

P. 312

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156/c  
Immed  
WFT STATIST

20  
20 April, 1949

216

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Netherlands Press, and more recently in  
concerning the operations of the Netherlands  
Government.

For close examination of all the available  
His Majesty's Government wish to state cate-  
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agents. Further, the allegation that His  
Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of  
order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally  
unfounded.

13 May ? 23735 G

Further denunciations followed, and the Germans were eventually able to capture Breda on September 4, 1944, the Dutch people's enthusiastic preparations for their welcome...

...and that beauty and good essential character of efficient pro-  
...that draught and ugliness were not  
...It was now recognised  
...take his place with the draughtsmen  
...to be brought in at the earliest stages  
...were to be achieved the architect should  
...of industry, that if the best results  
...responsible for the direction of large  
...in industry, and on the part of those  
...that there was a growing recognition  
...Electricity Authority, told the delegates  
...Lord Crichton, chairman of the British  
...ing is a beautiful line—the logical  
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...Here is an opportunity and a chal-

P.T. THE ROUND CHILDS  
NECK

/word

Z. 3156/G

20

7th April, 1949

216

DRAFT STATEMENT

The attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to allegations which have appeared in certain sections of the Netherlands Press, and more recently in pamphlet form, concerning the operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.

After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that there was any treachery on the part of British officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of Dutchmen in order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

*Amended version*

Sealed on 13 May ?

Z 3738 G

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...the more easily gained credence because in the last months of the war the Dutch people were called upon to suffer ... in the common ... When the Allied armies were thought to have captured Breda on September 4, 1944, the Dutch people's enthusiastic preparations for their welcome ... as events were

... later he gave himself up to the police but then became reared and ran away it crying. When he found the child had baby's neck. I only put it round the neck stop crying. So I put it round the neck on my own neck, but the baby would wake up and started to cry. I took my In evidence he said that the baby to the charge of murder. servitude. He had pleaded not guilty was sentenced to five years' penitence not guilty of murdering his nine-week-old son but guilty of manslaughter. If Nottingham Assizes yesterday was found Road, Huthwaite, near Mansfield, a Kenneth Roy Haslam (29), of Common NECK PUT THE ROUND CHILDS

... and that beauty and good-essential characteristics of efficient pro- that draughts and ugliness were not take his place with the draughtsmen brought in at the earliest stages to were to be achieved the architect should units of industry, that if the best results responsible for the direction of large In industry, and on the part of those that there was a growing recognition Electricity Authority, told the delegates Lord Citrine, chairman of the British line is a beautiful line. between beauty and utility—the logical issue there should be no conflict engineer and architect. In the ultimate is a vital need for co-operation between rebuilding many of our factories. There should give priority in our resources to It is clearly more important that we of our resources into re-housing projects. Public opinion has been educated to the need for diverting a large portion of the architects of our own age. Here is an opportunity and a chal-

/word

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

4 MAR 1949

Cutting dated

194

# A WAR-TIME TRAGEDY IN THE NETHERLANDS

## How Allied Agents Were Captured

From a Special Correspondent

It is now possible for the first time to tell the story of a tragic misfortune of war which cost the lives of many members of the Dutch Resistance movement and which has been wrongly understood by some Dutch patriots as a deliberate and inexplicable act of treachery on the part of the British Intelligence Service.

From information available in London the facts appear to have been as follows.

The first agent dropped into Holland by parachute in the summer of 1942 was soon captured by the Germans, who induced him to work for them against the Allies. This was not discovered in London until the end of 1943. In the meanwhile several agents had been dropped who had no reason to suspect the loyalty of their predecessor and who therefore trusted him and co-operated with him until they were captured themselves. (It is believed that a few of them also agreed to work with the Germans.)

At length two of them escaped from German captivity and made their way to London, where they reported on the desperate situation in Holland.

It was then decided to drop all agents "blind" in future, without informing anyone in Holland when or where they would arrive. By this method Allied Intelligence was able to build up a new organisation whose members were at first able to operate with some success. But as their activities expanded they came into contact with members of the previous "tainted" organisation.

Further denunciations followed, and the Germans were eventually able to capture most of the members of the new organisation. It seems, therefore, as if the treachery of the first agent, skilfully and thoroughly exploited by the Germans, led to the capture of many more.

This information confirms some aspects at least of the many stories about the same episode which have been current in the Netherlands for many months. On the other hand, it belies the conclusion that these unhappy consequences were due to deliberate treachery by the Intelligence Service in London, a conclusion which many Dutchmen have drawn from the facts available to them and in default of any official explanation.

### A NETHERLANDS VERSION

A young Dutch lawyer, Mr. J. E. v. d. Starp, has just written a pamphlet ("The English Plot," Uitgave Schefferdrukkerij, Dordrecht) which is probably a comprehensive account of the facts as they appear to many of his countrymen. He asserts that, following the capture and with the co-operation of the first agent already mentioned (who appears from his account to have been a Dutchman), the head of the German counter-intelligence service in Holland, a man named Schreieder, was in constant communication with London until

but says that they were imprisoned when they reached London lest they reveal the damning facts about the Intelligence Service's co-operation with the Germans.

It is clear that the melancholy history of the second organisation, set up in 1943 as the result of these two agents' report, would inevitably lend colour to this last assertion for the news that the two men brought to London did not, in the long run, prevent the subsequent capture of many of their comrades.

A comparison of these two accounts shows that in Holland, at any rate, the information available on the matter is incomplete and therefore misleading. If an inquiry has been held, it has been held in secret, and the public has not been reassured by what it has heard both during and since the war. The lack of any official statement has helped to convince honest and patriotic Dutchmen that their suspicions are justified. In default of further information the Dutch can hardly be blamed for their suspicions, which are the more insidious because they affect Governments rather than individuals and can easily do lasting harm to the relations between two peoples who have rendered each other valuable service in peace and war and whose traditional friendship has hitherto been free of this ugly kind of suspicion.

### WAR-TIME SUFFERINGS

Such suspicion undoubtedly exists at the moment in the hearts of many Dutchmen, and has perhaps the more easily gained credence because in the last months of the war the Dutch people were called upon to suffer greater hardships in the common cause than the people of any other liberated country in Western Europe. When the Allied armies were thought to have captured Breda on September 4, 1944, the Dutch people's enthusiastic preparations for their welcome (tragically premature, as events were to show) were brutally punished by the Germans. Their hopes were raised again when the airborne landings were made at Arnhem. On September 18 the Dutch railwaymen, responding to their Government's appeal, heroically and voluntarily incurred the Germans' wrath by declaring and maintaining a transport strike which was of incalculable military value to the Allies. In order to capture Walcheren the Allies had to breach the dikes and flood the land. Finally, in the spring of 1945, the Allied advance brought starvation to the invaded areas of the Netherlands.

This heroic record of enterprise and sacrifice has seldom been equalled. Since the war the people of Britain and of Holland have paid tribute, at Arnhem, to those who established that record and to those who helped them to do it. It would be tragic as well as unjust to allow anything to obscure the recognition by the Dutch and British peoples of each other's contributions to the common cause.

The charges put forward in Mr. v. d. Starp's book would, if generally

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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At length two of them escaped from German captivity and made their way to London, where they reported on the desperate situation in Holland.

It was then decided to drop all agents "blind" in future, without informing anyone in Holland when or where they would arrive. By this method Allied Intelligence was able to build up a new organisation whose members were at first able to operate with some success. But as their activities expanded they came into contact with members of the previous "tainted" organisation.

Further denunciations followed, and the Germans were eventually able to capture most of the members of the first agent, skilfully and thoroughly exploited by the Germans, led to the capture of many more.

This information confirms some aspects at least of the many stories about the same episode which have been current in the Netherlands for many months. On the other hand, it belies the conclusion that these unhappy consequences were due to deliberate treachery by the Intelligence Service in London, a conclusion which many Dutchmen have drawn from the facts available to them and in default of any official explanation.

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From his knowledge of the agents' radio operating procedures and of the identification signals they had to make, Mr. v. d. Starp argues that it must have been obvious in London that the first agent was co-operating with the Germans. In view of what he claims to know about the strict precautions which were taken to identify the originator of any message, he refuses to believe that an honest mistake or genuine error of judgment could have been made and draws the conclusion that the radio traffic with the Germans was deliberately prolonged in order to betray to the enemy as many Dutch patriots as possible.

He admits that two agents did escape from German captivity in 1943

It is clear that the melancholy history of the second organisation, set up in 1943 as the result of these two agents' report, would inevitably lend colour to this last assertion for the news that the two men brought to London did not, in the long run, prevent the subsequent capture of many of their comrades.

A comparison of these two accounts shows that in Holland, at any rate, the information available on the matter is incomplete and therefore misleading. If an inquiry has been held, it has been held in secret, and the public has not been reassured by what it has heard both during and since the war. The lack of any official statement has helped to convince honest and patriotic Dutchmen that their suspicions are justified. In default of further information the Dutch can hardly be blamed for their suspicions, which are the more insidious because they affect Governments rather than individuals and can easily do lasting harm to the relations between two peoples who have rendered each other valuable service in peace and war and whose traditional friendship has hitherto been free of this ugly kind of suspicion.

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This heroic record of enterprise and sacrifice has seldom been equalled. Since the war the people of Britain and of Holland have paid tribute, at Arnhem, to those who established that record and to those who helped them to do it. It would be tragic as well as unjust to allow anything to obscure the recognition by the Dutch and British peoples of each other's contributions to the common cause.

The charges put forward in Mr. v. d. Starp's book would, if generally accepted, clearly stand in the way of such recognition. But the information now available in London points strongly to the conclusion that the capture of the agents was due not to treachery but to a grave mistake made by the Intelligence Service in London. The terrible accusation of treachery must be rejected for the ugly and unhappy rumour that it is. An authoritative statement might well now be made by the British Foreign Office. Suspicion thrives on secrecy, and if the tragic fate of so many courageous Dutchmen is allowed to poison the relations between their country and ours it would indeed be an ironic triumph for Dr. Goebbels and a tragedy for two of the nations which fought against him.

Mr. Street should see Sir P. Nichols' letter as soon as possible.

If we authorised the Ambassador to issue a statement along the lines that he suggests, we should consider, and if possible decide now, how far we shall be prepared to amplify it if it provokes an outcry in Holland.

We should, I think, avoid the impression that we are reluctant to say anything about the "Englandspiel", but will do so if pressed sufficiently strongly. Sir P. Nichols' suggested statement, the "high moral line" suggested in Mr. Shuckburgh's letter of March 28th. It refutes the two main allegations contained in "Het Englandspiel":

- (a) That there was treachery on the British side.
- (b) That there was a diabolical plot to exterminate Dutch patriots.

However, in view of the complications of the case, a statement such as this, although true, is not convincing. Van der Waals is clearly in a position to give evidence, which the Dutch would find very difficult to reconcile with such a statement. We should then be faced with the problem of whether or not to amplify it. As we should not be able to do so without disclosing details which we wish to conceal, we should, I think, be prepared to ride out any storms that might develop, and withstand any pressure to give detailed explanations. We should be on record as having denied the allegations, and we should be able to rely on our performance during the war, and on the good sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

On balance, therefore, I think we should authorise Sir P. Nichols to issue a statement along the lines which he suggests. It would, I think, be a mistake to use the German expression "Englandspiel" in a British statement. It might be thought to confer a validity to the whole story, which we do not of course recognise. I would suggest, therefore, that the words "so-called" should be inserted before each reference to the "Englandspiel" in Sir P. Nichols' draft. Otherwise, it seems adequate.

*DANKER*

Mr. Street will no doubt say whether it will be possible to give Mr. Baker any further information from S.O.E. records. He will also, I am sure, wish to consider what reply should be returned to the Dutch, should they ask for Major Bingham to appear before the enquiry.

*R. H. Mason*

(R.H. Mason)

9th April, 1949

*/ Mr. Shuckburgh*

*/ word*

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

*Taxes*

Minutes.

Mr. Shuckburgh thinks that it would be preferable to avoid using the word "England-Spiel" and suggests instead: "The operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement?"

Rousseau  
9/April

This went to  
in para 2

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

1 M. Joy.

Mr. Joy.

Reference Sir Philip Nichols' letter of April 7th.

C has no objection to the issue of the proposed statement at any time which the Ambassador considers suitable. I do not think that there is any objection to the use of the term "Englandspiel". It is in fact the Dutch version of the German name for the operation and should not be interpreted to mean "The English Plot" but "The operation against England" (i.e. the English organisation in Holland).

I think that we can probably meet Mr. Denker's request for further information about the reasons why it was not appreciated in London that the S.O.E. organisation in Holland was under enemy control. I am looking into this urgently and will try to produce a draft statement soon.

I think we should tell Sir Philip Nichols that it would be undesirable for Major Bingham to be called to give evidence before the Committee of Enquiry. The reason for this is that he did not join the controlling staff of S.O.E. in London until 1<sup>st</sup> April 1943, by which time the German penetration had been achieved. Accusations against him personally are therefore baseless.

(S)

J.E.D. Streat.

12th April, 1949.

Mr. Mason

W. Depp.

M. Joy 12/4

As Mr. Haigler's friends have suggested no objection to Sir P. Nichols' statement I think we should now go ahead & authorize him to issue it when an opportunity occurs.

I do not think we should use the  
/ word

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Minutes.

"Englandspiel" in spite of Mr. Streets' explanation. "The operation against England" is certainly not the happiest description of the operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.

I now submit a draft reply to Sir P. Nichols.

Russell

13/April.

John Russell

144

JOHN RUSSELL,  
WESTERN DEPT.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

/ M. Bicknell



Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

Mr. Bicknell <sup>reply in appropriate</sup> ~~that.~~

K

I don't know whether you have finished the attached draft to Danes of the Commission of Enquiry. Your secretary sent it to me on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> with some other of the "E-Spiel" pp.

I have made one or two pencilled comments which the most important is on the first page - "Checks in wireless messages". Perhaps you would consider & let me have the draft back soon.

R. Weaver

16/May

See over

THIS IS A COPY  
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IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
8(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES  
SECTION 100

rather than a  
game played

not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that it signifies the <sup>a</sup> game played against England and not by England. The use of this expression

<sup>But</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>rather</sup> / might

Mr. Mason,  
Western Department.

23156 G

① We agree that your amendments to the attached draft to Danker about the wireless checks are an improvement.

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

- ③ On reflection the friends doubt the wisdom of including the final paragraph in square brackets, which was actually bracketed so that you should consider the advisability of its inclusion. They would also like you to decide whether the sidelined part of the statement on wireless checks should be included, but they think that the reference to the fact that many Dutch agents consistently omitted their checks should certainly be served.
- ②

*Nigel Bicknell*  
N. Bicknell.

18th May, 1949.

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THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

*John Street*  
19/5

*I see no objection to sending  
Mr. Bicknell's statement, as amended,  
to Mr. Danker of the Commission of  
Enquiry.*

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IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

STATS  
SECTION  
W/1342/155  
1307

*rather than a  
game played*

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expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that  
it signifies the <sup>a</sup> game played against England  
and not by England. *The use of this expression*  
*only as* ~~would~~ *might*

Minutes.

Enquiry.

Please see draft to Sir  
P. Nichol.

Ramson

27 ~~th~~ / May.

*John Russell*

26.5

JOHN RUSSELL,  
WESTERN DEPT.

*GR*  
*5/5*

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

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IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

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SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

rather than a  
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it signifies <sup>a</sup> the game played against England  
~~and~~ not by England. <sup>But</sup> The use of this expression  
~~is~~ <sup>only as</sup> ~~might~~ / might

*Mr. Daner + letter for*  
*23156.*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
THE HAGUE.

TOP SECRET  
(150/25/49)

7th April, 1949.

*My Dear Evelyn,*

With reference to my Top Secret letter 150/21/49 of 30th March, I have now discussed the question of the "Englandspiel"

I still feel that, granted all the objections to a detailed statement that are outlined in your letter of the 28th March, a time is likely to come when we cannot pass over in silence accusations of treachery or the deliberate sacrifice of Dutch lives for purposes of our own. Such an occasion is likely to arise when the appeal of van der Waals against the death penalty is heard towards the end of this month. To meet such a situation I should like authority to issue a very short and emphatic but uninformative statement on the lines of the enclosed draft. We should of course refuse to be drawn into any further discussion of the matter.

2. Mr. Danker has now returned the Selborne Report, with the following comments which were conveyed to us orally by Colonel Fock:-

- (1) "He is extremely grateful for the loan of this document.
- (2) The Report is a fair review of the position as known at the time and it corresponds to the facts available to him.
- (3) There are a few slight inaccuracies in it; these are due mainly to lack of later material gathered from much wider sources.
- (4) It hardly serves to help Mr. Danker at the present time since the Report is a factual review of evidence rather than an analysis of the reasons behind the tragedy.

J.A.E. Shuckburgh, Esq.,  
Western Department.

Mr. Danker /

THIS IS A COPY  
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
8(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

MAILED  
APR 11 1949  
WESTERN DEPARTMENT

*rather than a  
game played*

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pression "Englandspiel" although we realise that  
it signifies <sup>a</sup> the game played against England  
and not by England. <sup>Bul</sup> The use of this expression  
*copy us / might*



BRITISH EMBASSY,  
THE HAGUE.

2.

Mr. Danker was hoping to be able to glean enough evidence from it in order to make a decision about one of the various theories concerning the causes of the misfortune. He would have been happy to have found in it for example a statement that the fault lay in an accumulation of mistakes or poor communications methods, rather than indications of treachery on either side.

(5) Without in any way wishing to give the impression that he is asking for further information, and emphasising that he is in fact only commenting on the document in question as you requested, he has added that perhaps a document of a later date going more deeply into the reasons behind the whole business, would have been of more assistance to him at the present time."

3. Colonel Fock also tells me that we may shortly receive an official request from Mr. Danker for Major Bingham to appear before the enquiry. I will write again when I have received it.

Yours etc

Herbert Morrison

014101 WELSHMERE 10000 1141 A & E WILK O  
18000 148

sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

*There is one point about the wording. We do*  
3. Reverting to your draft statement, we do not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Engandepiel" although we realise that it signifies <sup>a</sup> the game played against England ~~and not~~ by England. *But* The use of this expression, *is by us* ~~is not~~ / might

*rather than a game played*

7th April, 1949.

*1 copy*

SUGGESTED STATEMENT.

The attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to allegations which have appeared in certain sections of the Netherlands Press, and more recently in pamphlet form, concerning the ~~Englandspiel~~ *operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.*

After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that the ~~Englandspiel~~ was aided in any way by the ~~treachery~~ of British Officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of Dutchmen in order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

*There was any treachery on the part of*

sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

*There is one point about 1<sup>st</sup> working. We do*  
3. ~~Reverting to your draft statement, we do not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that it signifies the game played against England and not by England.~~ *But the use of this expression, ~~is not~~ / might*

*rather than a game played*

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Registry  
No. Z 3156/1051/292

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FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

MG

OUTFILE.

16<sup>th</sup> April, 1949.

Top Secret.  
XXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXX

RHM.

TOP SECRET.

Draft S.

To:-

Sir Philip  
Nichols,  
The Hague.

From:-

Mr. Shuckburgh.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

RECEIVED IN  
DIVISION.  
19 APR 1949  
SENT TO  
TYPE 19/4.  
LENGTH 21/4.

14/4  
14/4  
14/4

Thank you for your letter 150/25/49 of 7th April with which you enclosed ~~the~~ draft of the a statement which you would like to issue about the "Englandspiel".

*Seems adequate as it denies*

2. The draft ~~refutes~~ the two main allegations contained in Van der Starp's pamphlet; ~~namely~~—

- ~~(a) that there was treachery on the British side, and~~
- ~~(b) that there was a diabolical plot to exterminate Dutch patriots.~~

*The denial is bald & unsupported. But we cannot help that.*

We agree that you should issue a statement along these lines when a suitable opportunity presents itself and I enclose for this purpose a slightly amended version of your draft.

4. I think you will agree that the statement, *in view of its bald & unsupported character, not very* though true, is ~~not~~ convincing. It is more than likely that doubts will be cast on the veracity of the statement and that we shall be pressed to amplify it. As we should not be able to do this without disclosing details which we wish to conceal, we should be prepared to "ride the high horse", refuse any further explanation and rely on our performance during the war and the good sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

3. *There is one point about 1<sup>st</sup> working. We do* Reverting to your draft statement, we do not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that it signifies the <sup>a</sup> game played against England ~~and not by England.~~ *But* The use of this expression, *only as*

*rather than a game played*

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584210 W.1410/112 50,000 1247 A.B. W.1410 0p. 888

*might be taken to imply some sort of admission, and what*  
~~would~~  
~~imply that we realise that the Germans had~~  
~~outwitted us,~~  
~~outsmaned us, and while this is true, we do~~  
not think there is <sup>no</sup> any need to rub salt into the wound. We have therefore substituted appropriate phrases for "Englandspiel" where it appeared in your draft.

5. Hayter's friends think that they can probably meet Danker's request for further information about the reasons why it was not appreciated in London that the SOE organisation in Holland *had come* ~~was~~ under enemy control. They hope to produce a draft statement soon.

6. As regards an official request from Danker for Major Bingham to appear before the Inquiry, Hayter's friends say that this would not be desirable <sup>in any case</sup> as he did not join the controlling staff of S.O.E. in London until 1st April, 1943, by which time the German penetration had been achieved. Accusations against him personally are therefore baseless.

*PHL. 18/4*

RECEIVED IN C.S.  
19 APR 1944

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(Z 3156/1051)  
TOP SECRET

Sir Philip  
The



OUTFILE.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W. 1.

(Z 3156/1051/29 G)  
TOP SECRET

20th April, 1949.

*My dear Phil.*

Thank you for your letter 150/25/49 of 7th April with which you enclosed the draft of a statement which you would like to issue about the "Englandspiel".

2. The draft seems adequate as it denies the two main allegations contained in Van der Starp's pamphlet; namely that there was treachery on the British side, and a plot to exterminate Dutch patriots. We agree that you should issue it when a suitable opportunity presents itself and I enclose for this purpose a slightly amended version of your draft.

3. There is one point about the wording. We do not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that it signifies a game played against England rather than a game played by England. But the use of the expression by us might be taken to imply some sort of admission, and whilst we realise that the Germans outwitted us, there is no need to rub salt into the wound. We have therefore substituted appropriate phrases for "Englandspiel" where it appeared in your draft.

4. I think you will agree that the statement, though true, is in virtue of its bald and unsupported character, not very convincing. It is more than likely that doubts will be cast on the veracity of the statement and that we shall be pressed to amplify it. As we should not be able to do this without disclosing details which we wish to conceal, we should be prepared to "ride the high horse", refuse any further explanation and rely on our performance during the war and the good sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

5. Hayter's friends think that they can probably meet Danker's request for further information about the reasons why it was not appreciated in London that the S.O.E. organisation in Holland had come under enemy control. They hope to produce a draft statement soon.

6. As regards an official request from Danker for Major Bingham to appear before the Inquiry, Hayter's friends say that this would not be desirable. In any case he did not join the controlling staff of S.O.E. in London until 1st April, 1943, by which time the German penetration had been achieved. Accusations against him personally are therefore baseless.

*Yours ever,  
C.A.E. Shuckburgh.*

(C.A.E. Shuckburgh)

Sir Philip Nichols, K.C.M.G., M.C.,  
The Hague.

7th April, 1949

DRAFT STATEMENT

The attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to allegations which have appeared in certain sections of the Netherlands Press, and more recently in pamphlet form, concerning the operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.

After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that there was any treachery on the part of British officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of Dutchmen in order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

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8 JUN 1949  
SENT TO: 8/6  
REMARKS: 2/2

(b) The "hand-writing" test. This refers to the fact that an experienced wireless operator can sometimes get to know the personal characteristics of the transmitting operator at the other end of the link. It was thus possible that, if an agent were captured and replaced, *the change in technique would be noticed* this fact would be noted at the receiving end.

3. So/

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SENT TO TIME 8/6  
REMARKS 2/6

126.5  
✓ *check at  
see again this  
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*hpa despatch.*

For final initial phase.

I don't know what has  
been holding it up.

left me May 26

Signed by Richard June 1st  
got back to me June 8th.

Fabulous!

*[Signature]*

8<sup>th</sup> June, 1946  
my letter 2.3156

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his capture.

(b) The "hand-writing" test. This refers to  
the fact that an experienced wireless  
operator can sometimes get to know the  
personal characteristics of the  
transmitting operator at the other end  
of the link. It was thus possible that,  
if an agent were captured and replaced,  
*the change in technique would be noticed*  
~~this fact would be noted~~ at the  
receiving end.

3. So/

Registry No. 23156/1051/29G

OUTFILE

As promised in 85 of my letter 2.3156/1051/G of April 20<sup>th</sup> 1946 + 1/c

8<sup>th</sup> June, 1946

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Open.

We have again looked into the request by Mr. Danker that a statement should be made available to him explaining as far as possible the reasons why the London headquarters controlling S.O.E. operations in Holland were not aware of the penetration of their groups by the Germans. *I am sorry that time has been so much wasted.*  
2. The technical indications can be divided into the following categories:

Draft/Gr.  
Sir P. Nichols  
The Hague  
from  
P. Schuchburgh

copy to:  
P. Bicknell

flwk  
26.5

*based at this end see report of 7/6*  
Hpa dispatch.

(a) Checks in wireless messages

Each agent before being sent to Holland was given two separate checks called "bluff" and "true" checks respectively. These were cypher groups one of which the agent was supposed to include in all messages. His instructions were that if captured and interrogated he was to inform <sup>give</sup> the Germans of the "bluff" check, <sup>which</sup> ~~This check~~ <sup>then</sup> would ~~then~~ continue to be included in all messages; <sup>but he</sup> ~~The agent was,~~ however, on no account to reveal the existence of the "true" check, which he was to omit from all messages sent after his capture.

(b) The "hand-writing" test. This refers to

the fact that an experienced wireless operator can sometimes get to know the personal characteristics of the transmitting operator at the other end of the link. It was thus possible that, if an agent were captured and replaced, *the change in technique would be noticed* ~~this fact would be noted~~ at the receiving end.

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3. So/

3. So far as <sup>the</sup> checks are concerned, there were three reasons why the correct conclusion was not drawn. First, many of the messages received from Holland were considerably mutilated and it was frequently impossible to tell whether checks had been omitted or not. Second, it was by no means an easy task to ensure that the agents really understood the purpose of these checks and in many cases the <sup>captured</sup> agents forgot to <sup>carry out the drill.</sup> omit them from their messages. Third, the inclusion or omission of checks, had been <sup>always</sup> shown in other theatres of S.O.E. operations, <sup>was</sup> to be inconclusive as a test of the agent's reliability.

4. So far as the "hand-writing" is concerned, there are three points to make. First, in many cases the agents themselves continued to transmit under German control. Second, in cases where they were replaced it needed a most expert receiving operator to notice the difference. Third, <sup>at least</sup> an electrical machine was devised during the war to measure the physical characteristics of a transmitting operator, but <sup>it</sup> this was not developed in time to be of use while the Dutch operation was going on.

5. Another point which contributed to the insecurity of the operations was the system, always preferred by agents, whereby they were not dropped "blind", but to reception committees already established in Holland. This system was extensively used in other theatres by S.O.E. Since most of the Dutch reception committees were known to the Germans at an early stage, it followed that

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*I would like to omit this: it adds nothing: & any use of B. is provocative & dangerous.*

*JW/Kennel  
26.5*

the agents dropped to them fell into enemy hands at once. [It is of interest here to record that Major Bingham, who has been the subject of so many allegations by certain sections in Holland, considered that the system of reception committees was most insecure and, when he joined the controlling staff of S.O.E., he gave instructions that any future agents were to be dropped "blind".]

6. Finally, it must be admitted that staffs controlling clandestine operations abroad have a psychological resistance to being persuaded that their agents are under enemy control, and there have been cases in which such staffs have gone on believing in the security of their agents abroad when all the evidence pointed the other way.

*7. You can pass all of this on to N. Dasher if you wish.*

*CTM  
2/6*

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

8th June, 1949.

(Z 3156/1051/29 G)  
TOP SECRET

OUTFILE.

*My dear Phil,*

As promised in paragraph 5 of my letter Z 3156/1051/G of the 20th April, we have again looked into the request by Mr. Danker that a statement should be made available to him explaining as far as possible the reasons why the London headquarters controlling S.O.E. operations in the Netherlands were not aware of the penetration of their groups by the Germans. I am sorry that there has been so much delay.

2. The technical indications can be divided into the following categories:

(a) Checks in wireless messages

Each agent before being sent to the Netherlands was given two separate checks called "bluff" and "true" checks respectively. These were cypher groups one of which the agent was supposed to include in all messages. His instructions were that if captured and interrogated he was to give the Germans the "bluff" check, which would thus continue to be included in all messages; but he was, on no account to reveal the existence of the "true" check, which he was to omit from all messages sent after his capture.

(b) The "hand-writing" test

This refers to the fact that an experienced wireless operator can sometimes get to know the personal characteristics of the transmitting operator at the other end of the link. It was thus possible that, if an agent were captured and replaced, the change in technique would be noticed at the receiving end.

3. So far as the checks are concerned, there were three reasons why the correct conclusion was not drawn. First, many of the messages received from the Netherlands were considerably mutilated and it was frequently impossible to tell whether checks had been omitted or not. Secondly, it was by no means an easy task to ensure that the agents really understood the purpose of the checks and in many cases the captured agents forgot to carry out the drill. Thirdly, the inclusion or omission of checks, as was shown in other theatres of S.O.E. operations, was inconclusive as a test of the agent's reliability.

4. So far as the "hand-writing" is concerned, there are three points to make. First, in many cases the agents themselves continued to transmit under German control. Secondly, in cases where they were replaced it needed a most expert receiving operator to notice the difference. Thirdly although an electrical machine was devised during the war to measure the physical characteristics of a transmitting operator, it was not developed in time to be of use while the Netherlands operation was going on.

5. /

Sir Philip Nichols, K.C.M.G., M.C.,  
The Hague.

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5. Another point which contributed to the insecurity of the operations was the system, always preferred by agents, whereby they were not dropped "blind", but to reception committees already established in the Netherlands. This system was extensively used in other theatres by S.O.E. Since most of the Netherlands reception committees were known to the Germans at an early stage, it followed that the agents dropped to them fell into enemy hands at once.

6. Finally, it must be admitted that staffs controlling clandestine operations abroad have a psychological resistance to being persuaded that their agents are under enemy control, and there have been cases in which such staffs have gone on believing in the security of their agents when all the evidence pointed the other way.

7. You can pass all of this on to Monsieur Danker if you wish.

*Yours ever,*

*sgd.*

(C.A.E. Shuckburgh)



Please see the attached  
excerpt from the Hague Embassy  
review of the Dutch press for 27<sup>th</sup>  
April.

No

Have Mr. Halford's friends any  
knowledge of the information which  
Mr. de Jong & Dr. Cohen are supposed  
to have?

(A) Yes.

It might, perhaps, be worth  
asking the Embassy to get some  
advance information on this from  
Mr. Daker of the Commission of  
Enquiry.

Rosenau

30/April.

Mr. Halford.

Mr Halford's friends would be very  
grateful for anything of the kind  
of information mentioned at (A).

May 1975.

Mr Mason  
W. Dept.

THIS IS A COPY  
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

1 Please

Commission contemplates issuing a  
statement, and intimate to him that  
/ Now / from

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BRITISH  
EMBASSY  
PARIS

Minutes.

Please see draft letter to Sir  
Philip Nichols.

Rocenasari  
11/11/5

John Russell  
12.5

JOHN RUSSELL  
WESTERN DEPT.

CR  
2/5

THIS IS A COPY  
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