

TESTIMONY TRANSCRIPTION

UMAR USMAN

DHD 7 No. 069/IX/A/1945/1976

The incident of tore the flag Red-White-Blue flag into Red-White flag Above the Oranje Hotel

25 years ago, exactly on September 19, 1945. Early morning around 8.00. Me, myself, run to the Oranje Hotel carried Takiari [sharpened bamboo spear] as weapon. Because I heard that there was a red-white-blue flag waving in the top of Oranje Hotel.

At that time I was as the Head of BKR Kapasari area, visiting the house of brother Imam Supardi. Brother Imam Supardi was a chief editor of Penjebar Semangat, I was offered a rencong (traditional sword) from Aceh, Sumatera, as my weapon, but I refused. Because according to the conditions of that time, people of Surabaya prefer to use sharpened bamboo spear as a weapon. Especially since I have been trained by Japanese how to use it as weapon, also when I was as a scout skilful in using stick as weapon in pencak silat (traditional martial art from Indonesia).

When I arrived at the Oranje Hotel, in the right side of pavilion which was used as storefront to sell perfume. At that place, stood an unarmed Japanese military guard. Around that place some people looked over to the top of the Oranje Hotel, where the Dutch flag was raised.

Then came from our minds to ask question to the Japanese guard, and convey our desire to ascend to the top of the hotel where the Dutch flag was waving. Finally, the Japanese guard prevented our intentions. Spontaneously, we could not manage our anger, which caused us to break the store and devastated its contents by using sharpened bamboo. After we finished pass to the stairway to the top of the hotel, where the Dutch flag was located. Although the Japanese guard warned us, but we ignored his order. And we continued to the upper stairs through the pavilion ladder followed by the Japanese guard. The situation at that time there were so many people but as spectators only.

When we reached the attic over the pavilion, beyond our expectations, we saw an Allied soldier armed with sten gun stood in the corner of the attic. He knew that we have threatened the Japanese guard by using takiari [sharpened bamboo spear]. He looked scared, his face pale.

Since I was alone when I got to the attic, and to proceed towards the flagpole, I had to climb through the overhang part [afdak] of the hotel because there were no stairs anymore. Then someone scream to the crowd at the downstairs, who seemed to have stopped paying attention to what was to happen on the top floor of the hotel. It was definitely because of the panic situation that caused the red-white-blue flag guardian became pale and helpless. Moreover we shout to the people below: “the guardian of the flag has become pale and helpless, let’s go upstairs” while pointing at the flag.

After the people heard our scream, then quickly they attached the ladder to climb up the pavilion attic. Meanwhile, we, who were at the top of the hotel, helped them by hold the ladder. When we were going to install the second ladder to the floor with a flagpole, suddenly there was a young man we did not know before, jumped upstairs, to the flagpole floor by holding the overhang of the floor.

Besides, before the unknown youth jumped, on the flagpole floor, I have already know that there was only two youngsters, an Allies soldier as flag guardian, and a Japanese guardian. For the detail position see attached sketch below.

The process of occurrence

The process was so fast, until a young man who I did not know his name had come down by the ladder we had installed, and brought with him a blue cloth from a torn piece of the flag, which has become a red and white flag waving. The young man then descended on the next ladder heading down, into the crowd waiting for him below. We who are still at the second floor did not immediately descend, because we still kept focus and paid attention to the Allied soldier and Japanese guardian. With gratitude to God and proud to the unknown youth, who managed to tear the flag bravely, so the red and white flag can wave with dignity. Then we went downstairs and assume that we have finished our duty, I met with a friend, named Sunarjo, from the Peladjar and shake his hand with of friendliness. Later on, Sunarjo became the company commander of Bn.BY/35, which has now change to Bn.516, I have also served as the commander of Bn.BY/35. Unfortunately, in the battle which occurred at Wonosalam in 1949, Sunarjo has been killed by the Dutch bombing.

Conclusion

The events I have experienced and mentioned above, known in the history of Indonesian revolution, as the flag incident at the Yamato Hotel. Here are some of my conclusion:

- 1) The Dutch flag has been flown but not tightly guarded, this means that the Dutch was trying to restore their power, by infiltrated into the Allied army. And also to “test the

waters” of Indonesian people reaction related to the possibility of returning the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia through the help of Allies forces.

- 2) With the torn of red-white-blue flag to became red and white flag, it means the failure of the Dutch government desire. Because it seems that Allies forces also intend to help the Dutch. Then the Dutch finally felt strong enough to start colonial war.
- 3) I made this account, only as a clue, so the authorities can get the reliable material and information. My name does not need to be mentioned, because I do not want any advantages. All I want is that the flag incident and the role of “45 generation” should not be forgotten in the history of Indonesia.

For me, the important thing is to be grateful to God, as a youth at that time can get involved in a significant events for the history of the Indonesian nation, for the people of Surabaya in particular, which was united with “the spirit of 45”. From us who have received military training from the Japanese, we can use to fight for Indonesian independence, for the sake of our homeland and nation.

- 4) The brave youth who tore the Dutch flag to become Indonesian flag, I did not recognized him, and I have already forgotten his face. I just little bit remember that he was somewhat older than me. At that time I was 22 years old, and his body slightly higher than me, and he has a strapping body.
- 5) I make this statement with full of responsibility for the truth. I am willing to be examined the truth by related authority, in order to find the truth of the events.

In advance, if there are some mistake in terms of language, I apologize as much as possible.

Thank you

Surabaya, 12 January 1970

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Appendix: Sketch of location

