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c/o American Embassy
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FROM: Eugene Rachlis (WR)
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SUBJ: The Information Program in The Netherlands

I. THE DUTCH SITUATION

In planning and reviewing the information program for the Netherlands, I think these things should be kept in mind:

In general, the Dutch are pro-American, well-informed about, and in favor of, the Marshall Plan. Politically, there is no mass group, right or left, articulately opposed to America or to ECA. Our recent public opinion poll confirms such a summary. But the Dutch also have sensitive spots:

1. The present economic difficulties of The Netherlands have come about rather suddenly. Neutrality in World War I, a highly developed agriculture and favorable trading relationships made the Dutch relatively well off during the interbellum period. The position of being in the need of large scale aid and facing economic problems now more stubborn than those of their Belgian neighbors, for example, is extremely distasteful. Because the Dutch have taken one of the quickest comedowns in Europe, their pride must be a prime consideration in information. Obvious demonstrations of gratitude must not be pushed, and all publicity of aid requires discretion and taste.

2. We are in a fairly difficult period of Dutch--American relations. It is sometimes the Dutch view that the U.S. gives with one hand and takes with the other. Some Dutch feel, correctly or not, that the United States, in one way or another, is hindering their recovery of three great and traditional sources of income: Indonesia, where it is charged we have interfered in favor of sovereignty of the former colonies; shipping, in which we have the 50-50 clause; and trade with Germany, which has not recovered partly because our occupation is shifting to German ports from Rotterdam. In reality, the impairment of these sources of income and an acute population problem makes Dutch recovery difficult.

In carrying out our information program we have in our favor: a highly literate population; a small country in which nationwide communication is easy; the Dutchman's propensity for organizing into clubs and societies;

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a government which is moderately strong and which is generally sympathetic to our program and cooperative.

In each of these areas, there are, however, special problems. The Dutch are exposed to a press which is, with few exceptions, a party press. Thus, in dealing with the press, certain political and religious factors must be considered.

The religious schism affects all of Dutch life, and therefore all our information, both in preparation and distribution. There are separate Catholic, Protestant, or neutral newspapers, radio stations, labor unions, farm organizations, schools; even the Boy Scouts and the Red Cross are divided by religion.

In the Dutch community there are few individuals or groups experienced in the use of American methods to sell or promote a program. Information or public relations is new here. The government and private groups, while cooperative, are often unskilled and unimaginative, and generally slow in carrying out many programs.

In addition, the deeply religious, traditional, individualistic and proud characteristics of many Dutch people works against the more flamboyant methods of advertising or promoting an idea.

These preliminary observations have, therefore, determined the manner of our operations in the following general ways:

1. Everywhere that it has been practicable, information material has been distributed under the label of the Dutch government, Dutch trade unions, or other Dutch organizations.
2. We have not sponsored or requested demonstrations of gratitude but have emphasized the genuine American desire for Dutch recovery and have pointed up the mutual cooperation which is bringing this about.
3. Because of the group breakdown, and because of lack of government machinery for complex distribution, it must be pushed by our office. Each medium brings its own distribution problems. We have added a man to the staff whose major responsibility is distribution.
4. Since almost no single information activity can reach more than a certain religious or political group, we have had to tailor many ideas to fit. In radio, for example, we must deal with radio stations which have different audience interests -- [Protestant, Socialist, Catholic].
5. The Dutch taste, while an elusive thing, has been respected; many projects, while apparently dignified, must be tested first lest they be judged offensive or condescending by the Dutch.

II. Information Channels

We have these outlets to work with for ECA information objectives:

Press. Perhaps the most important medium for factual information. Our public opinion poll indicates that the press reaches almost the entire population, that 96 percent say they read a paper at least once a week, that 87 percent say they read one at least once a day.

There are 18 national dailies, all but three of which are afternoon papers, none of which publish on Sunday. The five largest are Het Vrije Volk (Labor Party, 325,000); Het Parool (Independent Socialist, 175,000); Trouw (Calvinist Conservative, 170,000); Volkskrant (Catholic Labor, 155,000); and De Waarheid (Communist, 125,000).

There are five important national weeklies which publish on Friday. They perform a function roughly that of our commentary weeklies and our good Sunday sections, the emphasis being on longer articles of analysis and discussion in economics, politics, literature and the arts. The most significant are Elsevier's (Independent Conservative, 80,000); Vrij Nederland (Independent progressive, 50,000); Groene Amsterdammer (Independent left wing, 40,000); and De Linie (Conservative Catholic, 30,000).

All the dailies, with the exception of De Waarheid, are cooperative outlets for straight news. Most are editorially in favor of the Marshall Plan, although they have varying attitudes on American relations generally, notably in the Indonesian situation.

Most of the newspapermen who cover ECA are special economic or parliamentary writers with whom cordial relations exist. Because of the newsprint shortage, background and expository stories are difficult to place, although occasionally, as with Het Parool and Volkskrant, we have been able to promote special issues on ECA's first anniversary and on industrialization.

One specific plan for better press coverage is the start within a few weeks of informal seminars with economic and political writers, in which members of the mission will participate. Placing of exclusive feature stories among individual papers is being increased. The weeklies already have used and I expect will continue to use explanatory material. They should also be a good outlet for the profile stories being prepared in Paris about the people in OEEC and the Marshall Plan.

In addition, there are: the weekly and monthly labor press which almost completely covers the country's trade union membership; the provincial and farm press which gets to the country's rural and farm populations; and the trade and financial press. These will be discussed below in the section on the groups our information reaches.

Radio. Reaches 83 percent of the population according to our poll. So far it has been used mainly for news and special events coverage.

AVRO (neutral conservative) has 175,000 members; KRO (Catholic), 164,000; VARA (Labor), 180,000; NCRV (Orthodox Protestant), 180,000; VPRO (Free Protestant), 50,000. These membership figures include only those who subscribe to the radio's journal and does not include many others who, of course, listen to these stations. The figures do represent the hard core of people who may well have their dials locked to the station of their allegiance.

In general, radio can be said to be as cooperative as the press. It is using, or will soon use, the "Salute to Workers" and "This is Europe" radio shows prepared in Paris. It has used material we have prepared for labor and industrialization programs. The Government is now scheduled to get 20 minutes a week of radio time and we have been assured that we will get as many of these weekly stints as we need.

But for broader use of radio on the local level we are now turning to a new method. The Dutch radio has had very little experience with documentaries as we know them. I have given radio men scripts of some excellent CBC documentaries and am working with radio writers on a series of shows to be done for us under contract. In this area we hope to hit with radio some of the more important objectives in unification, productivity and dollar sales information.

Movies. According to our poll, only 26 percent of the population goes to the movies once a month or more; 16 percent say they go less than once a month; and 57 percent say they never attend. Nevertheless there are 448 cinemas in the Netherlands and weekly attendance runs about 1,400,000. Non-commercial distribution via USIS reaches about 20,000 people a week, mostly in rural areas, although USIS has plans now for daily showings in The Hague which should increase its audience.

The mechanics for commercial distribution is a fairly simple one. The Bioscoop Bond, made up of the movie owners, screens all new material and decides its use. On the basis of their approval of the cartoon film, we can assume a fairly cooperative attitude on their part, although they are essentially a conservative lot.

The cartoon film is awaiting Dutch language prints from Paris. Also in the works, to be initially distributed by the producer, is the Walcheren film recently completed here and now being edited in Paris. A general guide for planning pictures for the Netherlands is indicated by the fact that 75 percent of all films shown are American productions.

We work well with the only newreel company here, but a small budget does not permit them to cover everything we would like to have covered. To supplement their shooting we call on Fox Movietone which has a man in Brussels.

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On non-commercial distribution we have the unqualified cooperation of USIS and certainly, anything we have to show can be added to their movie units.

Other visual media. Perhaps in the Netherlands the most dramatic, effective way of promoting a conviction or demand. The Dutch have been leaders in the use of many of the visual media and the people are receptive to posters and exhibitions. The Utrecht Fair attracts 250,000 people at each of its twice-a-year shows. Obviously, there is no way of estimating beforehand how many people can be reached by any single exhibit, but we have good estimates to work on.

At two major exhibits, on which we are now working, we have estimates of 1,000,000 for one and 800,000 for the other. Pamphlet audiences are easier to gauge since we can direct them at specific groups whose size we know.

So far, the exhibition device has been used in three major instances: the Utrecht Fair in April, 1949, on general Marshall Plan information (prepared before I arrived); the Utrecht Fair in September, 1949, on agricultural information; and the Ministry of Agriculture stand at Eindhoven Fair in August, 1949, on agricultural productivity.

With pamphlets, we have an energetic program with the Dutch Government. Outstanding have been "How The Marshall Plan Works in The Netherlands" with a circulation of 3,000,000, including newspaper reprints; "Netherlands Industrial Growth" with a circulation of 1,000,000, including newspaper reprints; "Benelux," which is being brought up-to-date, and whose total circulation cannot yet be determined; "The Marshall Plan and the Dutch Farmer" with a circulation of 50,000. In production now are "Norwegian Labor Looks at the U.S. AND USSR" which we are distributing under the imprint of the labor unions to 700,000 trade union members (we are printing another 400,000 for Dan Madden in Brussels); and a cartoon pamphlet "The Marshall Plan and You," in which an outstanding Dutch cartoonist handles the ERP in popular fashion and closes with the need for European cooperation. With newspaper reprints this should hit the 2,500,000 mark.

Future pamphlet plans are concerned mainly with productivity. We will use the reports of the labor and agriculture TAF teams as the basis for popular productivity explanations and I foresee wide trade union and farm coverage.

We are preparing complete facilities for blanket distribution of all OSR material in the visual fields. Marshall Plan Picture News posters should soon go to some 10,000 outlets, including all schools; the labor posters will go to every labor union office and to the recreation and lunch rooms of all major factories; the contests, on the basis of preliminary checks, should be quite popular. The photo contest alone will require 400,000 pamphlets.

Speeches. Here again there is no certain way of knowing beforehand the total public which can be reached. Thus far the greatest number of speeches by mission officers and government officials have been before business audiences, with labor and farm groups next. While the business audiences will, of course, not be neglected, we are putting new emphasis on students, farm and labor.

III. Audiences.

Here is an estimate of the size of the major group audiences, their organization and how we are reaching each of them.

Labor. The NVV (Socialist) has 375,000 members; the GNV (Protestant) 150,000; the KAB (Catholic) 300,000; the EVC (Communist) 165,000; minor, about 10,000. Through the labor press we can reach the non-Communist trade union membership.

Labor material from Paris has been placed to the extent that our manpower situation permits (since translation and whipping into final form is essential); "The Gift of Freedom" got good play; Labor Day material and articles about American and international trade unionism are also widely used.

The labor radio station VARA will use labor material when we have it. Speeches before labor groups have been virtually limited to what Lee Smith, Mission Labor Adviser, has been doing, but this will be stepped up when our Labor Information Officer arrives. Other mission officials are being primed for labor speech activity.

Mr. Smith has also inaugurated a Labor-ECA seminar which he and I always attend and which other mission officers attend from time to time. At them recovery problems are thrashed out with labor leaders. Projects like the TAP group now in the States give us a good takeoff point for much more action in labor and this will be exploited to the fullest. More on this in the productivity section below.

Farmers. There are 760,000 farmers in The Netherlands organized into numerous groups of which the main six (Dutch Landowners Union, Christian Reformed Landowners Union, Royal Dutch Committee for Landowners, Christian Reformed Farmers and Market Gardeners Union, Roman Catholic Dutch Farmers and Market Gardeners Union, and the Dutch Roman Catholic Landowners Union) are formed into one overall group called the Foundation of Agriculture. This organization has worked with us in mutual projects such as the ECA Farm Day at September's Utrecht Fair. The day was sponsored by them. Through them, we are also running our productivity efforts based on the Dutch farmers TAP team which recently returned from the States.

Through the Ministry of Agriculture, we distribute our material to the agriculture and provincial press which covers many rural non-farmer readers as well. Most are weeklies, primarily interested in local affairs which is why the 32 young farmers project was so successful from an information point of view: we could localize the stories. Pamphlets have in the

past been distributed at fairs only, but with our new distribution setup and the cooperation of the Foundation of Agriculture we expect wider coverage.

Business and Professional. The leading organizations fall into a general pattern similar to that in the United States, with local Chambers of Commerce and one overall organization, the *Matschappij voor Nijverheid and Handel* (Organization for Industry and Trade) whose members represent every major business in The Netherlands. The business and professional community is probably the best informed of any in The Netherlands on the Marshall Plan, through the daily press, speeches and direct meetings. While I propose that other groups must receive equal attention now, it should be remembered that this group is especially important in the export drive, industrialization and productivity programs, and is influential in areas such as integration. Many businessmen are suspicious of, or reluctant to meet, American manufacturing or commercial competition. We will therefore not make speed with other groups at the expense of this one.

Students and teachers. There are some 100,000 students in the higher level schools; 60,000 (ages 15-20) in high school; 20,000 (ages 14-18) in training schools; and 27,000 (ages 18-26) at universities and technical schools. Another 700,000, from the ages of 9 to 14, are in the lower schools. The high school and college levels are already reached to some extent by the press and to a greater extent by our pamphlet distribution. We hope to aim more specific information at the higher level students by means of a speaker's bureau for college organizations, through which we will provide speakers from the mission. At the same time intense distribution of Marshall Plan Picture News is under way for both the lower and the higher schools, the child art contest among the lower grades and movie distribution through USIS for all students.

IV. Information Objectives.

Unification: So far, unification is an abstraction and therefore the most difficult of our objectives to publicize. We must try to show the benefits of unification in concrete terms.

Fortunately, we have here Benelux as a starting point. But so far it has not demonstrated the desirability and urgency of unification. Some concrete Benelux developments are coming up in the very near future, however.

This is still the part of the program which requires the most planning with the mission and OSR. Furthermore, an exchange of information between missions is needed. I expect to work on my unification program with the officers here, see Dan Madden in Brussels the first week in January and hope to bring more specific problems and proposals to Paris.

So far, my program shapes up this way:

In progress -- A Benelux pamphlet (via the Dutch Government) in both Dutch and English has had a printing so far of 100,000. A revised up-to-date edition is now being prepared to contain the results of the

most recent conferences and to concretely explain some of the benefits.

A cartoon pamphlet of a general nature was started before the unification theme was expressed but the final illustration hits European unification. It is now coming off the presses with an initial printing of 100,000. Newspaper and other reproduction commitments will bring it to an audience of 2,500,000 among students, business and professional men and farm and labor.

An exhibition is planned at Arnhem to start May 15 with an estimated audience of 1,000,000. The fair's theme centers on problems facing the Dutchman at home and abroad. In our building we shall try to show the Dutchman in relation to an economically unified Europe. Preliminary discussions have been held. Harnden is now at work on the plans.

An exhibition is planned at Rotterdam to start about June 1 with an estimated attendance of 800,000. The exhibits's theme is the recovery of Rotterdam since the end of the war. Our stand will show that a healthy Rotterdam depends on an economically healthy and unified Europe.

Planned -- A radio documentary play as part of a series we are working on to be done for us under contract. One or more shows will deal specifically with the problems and benefits of unification and at least one will center around Benelux.

Regular press seminars with political and economic writers in which I and other mission officers will provide background and off-the-record material for editorial guidance.

A speaker's bureau, aimed specifically at college groups, from which we will provide mission officers as speakers.

An intensified speaking program for the mission chief and other officers.

A movie on Benelux or the Rhine countries to be discussed with Lothar Wolff, Dan Mudden, Walter Ridder.

Industrial productivity: The increasing technical assistance program gives us an excellent lever for this one. Also, with the start of an industrialization program by the Dutch government, we have the basic material to tie the productivity program to concrete stories.

In progress -- An industrialization pamphlet (via the Dutch Government) which, with labor and other press special editions, is reaching an audience of 1,000,000.

Preliminary publicity on the departure of the labor TAP team plus complete coverage of their activities in the States has been completed. The group has been briefed, the journalists among them especially, on the speeches, articles and radio appearances they are to participate in on their return. Movie coverage of their trip has been scheduled, the movies to accompany speech appearances.

Planned -- Exploitation, on the same scale as with the labor team, is planned wherever practicable for all technical assistance teams.

Radio documentary plays as part of a regular series; one or more will deal specifically with industrial productivity.

We are in the process of fixing the requirements for technical films and will prepare a distribution set-up which will insure their use with maximum effectiveness.

Agricultural productivity: This is not a crucial problem here, but perhaps one in which we can supply information about highly productive Dutch methods for use as examples elsewhere in Europe. Nevertheless, there are special aspects of agricultural productivity in which the mission is interested. As in labor, we have a good TAP team to use as a starting point for information.

In progress -- Coverage of the 32 young farmers who have spent seven months in the States studying farm mechanization methods. Their stay was thoroughly reported in stories and pictures in the provincial, agricultural and general press. In cooperation with the Agriculture Officer, the TAP Officer, Dutch Government officials and the farm organizations, we are working out a program whereby the young farmers' story and reports will be distributed through the farm press as well as in pamphlets, movies, radio discussion programs, and speeches to local and farm youth groups.

Planned -- A radio documentary play as part of a regular series; one or more on agricultural productivity.

A series of pieces, with pictures, on individual Dutch farmers who have increased production on their own land. The series will be placed in the farm press here and will be forwarded to Paris for use elsewhere in Europe.

A movie on Dutch farmers who have increased production, to show the methods they have used, the results they have obtained. The movie will be shown locally to farm groups and can be used, either alone or with similar shots from other countries, elsewhere in Europe.

The translation and distribution of USDA Technical pamphlets, and the distribution of technical movies. The Agriculture Ministry is getting a report ready for us on their requirements.

Dollar Exports: A start having been made here as the result of the Dutch export drive, with its incentive of 10 percent in dollars to exporters, the main job here seems to be working on exporters and businessmen to improve their packaging and marketing methods and to keep their 10 percent incentive in front of them. A continued emphasis on the necessity of a dollar market for European goods is also indicated.

In progress -- Speeches before business groups by mission officers, especially the mission chief.

Distribution of Paul Hoffman's major speeches and magazine articles, as well as those of other Americans, which relate to dollar exports.

Continuing cooperation with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in the United States and government officials on promotional material for the States.

Planned -- Technical film distribution on packaging and market research.

One or more of the radio documentaries will be on dollar exports.

Technical advice to tourist agencies on their tourist promotional literature.

V. Other Information Office Functions.

Obviously, a daily responsibility is the routine press release and publicity side -- first, publishing news of Marshall Plan aid, TAP and counterpart; second, fullest possible cooperation with Paris and Washington in the European and Stateside programs. Furthermore, there are time consuming, but essential, details such as the information media guaranty program; service for the American, foreign and local press; public relations advice for the mission; miscellaneous queries to be answered and requests to be filled; appearances at plants and factories and public meetings.

VI. Organization for the job.

With the recruitment of a labor information officer (to work as assistant information officer) the staff will have doubled to six people.

The Dutch staff includes Dick Bakker on radio, exhibitions, pamphlets and important translations into idiomatic Dutch; Gerry deGoeijen on printing, large scale distribution of contest material, posters, pamphlets, movies; and Willem van Hemert on news analysis and reports of Dutch press plus reference material. In addition, we have the services of Govert Verheul of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs who is invaluable for coordination with Dutch individuals and organizations.

The American staff now includes myself and Miss Rosella Donohue, administrative assistant, who coordinates all the service functions under paragraph 5. With the arrival of a labor information officer, I propose to share the planning and execution of major projects outlined in this memorandum. Although we have been authorized an assistant information officer as well, I feel that at this time, the labor information officer can fill that function (which plan has been approved by this mission and Paris). However, if it appears that we cannot operate as efficiently as you or we would like, we will pick up the option for the extra man.

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In all activities where it is feasible and/or necessary, we have the cooperation of USIS, especially in some distribution, reproduction and translation problems. They are reimbursed from our budget for three people on their staff.

The Information Office of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs is the chief agency for Marshall Plan information. That office and ours work with the Office of the Special Commissioner for the European Recovery Program which is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Economic Ministry's information office also has the responsibility of the government's economic information in general, but since much of it works in with ECA information, the arrangement is satisfactory. We handle agriculture information with the Agriculture Ministry. An overall Government Information Office cooperates on a variety of subjects of general interest.

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