can conclude, that the opponent must have suffered many losses, especially those who were injured. We stop the pursuit, the attention of the people entirely focused on the flag, which seems to have not understood that its master has been crippled to the people. And also, that disobedient flag will receive its turn, in the form of an attack from the people who will finish off its history.

Under the roof to the right of the hotel building, the patriotic youth of our nation had crammed eagerly to climb up the hotel, to the flagpole where the flag would fly for the last time. They scramble to climb up the building. A young man in a brown shirt has climbed up and then we also support him to come quickly to his destination followed by other youth.

In addition, the views of all the people were addressed to the shameless flag. Things have been quiet for a while. All the people followed the movements of the young men with solemnity and with glowing faces mixed with the grin, they saw interchangeably between the youth and the flag. Their views are still mixed with anger that has not subsided altogether because the flag is still flying.

The youth who gallantly climbed the roof of the building had come at the very top, crawling all the way to the flagpole. At that moment all the feelings and souls of the people began to move again because of it.

The eye-view kept following the youth's movement by showing a feeling of impatience in waiting for the end of the unfortunate flag. The movement of feeling and soul, the movement of impatience to wait, their body also move like a huge wave blown by the wind, watching closely and distantly the historic event, second by second.

The young man had arrived at the flagpole. The flag seemed to be powerless, submitting to surrender because it was impossible to escape. Now it was the youth's turn to take the

necessary action against the shameless flag. He grabbed the disobedient flag roughly, held to the blue and white, then tore the blue one and separated it from the red and white at once with no hesitations.

Come the seconds we have been waiting for. Simultaneously with the tearing of the flag, we shouted loudly "freedom, freedom, freedom". That powerful voice broke the sky and shook the existing buildings. Suppose it can and would, apparently the building prefers to collapse, because touched witnessed the victory of the people.

The cursed flag had vanished from the sky and from the sight of the masses by leaving no traces left. At the same place has flown the two-colour flag, waving cheerfully, because the blue dirt is not burdening its colour anymore.

The longer it looks the more beautiful and sacred the two-colour flag. Like an angel who was coming down from the sky, to bring the prize for the winner of the struggle.

After the young man who ripped the flag down the lower floor, then upheld and supported by the youth masses with pride and gratitude, circling in the midst of the masses of the people. The battle was over, but the people had not yet left the battle site, because their anger had apparently not yet disappeared completely, instead they started clustering upfront the hotel. For what else? There was nothing else except to find another target to wreak his unfulfilled anger.

I myself was drifting along with the masses, clustered again in front of the hotel with fierce, with the intention of waiting, there might still be a desperate Dutch out of the hotel, which we would warmly welcome with a blow from our youth. The policeman who happened to be there during the incident cannot do anything. Even there was policeman who his sword can be taken by a Dutch as I have said above. Let alone the policeman who only armed with a sword, while the Kempetai [Japanese Military Police] carrying carbine gun with bayonet cannot do anything, they are all paralyzed. It was only when Mr Sudirman, the Resident of Surabaya, came and gave information that the matter would be solved by peaceful means, then the masses became calm. As I have described above, in the battle both side suffered some minor injuries. Some of us on our side were slightly injured, and some Dutch people suffered severe injuries.

Regarding the death of a Dutchman (Ploegman), I did not know for certain. If his death (Ploegman) occurred at the first fight/battle, surely he died from being stabbed by a knife and not because of takeary [sharpened bamboo spear], because at that time takeary has not been used. I suspect Ploegman was stabbed by a young man, dressed neatly, with a knife hidden under the folds of his coat jacket. I saw clearly that bloody knife he was carrying in bold and

calm manner, he felt by killing his opponent, so he has been able to fulfil his obligations. More than that, I cannot find out.

The completion of the incident then done by Mr Sudirman with the Dutch and Kempetai.

After that I left the battle site with a feeling of pride and returned to my office again with a swollen forehead and hand.

After arriving at the office, I immediately entered the back room. Have not had time to sit down, I have been invaded by many friends who ask about the battle at Yamato Hotel. Apparently they found out that I had come from the Yamato Hotel, heard the news from Arsad and Koesnadi who had returned to the office first. Not long after, the phone on my desk rang. I was asked to come quickly to Mr Tsunemoto office. Well of course there is something very serious matter. I soon realized that I had left the office without permission. We are really understand the consequences if that is the cause of Mr Tsunemoto call to me. I left my friends and then went to see Tsunemoto in his office. I met him in an upright position, because all the workers who were going to face the Japanese authorities had to stand up with the attitude of keotsuke [kiotsuke: stand up straight]. Upon arriving at his office, I was the seated in the chair. This is the first time, Indonesian employee is welcome to sit in a chair in front of a Japanese employer, normally, we have to stand upright. At first he observed my swollen red and blue face, the he said "Kasman, I heard you were fighting with the Dutch? Already finished?. I replied "yes, finished, and not only me who involved in fight, but the entire Indonesian as a nation". He said again "if you fight, is not only wounded, the enemy must be defeated, it is better". I replied "yes, of course, if necessary to death".

In that brief conversation it seems that Tsunemoto has understood how great the spirit of the Indonesian at that time. And he looked a little shy and bowed his head.

From that time the Japanese began to appreciate our nation and so by itself other foreign nation will follow.

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Surabaya, 15-01-1970

Signed

(S. Kasman)