



‘The year 2602’

March 8, 1942. The Colonial Army of the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) surrenders to the Japanese invaders. Next day the Japanese calendar reigns: it is now March 9, in the year **2602**.

In that year the colony counts 72 million Indonesians, plus 300,000 Dutchmen, who thus far ruled the country, and whose hold Japan strives to break. Japan imprisons fully half of them.

Japan occupied the Dutch colony, until 15 August 1945. Wishing to remove the Dutch rulers from their visible positions of authority, Japan thought of interning them all but lacked the logistics to confine all Dutch citizens. They then introduced a classification based on degree of mixed Eurasian ancestry, to intern almost half of the Dutch population, those with relatively high Dutch European ancestry.

The movie ‘The year 2602’ pictures Dutch survivors, children during World War II, who lived in what was then the Dutch East Indies, and who, from their current apparently comfortable situations, go back into time and relate to us how they gradually faced starvation and disease, and saw 15% of their numbers die. How in 1945 they found no liberation, but were made to realize instead that they had no future in the new Indonesia, as pitiless nationalist fighters attacked them.

The nineteen interviews have been cleverly amalgamated into one single story line, interspersed with footage of Japanese war propaganda, pre-war home movies, and postwar documentary material of Indonesia's independence struggle.

This movie contributes to an understanding of the end of Dutch colonial rule of Indonesia, of Japanese-Dutch relations at their 400-year low point. It is a monument to wartime experiences of direct relevance to 3% of today's Dutch.