

April 12, 1955

**Journal Entry of Ambassador Zhukov: Record of
Conversation with the Indonesian Minister of
Foreign Affairs, Sunario**

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Summary:

This journal entry from Zhukov describes a visit he paid to Sunario, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on March 24, 1955. He informs Sunario that a Soviet film about Indonesia, "Around Indonesia," has been completed and he would like to arrange a viewing of the film for Sunario and other political figures, including President Sukarno. Sunario agrees and a showing is arranged. Talk then shifts to the upcoming African-Asian Conference and Indonesia's position towards SEATO.

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Contents:

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SECRET Copy #2 FROM THE JOURNAL OF D.A. ZHUKOVIskh. #109/ss12 April 1955
RECORD OF CONVERSATION with the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sunario
24 March 1955 Today at 12.30, according to prior agreement, I visited the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sunario. I told him that the purpose of my visit is to invite the minister and his wife and daughter to a screening of the color film "Around Indonesia," which I had recently received from Moscow. I pointed out that, as the minister already knows, last year during the international fair in Jakarta, two Soviet film makers, comrs. Mikosha and Sokolnikov, visited Indonesia in order to film the opening of the fair. However, despite the fact that the length of their stay in Indonesia was very short, they were able to film not just the fair, but also a number of Indonesian cities and locales. Of course the film has a number of faults and does not completely reflect the life of the Indonesian people, yet it nevertheless possesses great value to the Soviet viewer and, it seems to me, will be interesting to Indonesian viewers as well. I would like to show this film to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Information and a number of other officials before it is released to the wide screen. I further pointed out that our film makers were given considerable assistance by the Ministry of Information in organizing their trip around the country. Thus, the film contains a special thanks to the Ministry of Information for its help to the film makers. Then I said that I would like to consult with the minister about how I could be granted an audience by the President of the Indonesian Republic, Sukarno, to whom I would also like to show this film. In response to my invitation, Sunario stated that he was very happy to hear that the Soviet Union has made a film about Indonesia. "This is a great and important event. I am convinced," continued the minister, "that the Indonesian people will welcome the appearance of this film about Indonesia on the screen." The minister said that he very much likes the art of film making and is very happy to be given the opportunity to acquaint himself with Soviet film making. He expressed his gratitude for the invitation to see this film. Further, Sunario stated that President Sukarno is also a great enthusiast of film and film making. He promised to meet with Sukarno and relay to him my request to organize a screening and promised to inform the Embassy of the time and place for the screening of the film. The minister then asked to clarify whether I would like to show the film to everyone at once, that is to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Information and the President, or whether a special screening will be organized for the President. To this I replied that I would like to arrange a special screening for the minister and his wife and daughter, as well as the Minister of Information and his wife, and a number of other officials, to be held at the "Des Indes" hotel at any time of the minister's choosing, with the exception of 29 March for which I already have prior arrangements. Further, I pointed out that I would not be comfortable inviting the president for a screening at the hotel, while, as the minister knows, I do not yet have a house of my own. Thus, I am ready to show this picture to the president at his palace or at any other location convenient for the president. The minister once again thanked me for the invitation and informed me (after consulting his calendar) that he can come to a film screening on 31 March at 8 PM (the screening was later moved to 7 April). Continuing, I thanked the minister for agreeing to come to the screening of the film and to find time during such a busy period for him, when he must certainly be extremely occupied preparing for the upcoming conference of Asian and African countries. I said that the people of our country are following with great interest the preparations for the Afro-Asian Conference. Furthermore, I reminded Sunario of the words of the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs, comr. V.M. Molotov, when he said during his speech at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, that the very fact that there will be a conference of Asian and African countries in Bandung demonstrates the significance of the positive changes that have recently taken place in Asia. Further, I congratulated the minister on the fact that 28 countries have already given their agreement, by which one can be quite certain that the conference will take place, for such countries as the Central African Federation (which refused to participate) and the Gold Coast (which has not yet responded) do not play a significant role. I said that in addition to the difficulties of preparation, it is becoming evident from the papers that there is strong opposition within the country to the convening of the conference and that there have been growing attempts to wreck the conference from outside. I inquired the minister if he could possibly tell me something about how serious these attempts have been inside and outside the country and who is obstructing the convening of the conference of Asian and African countries. Sunario stated that he is very attentively following the response of foreign governments to the upcoming Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung.

He expressed gratitude that the government and the people of the Soviet Union have recognized the importance of the upcoming Afro-Asian Conference, which is being convened by Indonesia along with other countries of Colombo. The minister said that he had also heard from the Indonesian Ambassador in Moscow, Subandrio, about the high degree of attention in the USSR being paid to the conference. The minister further stated that already 28 countries have accepted the invitation to participate in the conference. Just now they have received word that the Gold Coast apparently also intends to participate in the conference. Sunario confirmed that the first stage of organization was difficult, but, it could be said that it has been already wrapped up rather successfully. "Right now," noted the minister, "we are looking for conference principles that would be acceptable to all. This is also a difficult task. But my government and I are optimistic." Further the minister agreed with me that there have been attempts to wreck the conference on part of the Masyumi Party and other opposition groups that do not want the convening of the Afro-Asian Conference. "However, right now," noted he, "the leadership of the Masyumi Party is apparently increasingly recognizing the value of the Afro-Asian Conference in the struggle against colonialism." With regard to foreign countries' attempts to wreck the conference, the minister confined himself with the statement that so far he is not very aware of such attempts and that he also does not know of the positions of such countries as Turkey, for example. Further, the minister said that one of the aims of the Afro-Asian Conference is the demand that atomic energy be used solely for peaceful means, as well as the demand that peace be preserved throughout the world. Then he announced that Australia intends to send its observers to this conference. I noted that, in my opinion, one could presume that the recent session of SEATO in Bangkok was directed against the Bandung conference, especially when one takes into consideration that SEATO includes such imperialist powers as the USA and England, which have colonial holdings in Asia and Africa, and the interests of which, of course, seriously contradict the interests of the 30 African and Asian countries that themselves were, until recently or are still, colonies or dependent countries which are fighting against colonialism. Further, I said that a number of Indonesian newspapers have stated, not without foundation, that the Philippines and Thailand, which are economically and politically directly dependent on the USA, had at first refused to send representatives to the conference in Bandung, but having received appropriate instructions, changed their intentions, apparently with specific aims in mind. Such an inference could also be applied to a number of other countries dependent on the USA and England, such as Turkey, to which the minister had referred to earlier. I also recalled the attempt to include Holland as a member country of SEATO and thus put pressure Indonesia--one of the initiators of the conference of Asian and African countries--and deal a serious blow in its struggle to reunite with Western Irian [Western New Guinea]. I noted also that the SEATO session's request to convey regards to the "free countries" participating at the Afro-Asian Conference cannot be interpreted as anything other than a desire to drive a wedge between the conference participants, as was correctly stated by some Indonesian newspapers. Minister Sunario's statement on this question (the inclusion of Holland in SEATO) had serious significance and concluded that the attempt to include Holland in SEATO and thus bring serious harm to Indonesia was unsuccessful. In conclusion, I said that in light of this, it seems to me that a public pronouncement regarding the actual aims and intentions of the recent SEATO conference of Southeast Asian countries in Bangkok could have a certain influence on a number of SEATO participants and undermine the influence of forces which aim to thwart the reduction of tensions in the Far East and Southeast Asia. In response the minister stated that Indonesia has never approved and will not approve of SEATO. He said: "We never wanted and don't want now to enter into any kind of military agreements which could become dangerous for Southeast Asia." The minister noted that members of SEATO--Australia and New Zealand--are Indonesia's neighbors. Further, he said that right now there is still a danger of a possible SEATO expansion by including Holland in SEATO, even though the first attempt did not meet with success, as well as by attempting to include Indonesia itself in SEATO. Thus the Indonesian government believes it necessary to take a number of measures against further attempts by Holland. Sunario expressed apprehension that the Prime Minister of Australia, who had recently been in Holland, had probably promised to assist Holland and had also asked for assistance from other

foreign countries in this matter. Continuing, the minister said that he is also worried by Australia's attempt to create a close union with Malaya, which "would go through Indonesia" This presents a certain danger, since for this reason the sphere of SEATO could also be expanded. Then the minister told me that Holland will be participating as a member of EKADV [United Nations Economic Commission on Asia and the Far East] during its session in Tokyo. In connection with this, Indonesia intends to make a decisive protest against this attempt by Holland. Sunario, having expressed his gratitude for the high approval of his statement regarding the attempt to include Holland in SEATO, noted that the Indonesian government and he personally are carefully following reports that contain evidence of the presence of attempts to wreck the Afro-Asian Conference. "However," said Sunario, "it should be pointed out that the consequences of a breakdown of the Afro-Asian Conference would be all the more lamentable to the USA and England, since the damage from the breakdown of the conference would be felt not only by Indonesia but by India, Burma and Ceylon as well, i.e. the initiator-countries of the conference. "The minister expressed the thought that a conference breakdown would be a very risky affair for SEATO and would cause much damage to its member countries, since as a result of a conference breakdown, Indonesia as well as other Colombo countries would certainly re-examine their relations with these countries. "Everyone is aware," concluded Sunario, "that India is an important country in the world, Burma plays a large role in international relations, and Indonesia also, apparently, has a certain significance in the world." In response to the minister's words, I said that of course I agree with him that Indonesia currently plays an important role in the world, that Indonesia's voice is heard everywhere and Indonesia's opinion is taken into consideration just as the opinion of such countries as India and Burma is taken into consideration, and that the important role of the Colombo countries in international matters is accepted throughout. I thanked the minister for his explanations regarding the upcoming conference of African and Asian countries and regarding Indonesia's position toward SEATO, as this will help me form a deeper understanding of the events in Southeast Asia. I noted also that I had listened with interest to the minister as he spoke of the fact that Indonesia did not and does not intend to join SEATO, and that attempts to wreck the Afro-Asian Conference will be repulsed by the Indonesian government. After this, on my behalf, I repeated my supposition that a public announcement regarding the aims and intentions of the SEATO conference of Southeast Asian countries and a public warning of the possible consequences of a breakdown of the conference in Bandung could have a certain influence on those who are trying to thwart the reduction of tensions in the Far East and Southeast Asia. In conclusion I expressed my gratitude for the information that the minister had shared with me, and apologized for taking up so much of his time. On his part the minister thanked me for the interesting conversation and said that he will think about what I had told him during today's discussion. In parting with the minister I asked him how would I be informed of the president's agreement to view the film: through the protocol channels or otherwise. The minister replied that I will be informed of this through the protocol department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The conversation took place in the Indonesian language and lasted more than an hour. Present at the discussion was the interpreter, Embassy attaché Yu.A. Sholmov. USSR AMBASSADOR TO INDONESIA [signature] (D.ZHUKOV)